

Concept note on the theme for the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in May 2015

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. During their meetings held respectively on 14–15 May 2014, 22–23 May 2014, and 4–5 June 2014, the bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam conventions considered a proposal by the Secretariat on a possible theme for the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2015.
2. The three bureaux expressed their general support for this proposal, and the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention requested the Secretariat to prepare a concept note on the theme for the meetings of the conferences of the parties in May 2015 for the bureaux at their joint meeting in November 2014, taking into account the comments made by the bureaux at their respective meetings.

II. Implementation

3. In response to the request from the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention, the Secretariat developed a concept note on the theme for the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2015, taking into account the comments made by the three bureaux at their respective meetings.
4. The concept note on the theme for the meetings in 2015 is contained in the annex to the present note.

III. Proposed action

5. The bureaux may wish to take note of the concept note on the theme for the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in May 2015, as set out in the annex to the present note.

Annex

Concept note on the theme for the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in May 2015

I. Summary, background and modus operandi

1. Following initial discussions with the presidents of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the 2015 meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (2015 COPs) will be held under one common theme. The theme is a unifying “flag bearer” for the COPs with which delegates, participants and others can easily identify. It is a simple and core element of the communication plan for the 2015 meetings. It will focus attention on key messages and be present in all communications related to the meetings.

2. For all three conventions, scientific assessments underpin and inform the decisions made by the COPs. These assessments are undertaken through rigorous review of scientific data by experts in the technical and scientific bodies of the conventions such as the Stockholm Convention’s Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, the Rotterdam Convention’s Chemical Review Committee and the Basel Convention’s Open-ended Working Group. Furthermore, in recent decisions¹, the conferences of the parties have asked for increased cooperation and information exchange among the scientific subsidiary bodies to the three conventions. It is therefore proposed that the theme be:

‘from science to action, working for a safer tomorrow’

3. A number of sub-themes to the one main theme will be tailored in a flexible manner for the science fair² and specific side events taking place during the meetings of the COPs, including:

- (a) Chemicals in today’s world: benefits and risks;
- (b) Protecting human health and the environment;
- (c) The life-cycle approach and its link to sustainable development;
- (d) Sustainable chemicals management as part of the green economy;
- (e) The importance of science in decision making.

4. Taking into account comments/inputs made by the three bureaux at their meetings in May and June 2014, the Secretariat was tasked to finalize the theme by September 2014 before preparing the overall communication plan for the 2015 COPs (October-November 2014).

5. As a focal activity promoting engagement and awareness, including showcasing the work of the conventions and the importance of scientific considerations in decision-making processes, the science fair closely reflects the overall theme of the meetings. It should amplify the theme and deepen its deployment in the context of the fair.

6. Developed countries and other specific organizations have been approached to fund the visual identity, products and tools associated with the theme.

II. Next steps

7. Due diligence will be carried out on the proposed theme, to identify already established associations words and phrases have acquired in the media, or to uncover possible unintended meanings.

8. The Secretariat will use the theme as a central component and unifying concept when developing the 2015 COP communications plan during October-November 2014, including for the science fair, which will be staged in the margins of the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

¹ BC-10/29, BC.Ex-2/1, RC-5/12, RC.Ex-2/1, SC-5/27 and SC.Ex-2/1.

² See document 7 on the concept note on the science fair in the margins of the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in May 2015.