

5th IPCP Letter, May 2009

Dear IPCP members, dear colleagues supporting the IPCP initiative,

with this 5th IPCP letter, we inform you about the progress of the IPCP initiative since December 2008 and about next steps planned for 2009.

1. General activities and funding: As of May 2009, 114 scientists from 40 countries have signed the IPCP declaration (www.ipcp.ch).

On June 14–17, 2009, the 12th *International Conference on Chemistry and the Environment*, ICCE, will take place in Stockholm, Sweden, see

www.chemsoc.se/sidor/KK/icce2009.htm. On June 14, a pre-session of this conference dealing with the IPCP will be held. The program of this session is:

- Status of the IPCP initiative (Martin Scheringer, ETH Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland)
- A public health physician's perspective on protecting health: time for cross-talk (Arnold Schechter, University of Texas, Dallas, Texas, USA)
- IPCP – A Japanese perspective on the organization (Noriyuki Suzuki, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Tsukuba, Japan)
- IPCP in an intergovernmental perspective (Rolf Annerberg, Formas, Stockholm, Sweden)
- Questions-Comments-Discussion (Plenary)

Break

- Selection of tasks for IPCP Working Groups (WGs) and guidelines for work of IPCP WGs (Åke Bergman, Stockholm University, Sweden; Martin Scheringer, ETH Zürich)
- Views on how to select and prioritize tasks of IPCP WGs (Plenary)

In December 2008, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency made available 100 000 SEK (about 12500 USD) to the IPCP. In addition to that, the IPCP may receive another amount of twice this size from the Swedish EPA (decision will be made by end of May 2009).

The Swiss Federal Office for the Environment supports the SAICM QSP project that will be conducted by the IPCP in collaboration with the governments of Armenia, Chile and Ghana (see item 2 below) with the amount of 6000 USD.

The bank account of the IPCP is open for funding from various sources, including donations. The account information is:

Account holder: International Panel on Chemical Pollution, Hochstr. 51, 8044 Zurich, Switzerland

International bank account number (IBAN): CH19 0070 0110 0019 8556 8

Bank address: ZKB, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland

SWIFT address (also called BIC): ZKBKCHZZ80A

2. Project under SAICM Quick Start Programme: The governments of Armenia, Chile, and Ghana submitted the revised application “Training on risk assessment of chemicals at national level in a global context” to the SAICM Quick Start Programme (see <http://www.saicm.org/index.php?menuid=22&pageid=252>) in February 2009. The IPCP coordinated this application in collaboration with government representatives and scientists from the three countries. The project has been approved by the Trust Fund Implementation Committee. However, because insufficient resources were available in the trust fund to support all suitable projects, the Committee was not in a position to confirm funding for the project at this time. We hope that funding will be available for implementation of the project in 2010.

3. UN panel on chemicals: Two Swedish politicians have proposed that a UN panel on chemicals be established. In April 2009, EU Commissioner Margot Wallström made this proposal in a speech that she gave at the European Chemicals Agency, ECHA, see

http://echa.europa.eu/doc/press/pr_09_04_inauguration_conf_centre_20090406.pdf

Wallström has also taken the initiative for a debate article on this matter in a major Swedish newspaper, Svenska Dagbladet. That article was published already in mid-February.

In May 2009, Viveka Bohn Bohn (former Swedish ambassador of the environment and chair of the first International Conference on Chemicals Management in Dubai, 2006) presented the idea of a UN panel on chemicals in her opening speech at the 2nd International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM2) in Geneva, Switzerland, see

<http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/News/PressRelease/tabid/425/language/en-US/Default.aspx?DocumentID=585&ArticleID=6160&Lang=en>

We think that such a panel on chemicals would be an important step to integrate science into the political agenda. Åke Bergman and Martin Scheringer attended the ICCM2 and expressed in a statement in the plenary that the IPCP fully supports the proposal made by Viveka Bohn. We will follow the development of a UN panel on chemicals closely and try to identify opportunities for IPCP to support this development.

4. Establishing IPCP working groups: We are currently developing a procedure to select topics for IPCP Working Groups. This important question will also be discussed at the IPCP pre-session on June 14, see item 1 above. The objective of IPCP Working Groups is to review the scientific knowledge about high-priority topics, including a discussion of consensus, disagreement, uncertainties, and priorities for further research. The results of this process of reviewing and interpreting the current knowledge will then be presented in IPCP Reports. IPCP Reports contain 30–100 pages and a summary of 4–6 pages; they will be delivered to international institutions and national governments and will also be available to the public *via* the IPCP website. They are intended to present a summary of the state of the science in a form that is not provided by any other sources.

For the IPCP Working Groups, some financial support will be available to cover the expenses of working group members. Furthermore, we are developing guidelines for the work process of IPCP Working Groups.

Please forward this letter to colleagues who may also be interested in the IPCP initiative.

With best regards,

Martin Scheringer
Åke Bergman
Ivan Holoubek
Noriyuki Suzuki
Cornelius Zetzsch

scheringer@chem.ethz.ch
ake.bergman@mk.su.se
holoubek@recetox.muni.cz
nsuzuki@nies.go.jp
Cornelius.Zetzsch@uni-bayreuth.de

May 29, 2009