

Economic and Industry Sector Engagement and Action to Implement the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC)

*A multi-stakeholder workshop to develop a GFC Industry Implementation Programme
(with a dedicated day on disclosure, reporting, and financing)*

24-26 February 2025, Paris

Workshop Highlights and Key Outcomes

Global Framework on Chemicals, para. 24

The International Conference on the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste may adopt programmes to support the implementation of the Framework in order to achieve its strategic objectives, as presented in part V, “Strategic objectives and targets”. Such programmes should have their own focus and engage relevant sectors and stakeholders, and could include, in a flexible and dynamic format, the actions that the stakeholders intend to initiate or contribute to at the national, regional, and/or international levels in order to successfully meet the relevant targets identified in part V. Such programmes should also include any necessary mandates, terms of reference, workplans and/or other mechanisms, including actions to address identified issues of concern where relevant, to contribute to the success of the overall Framework and its strategic objectives.

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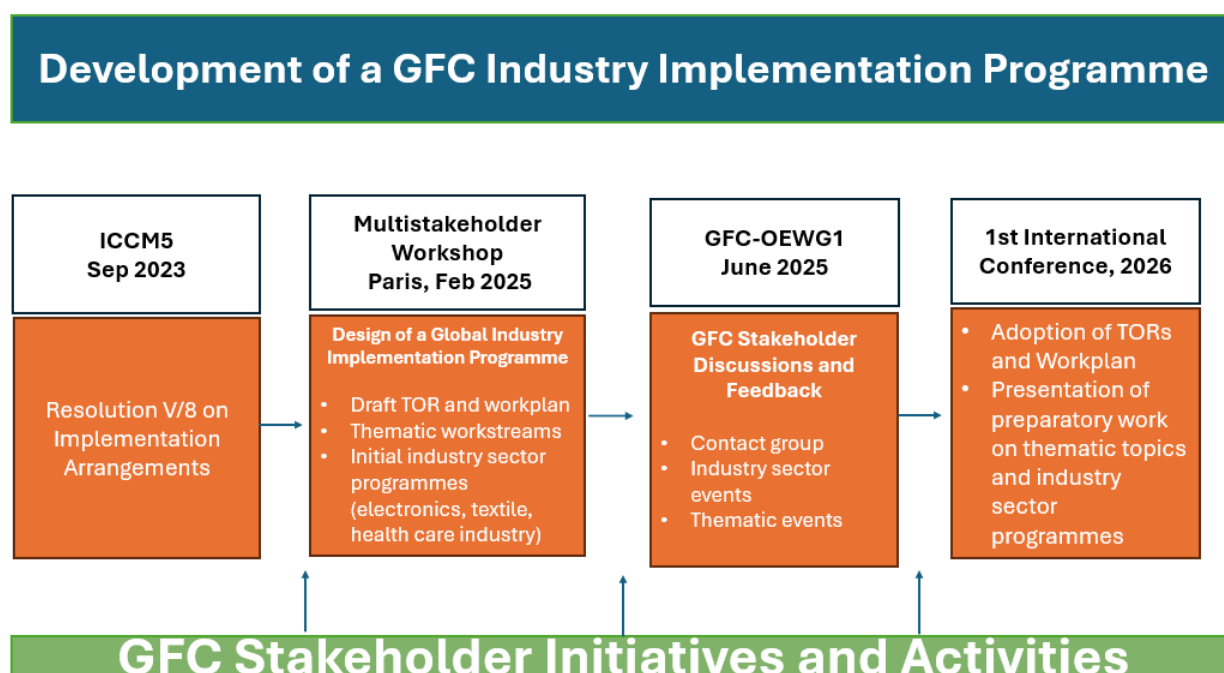
1 Background and Overview

Background

Following adoption of the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste in 2023, resolution V/8 was agreed on implementation arrangements, inviting “stakeholders... to collaborate on and develop proposals for implementation programmes”. The proposals should address “respective mandates, terms of reference, workplans and other mechanisms”. The topic of “Integrating sound chemicals and waste management in economic and industrial sectors along value chains” is one of the topics specifically mentioned in the Resolution.

