1. Purpose

The UNEP Scientific Expert Group on Chemicals and the Environment (SECE) is established to provide scientific advice and guidance on environmental issues linked to the sound management of chemicals. The Expert Group will provide a resource of expertise that can be drawn upon to address particular environmental issues concerning chemicals, e.g. pesticides management; assessment of specific chemicals, including methodologies, and management of specific environmental issues or ecological endpoints.

The target audience for its outputs is UNEP and its’ stakeholders, in particular, policy makers and government authorities responsible for the control and management of chemicals and environmental protection. However, also other stakeholders involved with environmental aspects in the risk assessment and management of chemicals will benefit from the work undertaken.

2. Scope

The work of SECE will provide required scientific basis in support of UNEP’s implementation of SAICM (plan presented at the Governing Council in 2007 UNEP/GC/24/INF/15 at http://www.unep.org/gc/gc24/information_documents.asp). The scope of possible work would include the following:

a) assessment and management of environmental risks associated with the production, use and disposal of chemicals, including methodologies;
b) assessment and management of specific chemicals, especially of international/global concern;
c) advice on how to translate guidance materials into actions and assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in building capacities to better address environmental risks of chemicals;
d) scientific backing / justifications relating to the identification of emerging issues and future activities for addressing them; and
e) monitoring of progress in sound management of chemicals.

The figure below shows the structure of the SECE and its linkages to the UNEP Secretariat and its stakeholders from governments and other institutions. The SECE will as a group, first of all provide a resource of expertise to UNEP and its stakeholders. Individual experts will take part in project groups that carry out the required work and develop products according to needs and priorities of UNEP and its stakeholders. The full SECE group and UNEP will be supported by a small core group of experts as described under point 3.3.

3.1 The SECE Resource Group

The SECE resource group will comprise a pool of experts covering the main areas of expertise listed below. This list of main areas of expertise may be further specified and/or expanded, as required.
The list of main categories and areas of expertise of SECE include the following:

**Exposure**
- a) environmental fate and exposure assessment;
- b) substance and material flow analysis;
- c) environmental analytical chemistry

**Hazard / risk assessment**
- d) eco-toxicology;
- e) environmental risk assessment;

**Environmental**
- f) ecology / applied ecology;
- g) soil sciences;
- h) hydrology

**Management**
- i) risk management
- j) environmental law and political science;
- k) risk communication;
- l) monitoring / indicators;
- m) waste management.
- n) water management;

**Socio-economic**
- o) socio-economics and ecological economics;
- p) training and capacity building;

Some areas, such as environmental health, may have potential overlaps with mandates of other IGOs. Therefore, consultation and coordination with these IGOs should be ensured in these areas in order to avoid duplication and overlap of work.

### 3.2 Composition of the SECE Resource Group

The SECE Resource group will comprise scientific experts chosen in a manner that takes into account regional, gender and discipline balance. Experts will be drawn from developed, developing and economies-in-transition countries and be selected for their expertise and experience in specific aspects of chemicals management. Experts are to be appointed in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their employers, governments, or other institutions. Experts would mainly be drawn from academia, but a limited number may also be from governments and other types of institutions. Experts will usually be identified through recommendations from other experts, preferably substantiated by publications in peer-reviewed specialized journals. The Secretariat will be responsible for the final selection and invitation of experts to become members of the SECE. Experts who would want to accept and become members of the SECE will be

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1 Substance and material flow analysis of chemicals in society with regard to potential emissions.
2 To focus on the legal and institutional frameworks for policy making, implementation and enforcement of the laws regarding the sound management of chemicals in DCs and CEiTs, including the processes for developing/ strengthening these frameworks taking into consideration the specific circumstances of these countries.
required to submit a Declaration of Interest, based on which UNEP will decide whether any potential conflict of interest may be acceptable or not for the expert to become a member and / or to carry out specific work as a member the SECE.

The SECE Resource Group is unlikely to meet as a whole group. Members will be called upon when there is need for their special expertise for specific tasks or they may be invited to be part of the Core Group (see SECE Core Group and SECE Project Groups below).

