Date: Please send in early January 2022

Dear Honourable Minister,

I am (we are) writing to urge/ask you to support the draft resolution to establish an intergovernmental “**Science-Policy Panel to support action on chemicals, waste and pollution**.” This draft resolution will be brought forward at the upcoming meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA5.2) from February 28 to March 2, 2022 in Nairobi, Kenya.

As (a) scientist(s) working on [optional - you can add your expertise], I am (we are) very concerned with the threat that poorly managed chemicals and waste pose to human and ecological health. The estimates of the global burden-of-disease studies show that exposure to a small subset of well studied yet still poorly managed harmful chemicals is causing more than one million premature deaths worldwide every year, which is almost on par with the effects associated with secondhand smoke. This is especially concerning given that the global production of chemicals and waste continues to increase without adequate evidence based global oversight.

As exemplified by UNEP’s working priorities in 2022–25, the international community is dedicated to jointly tackle the triple interconnected global environmental threats of climate change, loss of biodiversity, and chemicals, waste and pollution. A series of background reports prepared by UNEP in response to the UNEA4 resolutions have made a strong case for the need for sound, credible and authoritative scientific assessments to support timely policy responses to mitigate risks posed by chemicals, waste and pollution at the global, regional and national scales. Such assessments need to come from knowledgeable, independent, and representative experts working through an open and transparent process.

Several science-policy bodies already address specific issues within the “chemicals, waste and pollution” space, for example, under the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions. However, significant gaps exist in the coverage of all critical issues, e.g., lead and other hazardous metals, highly hazardous pesticides, endocrine disrupting chemicals, and many others that are not covered by existing frameworks. Furthermore, the existing frameworks generally do not have mechanisms for proactively capturing new and emerging threats, or for effectively working with the IPCC (climate change) and IPBES (biodiversity loss).

Chemicals, waste and pollution is a global environmental threat that does not recognize national borders. As shown in the case of climate change and biodiversity loss, such compex problems can only be addressed through concerted efforts by each and every member of the international community, guided by up-to-date science. Also learning from the IPCC and IPBES, medium- to long-term benefits far outweigh short-term investments.

In response to this need, several countries will table a [draft resolution](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/37651/Draft%2520Resolution%2520Science%2520Policy%2520Panel%2520CWP_10_12_21.pdf?sequence%3D1%26isAllowed%3Dy&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1639498072371000&usg=AOvVaw3YkZwH0wJviwufLQvo4TB6) at the upcoming UNEA5.2 meeting calling for an intergovernmental science-policy body for chemicals, waste and pollution. Those countries now include Costa Rica, Ghana, Mali, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uruguay. I/We would like to urge/ask the Government of [add your country’s name] to co-sponsor this draft resolution or support the draft resolution at UNEA5.2.

In closing, an intergovernmental science-policy body is much needed to address the threats posed by chemicals, waste and pollution, and to find and promote measures to jointly address this threat along with climate change and loss of biodiversity. I/We again urge/ask you to support, on behalf of the [add your country’s name] government, this critical initiative to strengthen global governance of environmental threats toward a sustainable future. Further, I/we would like to ask that you respond to this letter in advance of UNEA5.2, with an explanation of your government’s position on this proposal.

Sincerely,

Link to the draft resolution for a Science-Policy Panel: <https://tinyurl.com/a3wc456s>