As a follow-up, the IOMC started in 2024 to engage stakeholders in developing the TOR and Workplan for a GFC Implementation Programme focusing on industry engagement and action along value chains (“Industry Implementation Programme”). The following figure briefly describes the journey from ICCM-5 in September 2023 towards the International Conference in 2026, with a multistakeholder workshop in Paris, France and the OEWG in Punta del Este, Uruguay serving as important interim milestones.

Figure 1: From ICCM-5 to IC-1 – development of a GFC Industry Implementation Programme



Overview of the Workshop

To further this work, the IOMC convened a multistakeholder workshop to develop a GFC Industry Implementation Programme, hosted at the OECD in Paris, on 24-26 February 2025.¹ All stakeholders were invited to participate, with a particular emphasis on those stakeholder groups that are not typically present in the GFC negotiations, such as diverse value chain actors. The workshop was held in person, with live streaming to allow for engagement and presentation from key stakeholders. Ninety-six participants joined in person, with a further ninety-two joining online.

The workshop focused on the question of how a GFC Industry Implementation Programme should be designed to create value-added for stakeholders and accelerate progress to achieve the Strategic Objectives and Targets of the GFC. Over two and a half days, participants took part in constructive, concrete, and action-oriented discussions to further strengthen economic and industry sector engagement and action. Presenters (both in person and online) from the distinct stakeholder groups were invited to convey information and how their work linked to the development of implementation programmes. The second day included multiple speakers and presenters sharing knowledge on the chemicals and waste dimensions of disclosure and reporting standards, as well as engaging stakeholders and investors in a discussion on implementing target D3 on private sector financing.

Specifically, the workshop:

- Identified benefits for stakeholders of a GFC Industry Implementation Programme
- Reviewed and provided input to a draft TOR and initial workplan for an Industry Implementation Programme
- Initiated the development of specific Industry Sector Programmes, including for the electronics industry sector, the textiles industry sector, and the health care industry sector
- Identified six thematic areas of work under the global workplan to support Industry Sector Programmes,
- Provided input on draft guidance to develop sustainable chemicals and waste strategies by industry, called for in Target D6².

2 Stakeholder Input on Programme Design

Benefits of an Implementation Programme

The workshop identified several benefits of a GFC Industry Implementation Programme which would complement formal GFC processes. It would create opportunities for stakeholders to engage regularly, exchange knowledge, recognize good practices and achievements, coordinate and collaborate, identify gaps, and find common solutions.

Structure of the Programme

While the overall Programme should create a common framework and guidance, its governance structure needs to accommodate diverse economic and industry sectors and include stakeholder representation. To address this, the Programme could comprise two main components:

- A **global component** focusing on outreach, guidance, oversight, and thematic/cross-cutting issues; and a
- series of specific **Industry Sector Programmes** with their own TORs and workplans, aligned with global guidance.

Governance

In developing the Programme, different approaches to governance should be explored. For example:

- A multistakeholder stakeholder governance structure for the Industry Programme should ensure that a wide range of industry stakeholders can be attracted to engage in the Programme, while ensuring that an overall Steering Committee is consistent with the multisectoral and multistakeholder approach of the GFC.
- One option would be to create a separate Steering Committee for the Industry Programme. An alternative would be to create a Steering Committee to oversee all Implementation Programmes, thereby ensuring there are linkages and coordination across Programme. One possible option is that the GFC Bureau takes on this function.
- In this case, the specific Industry Sector Programmes could then have a more flexible governance structure, while ensuring that they do not operate in isolation, and need to be endorsed by a multistakeholder Steering Committee and ultimately the International Conference.
- In all cases multi-sector, multistakeholder and regional collaboration in the Industry Sector Programmes is important.
- A recognised neutral organisation, such as an IOMC PO could provide convening support for specific Industry Sector Programmes, while making sure that engagement and ownership of industry stakeholders is ensured. More than one entity may be providing convening services.