3.3 The SECE Core Group

To support the Secretariat in its work related to the SECE, a Core Group will be established and its members will be selected from among the full Resource Group. The functions of the Core Group will include the following:

a) Provide UNEP with advice regarding work and activities and assist the UNEP Secretariat in elaborating actions needed for addressing priority issues identified by governments and other stakeholders of developing and countries with economies in transition as well as emerging and other issues, in particular, those identified by the UNEP Governing Council, SAICM and other international forums.

b) Advise UNEP about potential experts that might be invited to join the SECE

c) Select among its members the Chair of the SECE who will also chair the Core Group meetings.

d) Advise on possible timelines for the activities that might be undertaken.

e) Identify suitable experts for the project groups that will undertake specific activities. UNEP will in consultation with the core group select suitable experts for the project groups based on the following criteria:

1) Expertise, knowledge, and experience;

2) Availability and willingness to serve;

3) Absence of real or perceived conflict of interest; and

4) Regional balance.

f) Advise UNEP on the Terms of Reference for the projects to be undertaken, as well as suggest who might serve as a project leader. (Final arrangements for the projects that are to be undertaken remain under UNEP's responsibility.)

g) Overseeing the peer review process to ensure the highest levels of scientific quality and credibility for all products delivered by the project groups.

3.4 Composition, work and meetings of the SECE Core Group

The SECE Core Group will comprise 6-10 experts, selected from the SECE Resource Group. In addition to covering a wide range of expert fields the selection will take geographical and gender balances into account. Members of the Core Group will serve for four years. In order to create continuity in the work of the group, it is foreseen that new members will join the group after its first two years. The Core Group will advise UNEP on the selection of the new members from the SECE Resource Group to serve for the next four year period.

Face-to-face meetings of the Core Group will be organized once a year, resources permitting. The agendas will be based on suggestions by the previous meeting, further developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Core Group. The Core Group can also work inter-sessionally via e-mail and tele-conferencing and should normally work in this manner at least twice in between the face-to-face meetings.
The Chair of the SECE and the Core group (to be selected by the Core Group among its members) will serve until the next yearly face-to-face Core Group meeting.

3.5 The SECE Project Groups

The SECE should have experts covering all of the specific areas listed in section 3.1. Each expert will, when becoming a member of the Resource Group, identify her/his special area(s) of expertise. Project Groups will be formed to develop expert advice on particular topics in line with the actions required according to the work-plans developed by UNEP with the Core group. Experts to take part in a specific Project Group will be identified according to their area(s) of expertise and also taking into consideration geographical distribution and other relevant UN criteria. Project leaders will be identified for each project group. The Project Leader will be accountable to UNEP Secretariat and UNEP will monitor the progress of the project over and above the Project Leader. The outcomes of the project groups will, unless otherwise agreed, belong to UNEP that is responsible for the distribution / publication of the products.

As a general rule, membership in the SECE Resource group and Core Group is not remunerated, for certain types of tasks, within the project groups there could be possibilities of some remuneration, e.g. drafting of guidance materials. Members of the group will be able to communicate and have discussions through a special chat-area created under UNEP Chemicals web-site. There may also be special e-forum discussions called by the Secretariat based on suggestions from the Expert Group members.

3.6 The Secretariat

The DTIE Chemicals Branch of UNEP will provide the secretariat of SECE and its groups and will facilitate the work and communications among the experts in the different groups. The responsibilities of the Secretariat will include the following:

- making final selection of experts for the SECE taking due account of the advice from the Core Group, and inviting the selected experts to become members of the SECE;
- based on the declaration of interest from invited experts, evaluate whether any potential conflict of interest may be acceptable or not for the expert to become a member and / or to carry out specific work as a member the SECE. evaluate the potential
- establishing and maintaining records for SECE member experts in a database containing their field of expertise and contact information of experts.
- convening meetings of the Core Group and project groups as required and in accordance with availability of funds;
- establishing project groups, terms of reference and any contractual and financial implications that the work of the project group may involve, taking due consideration of the advice from the Core Group;
- initiating, facilitating and overseeing the work of the project groups;
- initiating wider expert review of project group outputs;
- editing and ensuring that the final products meet UNEP/UN standards, and that necessary disclaimers are included regarding the status and policy representation of the content of the reports and other products;
i) publicizing and disseminating SECE reports, guidance materials and resources to the target stakeholders and a wider scientific and policymaker community, including translation into United Nations official languages, as is deemed necessary and in accordance with availability of financial resources;

j) organizing stakeholder meetings or other consultative processes that will identify needs and priorities of different stakeholder groups for the sound management of chemicals; and

k) UNEP will reserve the right to discontinue the group if deemed necessary, in which case it will duly inform all members in due time.