

ICCA: A year of strengthened partnerships

Challenges lie ahead for the chemical industry this year but ICCA president, Mark Rohr, says there is reason to be optimistic



Mark C Rohr
President, International Council of Chemical Associations, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Celanese Corporation

For the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), 2016 will be the year of building and strengthening partnerships in three key areas, so we can continue to capitalise on the momentum and recognition we earned, last year, as global solutions providers.

The first area, where partnerships will continue to play a key role, is implementing the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (Saicm). Saicm's multi-stakeholder approach has led to collaboration that may not otherwise have been possible. In 2016, the ICCA looks forward to strengthening our partnership with Unep so that we can continue to work together to fulfil our shared vision for sound chemicals management practices, in countries that currently cannot implement them alone. We expect this work will go beyond industry's contributions to tackling global problems and highlight the important work that we do in providing real, tangible solutions.

For example, Saicm has the potential to do more than just strengthen protections for human health and the environment. Sound chemicals management can also help promote innovation. Since the vast majority of manufactured goods depend on chemistry, the sound management of chemicals can help provide business opportunities and a foundation for broader economic growth. In 2016, ICCA members look forward to continuing to create capacity for innovation and economic growth, in the countries that need it most, by helping to advance sound chemicals management programmes like Responsible Care and the Global Product Strategy.

The second area where partnerships will be critical is in our efforts to expand the reach

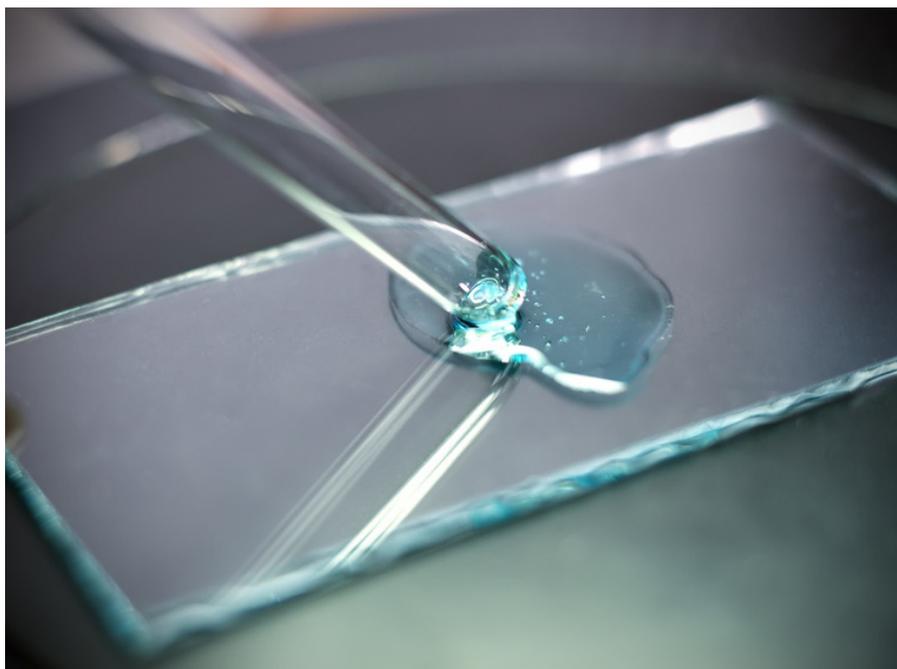


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Mark Rohr: Some governments still consider policy proposals that are based on inconsistent and unreliable research

of Responsible Care. With the recent adherence of China, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Vietnam to the programme, the number of ICCA member associations in 2015 grew to 59. ICCA membership could exceed 60 this year, with the addition of new partners in Egypt and Croatia. Last year, we also began outreach in the African region, introducing Responsible Care to Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania. Capacity building activities in other countries will follow in the near future. In 2016, by continuing to strengthen industry partnerships with governments and between nations, we can bring the values of Responsible Care to the countries that need it most.

Finally, partnerships that foster mutual understanding will play a critical role in creating a regulatory environment that promotes innovation and protects human health and the environment. Today, consensus is growing that sound science should prevail over fear and speculation

when it comes to designing effective, sensible health and environmental policies. At the same time, some governments continue to entertain proposals that are based on research that is inconsistent, unreliable and lacks the kind of scientific integrity needed to help policy makers make sound decisions.

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Through a united effort by governments, academia and industry, stakeholders have made considerable progress in ensuring the very best methods, tests and data continue to drive policy decisions. I believe that, by working together to improve chemical screening and testing,

the global community can develop and implement policies that are based on the best available science, and that give people more confidence in the safety of the chemicals, used to make everyday products.

Thanks to public-private partnerships, the development of new products that improve people's lives, initiatives such as Responsible Care and the Global Product Strategy – combined with our actions and expertise to continuously improve performance – global chemical manufacturers have made great strides in expanding sound chemicals management practices and have helped to improve social and economic conditions around the globe.

In my [outlook last January](#), I wrote that 2015 would be the year in which the global chemical industry raised the curtain on the role we can play in tackling the world's biggest challenges. Two values that are important to me are accountability and transparency; they guide the way my company, Celanese, does business, and they are two areas in which we members of the ICCA are stepping up our

performance. I believe it's important that I update readers on whether we followed through on our commitment last year.

I believe we did. And there was no better place to test our performance than on the global stage.

ICCA brought industry CEOs together with senior leaders from Unep, governments and civil society to highlight the relaunch of the Responsible Care Global Charter

First, at the fourth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4) in Geneva last October, we demonstrated how the global chemical industry fulfils its commitment to sustainable development and sound chemicals management. We brought industry CEOs together with senior leaders from the United Nations

Environment Programme (Unep), governments and civil society to highlight the relaunch of the Responsible Care Global Charter, signed by more than 90% of the top 100 chemical manufacturers in the world. We also signed a new partnership agreement with Unep to help strengthen chemicals management around the world, particularly in countries that don't have the capacity to do it alone.

Second, at the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, also known as COP-21, we highlighted the many ways in which chemical products enable greater carbon efficiency throughout the economy. For every unit of greenhouse gas (GHG) emitted in manufacturing chemicals, more than two units of GHG can be avoided when those chemicals are used in energy-saving products and technologies.

Yes, 2015 was a strong year for promoting chemistry solutions. While ICCA members are proud of the progress we've made in putting those solutions into practice, we are also acutely aware of the challenges that lie ahead. That doesn't mean we aren't optimistic, however, because we have good reason to be.

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