¹ For more information and documentation, see:

[https://partnership.who.int/iomc/newsroom/events/item/2025/02/24/default-calendar/economic-and-industry-sector-engagement-and-action-to-implement-the-global-framework-on-chemicals-\(gfc\)](https://partnership.who.int/iomc/newsroom/events/item/2025/02/24/default-calendar/economic-and-industry-sector-engagement-and-action-to-implement-the-global-framework-on-chemicals-(gfc))

² Global Framework on Chemicals, [Target D6](#): “By 2030, sustainable chemical and waste management strategies have been developed and implemented for major economic and industry sectors that identify priority chemicals of concern and standards and measures, such as the chemical footprint approach, to reduce their impact and, where feasible, their input along the value chain.”

3 Proposed Programme Workplan

In line with the proposed structure, the Industry Implementation Programme would have a Global Workplan (which includes outreach, guidance and coordination activities), as well as thematic workstreams which address cross-cutting issues relevant to all Industry Sector Programmes. Furthermore, each Industry Sector Programme will have its own sector-specific workplan.

3.1 Global Workplan

3.1.1 Global outreach, guidance and coordination

The workshop identified the following activities under this workstream:

- Development of a global TOR for the overall Implementation Programme
- Development of Guidance for D6 Strategies (Companies and Associations)
- Development of a knowledge management platform (supporting thematic work and industry sector programmes)
- Identification of possible additional, specific industry sector programmes
- Preparing input to the OEWG
- Outreach to engage other stakeholders

Development of guidance for D6 strategies

The workshop provided valuable feedback on the guiding objectives and principles for developing sustainable chemicals and waste strategies called for by target D6. Issues highlighted included the following:

- The guiding objectives and principles should be ambitious, in line with the GFC, while allowing flexibility for stakeholders to undertake continuous performance improvement.
- Target companies and associations as well as other stakeholders should be engaged in the further development of the guidance.
- The development of business cases to implement the D6 approach can be valuable for different decision makers.

3.1.2 Thematic workstreams

The workshop identified a number of cross-cutting **thematic workstreams** for inclusion in the Global Workplan that would provide support to specific industry sector programmes.

A step-by-step approach to advance work under each theme could involve the following:

1. Knowledge-sharing of existing stakeholder initiatives and good practices
2. Identification of options/guidance to support implementation
3. Considering opportunities for coordination, alignment, harmonization, etc.

The IOMC indicated that it will, as a follow-up to the workshop, engage with stakeholders to explore their interest to participate in further discussions. This may include organizing virtual meetings on each theme in advance of OEWG, and reporting progress at the OEWG.

In addition, next steps and proposed activities were identified in the workshop for each theme.

Priority chemicals of concern

Target D6 states that “By 2030, sustainable chemical and waste management strategies have been developed and implemented for major economic and industry sectors that *identify priority chemicals of concern...*”.

Participants identified several initiatives that have identified chemicals of concern. Some of these lists are generic and apply to all industry sectors, and value chains while others apply to specific industry sectors. Opportunities exist to foster knowledge-sharing to learn about relevant initiatives and identify possible gaps.

Activities under this workstream could include:

- compile and analyse existing lists of priority chemicals of concern, their purpose and criteria used
- review of existing initiatives to identify priority chemicals of concern for specific industry sectors (this could also be done under an Industry Sector Programme)
- explore opportunities to identify common criteria to identify chemicals of concern and taking priority measures to reduce their impact.

Chemical footprint approaches

Target D6 states that sustainable chemical and waste management strategies identify “standards and measures, such as the *chemical footprint approach*, to reduce their impact and, where feasible, their input along the value chain.” Valuable initiatives and approaches were presented which are relevant to identifying the chemical footprint along value chains. Opportunities exist to foster knowledge-sharing, understand the context they are used in, and explore opportunities for alignment.

Activities under this workstream could:

- compile and undertake a comparison of existing approaches to measure the chemical footprint along value chains
- develop guidance to provide options to measure various aspects of the chemical footprint and support industry disclosure
- explore opportunities to align a chemical footprint approach e.g. through development of a common standard.

