

Development of the ECHA strategy statement

69th Meeting of the Management Board 30 March 2023

Proposed actions

The Management Board (MB) is invited to:

- I. confirm the process for developing ECHA's strategy statement 2024-2028,
- II. designate its members to take the lead to work with the Executive Director (ED) and the secretariat in the development process,
- III. confirm the arrangements for channelling the views of ECHA's external stakeholders into the development process and
- IV. provide orientation on the key themes or areas for focus in the coming five years for ECHA.

The proposals are set out under the corresponding sections below.

I. Background, process and timeline

This document outlines the process for developing ECHA's strategy statement for the period 2024-2028. Based on the assessment of the ED, the development of the strategy statement is necessary for the organisation to remain able to deliver on ECHA's current and future tasks, to plan and operate in a context of changing mandates and uncertainty and to develop the organisation and more importantly its people.

The strategy statement 2024-2028 will be a clear statement of intent, defining the direction and focus for the Agency in the context of current and future mandates as well as setting priorities for people and organisational development.

The multiannual and annual work programmes, adopted every year by the MB, will then be the instruments to implement the strategy statement, through objectives, activities, expected results and performance indicators.

The strategy statement will outline ECHA's purpose/mission (what we do), the vision (what our aim is) and the specific priorities and objectives. It will also state ECHA's organisational values and the expected behaviours we should demonstrate in everything we do.

In order to arrive at a strategy statement that reflects internal and external views, the MB and the ED will engage with ECHA staff and external stakeholders to inform the final document. Subject to the pace of the progress, the strategy statement will be adopted in Q3 or latest in Q4 of 2023.

An overview of timeline and deliverable structure is presented in Annex 1.

II. MB members' involvement

The process presented in Annex 1 describes the framework for collaboration between MB members and the ED in the development of the strategy statement. While requiring commitment of time and effort, it ensures that all Board members' time is used efficiently and effectively. The development process will be an iterative one, with the ED and the secretariat preparing and drafting discussion documents based on MB reflections and comments.

MB subgroup

To minimise the impact on the Board members, it is proposed that a dedicated sub-set of the MB SG SPI, similar to that which worked on the 2021 strategy review, would take the lead to work with the ED and the secretariat in the development process.

Some members expressed their availability to work on the development of the strategic statement during the meeting of the MB SG SPI on 8 March 2023 (Annex 2). Other Board members, who are able and willing to invest in this work are invited to contact the Chair of the MB (cc secretariat) prior to the 69th MB plenary meeting. The MB is invited to adopt the composition of this subgroup in its 69th meeting.

Members of the dedicated **MB subgroup** are asked to:

1. Review and confirm drafts provided by the ED and the secretariat during Q2-Q3 2023
2. Prepare MB plenary session(s) – preparatory meetings (ca. 1 hour) prior to plenaries - to ensure the most effective MB contribution to the process
3. Contribute to consultations and interpretation of feedback

All Board members are asked to:

1. Actively participate in MB plenary meetings to discuss the strategy statement, prepared by the ED and the MB subgroup (see above)
2. Contribute to consultations and interpretation of feedback (e.g., starts in this plenary)
3. Adopt the final ECHA strategy statement 2024-2028

III. Input from external stakeholders

The 2021 review of ECHA's strategic plan 2019-2023 was conducted with the involvement of external stakeholders, whose views were collected by MB members. This exercise has resulted in learnings, which serve as a key input to the strategy development process, see Annex 3.

Since then, ECHA's external environment has further evolved, including, but not limited to, the progress in the implementation of the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the end of large-scale pandemic-related public health measures and the energy crisis, which has accelerated parts of the Green Deal implementation.

In its meeting of 8 March 2023, the MB SG SPI reviewed options for channelling further external stakeholders' views into the development process of the future strategy statement. The options discussed were:

- 1. Use the input from the 2021 consultation as basis for strategy development**
- 2. Repeat the exercise as in 2021: consultation done by MB members**
- 3. Conduct a stakeholder consultation using external support**

The majority of the MB SG SPI members considered that the richness of the input collected in 2021, together with the secretariat's input on external and internal factors, constitutes a sufficient basis for developing the future strategy statement.

Option 1 was therefore preferred, while clarifying that each Board member is welcome to conduct further consultations in their Member State or stakeholder community, including members of ECHA bodies, as necessary. The secretariat is ready to provide questions to facilitate this work, if requested. Input from any further consultation is invited by 15 May 2023.

IV. Input collected on external and internal factors affecting ECHA's future

During Q1 2023, ECHA collected internal input, through a series of team dialogues at staff and management level. The topics were related to ECHA's current state, its external environment and future direction¹. The summary of input received is presented in Annex 4.

The input is well aligned with the key points and guidance that emerged from the MB's 2021 review of the strategic plan 2019-2023. Additional points emerged on:

- New developments since 2021 that should be considered for ECHA as an organisation (see PESTEL summary slide 3 in Annex 4)
- Additional emerging themes that will require further processing during the drafting phase (see slide 10 in Annex 4).
 - In 15 years, ECHA has become a different regulatory Agency, going from 'REACH' to 'Chemicals'
 - Drive to define a shared future focus of ECHA and implement clear priorities
 - Need to adjust how we work as an organisation

The MB is invited to discuss, building on Annex 4:

- Elements in the evolution of the external environment that are relevant for ECHA's future - confirming or adding to the PESTEL insights
- Key themes or areas for focus in the coming five years for ECHA
- Anything else that is relevant for the Subgroup and ED to consider

Attachments:

- Annex 1: Strategy statement development timeline and deliverable structure
- Annex 2: Draft list of MB members to work on the development of the strategy statement
- Annex 3: Outcome of the 2021 [Strategic Plan review](#)
- Annex 4: Summary of input from ECHA internal staff and management dialogues

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¹ The internal dialogue will continue with the review of ECHA's values in Q2 2023.