Transparency and traceability along value chains

Strategic Objective B states that: “Comprehensive and sufficient knowledge, data and information are generated, available and accessible to all to enable informed decisions and actions”. **Targets B1, B2, and B3** are focused on the need to make information and data available along the value chain. Important advances have been made by stakeholders to enhance transparency and traceability of chemical information along value chains, including through the SAICM Chemicals in Product Programme. Opportunities exist to foster knowledge-sharing, identify good practices, and explore opportunities to explore opportunities for alignment and benchmarking.

Activities under this workstream may include:

- Identification of user groups along value chains and their chemical information needs in specific contexts
- Compilation and review good practices and tools to advance transparency and traceability of chemical information along value chains
- Development of minimum transparency and traceability benchmarks/standards along value chains
- Further development of Digital Product Passports (DPPs) to advance chemicals transparency and foster compliance and circularity.

Disclosure and reporting standards/frameworks

Disclosure and reporting by companies of their sustainability performance has become a key aspect of sound corporate management to inform stakeholders, including investors. Target D3 refers to the application of “internationally recognized or equivalent reporting standards” to support chemical related investment decisions.” Several important international reporting standards were presented which address, to some extent chemical information and GFC targets. Some of this information is used by financial investors. Opportunities exist to foster knowledge-sharing and a better understanding about the chemical dimension of existing reporting standards, the extent they are compatible with the GFC, and explore opportunities for alignment.

Activities under this workstream may include:

- Conduct a landscape analysis of the chemical and waste dimension of existing sustainability disclosure and reporting standards/approaches
- Identify opportunities to harmonize the chemical dimension of sustainability reporting and develop a complementary GFC compatible voluntary reporting module
- Identify opportunities for aligning existing reporting standards/approaches with the GFC and engage with relevant standard setting bodies.

Green and sustainable chemistry innovation and solutions

Target D1 focuses on the advancement of sustainable chemistry throughout the lifecycle of chemicals. **Target D5** seeks to support “safer and more sustainable agricultural practices... and the use of non-chemical alternatives”. Several stakeholders have developed definitions and guidance concerning green and sustainable chemistry. Opportunities exist to foster knowledge sharing on them and identify common aspects and differences. Furthermore, significant opportunities exist to scale-up information sharing on green and sustainable chemicals alternatives.

Activities under this workstream may include:

- Foster knowledge-sharing on
 - guidance and case studies for identifying safer alternatives
 - guidance and case studies on “Sustainable by design” product development
 - sustainable chemistry, and safer and non-chemical alternatives platforms
 - guidance and case studies for sustainable chemistry incubators
 - strengthening sustainable chemistry innovation ecosystems
- Identify commonalities and distinctions among different green and sustainable chemistry frameworks
- Scale up and coordinate capacity development initiatives to empower green and sustainable chemistry innovation and entrepreneurship, in particular in developing and transition countries.

Private sector financing and investment

Investors are increasingly prioritizing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors, and companies with strong chemical management practices can attract more capital. **Target D3** notes the specific role the private sector, including the finance sector, should have in its finance approaches for the sound management of chemicals and waste. Valuable stakeholder initiatives were presented which curate information in a way that help investors to make sound decisions. Opportunities exist to expand and scale up these initiatives and raise the aware and support financial investors in all regions to advance sound management of chemicals

Activities under this workstream may include:

- Prepare a study on financial flows and investments in the chemical value chain to understanding opportunities for transition planned
- Develop guidance for finance institutions and investors to support corporate transition planning (including corporate policy/management benchmarking)
- Enhance cooperation with the finance sector to obtain a better understanding of the financial materiality of chemical management in-action
- Awareness raising, education and engagement of financial institutions and investors, and communication of issues around financial and impact materiality
- Knowledge-sharing on triple bottom line investments, and public, blended and

private investments

- Investigate opportunities and commitment to develop a dedicated GFC Finance Sector Programme.

Other possible cross-cutting topics

- Identifying linkage and synergies across industry sector programmes, in line with **Target E2**
- Occupational health and safety, as per the **Bonn Declaration**³ identifying the need for action to develop and provide “safe and sustainable chemicals with reduced adverse impacts for downstream industry users, workers and consumers”, as well as **Targets D7, E1 and E6** (among others throughout the GFC targets).

3.2 Industry sector programmes

GFC Industry Sector Programmes will comprise an integral component of the overall GFC Industry Implementation Programme. Given that industry sectors have their own needs and stakeholders, each Industry Sector Programme would have its own TOR, workplan, and multistakeholder governance arrangement.

Three specific sector programmes were discussed in dedicated panels for electronics, textiles, and health care industries, respectively. A number of stakeholders indicated their interest to engage in such sector programmes and in the development of specific TORs and workplans. Initial discussions on those took place in dedicated working groups.

Electronics

The stakeholders that joined the group agreed to continue their efforts through regular consultations leading up to the GFC Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in June 2025.

Considerations relevant for developing the Electronics Industry Sector Programme, including its workplan, include:

- Encourage aligning of chemical management programmes in the industry sector with GFC goals and integrate feedback from this consultation.
- Scale-up knowledge-sharing and technical support on priority chemicals of concerning elimination and safer alternatives.
- Continue development and promote transparency tools to support industry sector reporting.
- Explore ways to strengthen regulatory capacity for e-waste management and hazardous chemicals tracking.
- Advance pilot projects (e.g. for toys and mobile devices) to demonstrate circularity in electronics in response to consumer demand and policy momentum.
- Reach out to an expand engagement of other electronics companies in the Industry

³ <https://www.chemicalsframework.org/bonndeclaration>

Sector Programme.

Health care

Considerations relevant for developing the Health Care Industry Sector Programme, including its workplan, include:

- Mapping of existing initiatives and projects (including eco-labelling and 'green' certification scheme for health products and medical devices)
- Identification of priority chemicals of concern in the health care industry value chain
- Developing a business case to encourage industry and other stakeholder participation in the Programme.
- Establish 2 working groups:
 1. Developing a terms of reference for the Programme
 2. Mapping of relevant initiatives
- Work with group 1 (ToRs) to develop a policy brief for decision-makers participating in the OEWG and the 2026 International Conference to explain the importance and broad impact of the health care programme.

It was indicated that a follow-up, online meeting would be useful to further advance the work.

Textiles

Considerations relevant for developing the Textile Industry Sector Programme, including its workplan, include:

- Mapping of textile initiatives/standards/frameworks and alignment with the GFC, including identifying gaps and tools.
- Identify and reach out to "missing" stakeholders, including brands, SMEs and NGOs
- Identify interconnections with other industry sectors and topics along the value chains (i.e. plastics, biodiversity and climate change)
- Address issues and identify option related to consumption and "fast fashion"
- Develop user friendly information and tools to help SMSs identify alternatives and take concrete steps.

Next steps following the workshop include:

- Circulate draft TORs
- Follow up meetings (virtually)
- Outreach to other stakeholders
- Develop work plan by 2026, with a timeline with clear objectives and deadlines
- Outreach to stakeholders through a webinar, focusing on challenges, solutions and engagement in GFC work (the webinar could be done e.g. through the UNEP India project)

- Identify possible donors, e.g. foundations.

Additional industry sectors

The initial efforts in the above three sectors were commended and supported by participants. Nonetheless, there was a general view that other sectors would also be appropriate for industry sector programmes. These included:

- Buildings and construction industry
- Food and agriculture industry
- Minerals and mining industry
- Consumer products and retail industry.

4 Next steps

The IOMC will develop an information document for the GFC OEWG in June 2025 that will summarise the work done to date on the implementation programmes, and summarise developments with the terms of reference, mandates, and workplans. The meeting will provide an opportunity for formal stakeholder feedback in advance of the International Conference in 2026.

The OEWG will also feature a series of multistakeholder events that will allow sharing in more detail the progress made, the initial results of the consultations, and engagement with GFC stakeholders in shaping the further development of the Programme and its various components.

In preparation for the OEWG, all stakeholders who have committed to leading or joining efforts in the thematic workstreams and Industry Sector Programmes are encouraged to continue engaging stakeholders and proceeding with activities. In each case, it is expected that at least one session (online or in person) could be organised before the OEWG, so that updates can be provided.

The IOMC will be contacting workshop participants (and those who have previously engaged in relevant workshops, webinars and surveys to develop the programme) to identify stakeholders interested in engaging in the next steps.