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**Basel Convention on the Control of
Transboundary Movements of Hazardous
Wastes and Their Disposal**

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**Rotterdam Convention on the Prior
Informed Consent Procedure for Certain
Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in
International Trade**



**Stockholm Convention on Persistent
Organic Pollutants**

**Conference of the Parties to the
Basel Convention on the Control
of Transboundary Movements
of Hazardous Wastes and
Their Disposal
Twelfth meeting
Geneva, 4–15 May 2015
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Programme of work and budget**

**Conference of the Parties to the
Rotterdam Convention on the
Prior Informed Consent Procedure
for Certain Hazardous Chemicals
and Pesticides in International
Trade
Seventh meeting
Geneva, 4–15 May 2015
Item 6 of the provisional agenda**
Programme of work and budget**

**Conference of the Parties to the
Stockholm Convention on
Persistent Organic Pollutants
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**Secretariat's approach for mainstreaming science in the
implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm
conventions**

Note by the Secretariat

As referred to in the note by the Secretariat on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (UNEP/CHW.12/23/Rev.1-UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.7/17/Rev.1-UNEP/POPS/COP.7/33/Rev.1), the annex to the present note sets out information on the Secretariat approach for mainstreaming science in the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, with a view to support parties in gaining increased understanding of the in-depth scientific considerations relating to decision-making under the three conventions, and considering a lifecycle approach for the sound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes. The present note, including its annex, has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/CHW.12/1.

** UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.7/1.

*** UNEP/POPS/COP.7/1.

Annex

Secretariat's approach for mainstreaming science in the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

I. Background

1. The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions' goals are to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous chemicals and wastes. Together, the three conventions achieve lifecycle approach to the sound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes. It is important that in their decision-making, parties to the conventions, working through their conferences, subsidiary bodies, expert groups and other international initiatives have a full understanding of the relevant scientific aspects when taking decisions on these chemical substances.
2. While core activities under the conventions are well grounded to ensure effective delivery of the key functions such as listing of chemicals and waste streams under the conventions toward achieving their respective objectives, there are other activities already in place to supplement the implementation of above functions with necessary scientific and technical knowledge. To mention few examples of the science-based decision making so far, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention has adopted 30 technical guidelines, framework documents and guidance related to environmentally sound management of various types of wastes. The Rotterdam Convention has amended Annex III to the Convention to list additional 8 chemicals based on the recommendations of the Chemical Review Committee. The Stockholm Convention has amended Annexes A, B and C to the Convention to list additional 11 chemicals based on the recommendations of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee.
3. The Basel Convention technical guidelines, framework documents and guidance related to environmentally sound management of various types of wastes provide parties with the necessary know-how for scientifically sound management of hazardous wastes.
4. A global monitoring programme for persistent organic pollutants has been implemented, providing comparable monitoring data on the presence of these chemicals and on changes of their concentrations over time from all United Nations regions.
5. Best available techniques and best environmental practices to minimize and ultimately eliminate releases of a number of persistent organic pollutants have been documented for the sources of release of these chemicals, and relevant technical guidance developed to support parties in implementing their obligations under the Stockholm Convention.
6. The clearing-house mechanism of the three conventions provides a platform for information exchange and knowledge management, including that of scientific nature. Information and comments provided by parties and observers during the scientific processes under the conventions (e.g. review of chemicals, development of technical guidelines) are posted on the website and used by the subsidiary bodies and expert groups, as well as by the wider public.
7. Collaboration with other entities that have scientific and technical expertise also supports science-based decision making of the three conventions. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) plays a key role in the DDT expert group of the Stockholm Convention and in the implementation of the human milk survey under the global monitoring plan for persistent organic pollutants, together with UNEP Chemicals Branch. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provides expertise in pesticide management, such as in the development of the Basel Convention's technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes containing pesticides and promoting alternatives to pesticides listed under the Rotterdam or Stockholm conventions. The United Nations University's initiative called Solving the E-waste Problem (STEP) provides expertise to the task group on measuring e-waste under the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communication Technology for Development, which was started by the Basel Convention Secretariat. Regional Centres of the Basel and Stockholm conventions are also contributing to key scientific work of the conventions. For example, RECETOX, the Regional Centre in Czech Republic supports monitoring activities in Central and Eastern Europe and in Africa, as well as contributed to the development of the POPs Global Monitoring Plan data warehouse. Such activities offer opportunities for further enhancing the integration of scientific considerations in decision making related to hazardous chemicals and waste and are contributing to increased awareness relevant to the scientific aspects under the conventions.

8. Exploring and engaging in new activities within the broader Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm convention mandate for proactive intervention to gain focused contributions towards mainstreaming science in the implementation of the conventions should provide further opportunities to support parties towards achieving their goals and the goals of the conventions to protect human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes. Such efforts shall be initiated to evolve, while generating the interest of parties on how they can further engage and integrate science in the implementation of the conventions at the regional and national levels with novel and untapped resources and opportunities.

9. It should also be noted that concerns related to gaps in access to scientific information and knowledge, lack of capacity in providing scientific inputs to the various processes under the convention, and need for scientific and technical advice in relation to the implementation of the conventions have been expressed frequently by parties and observers, in particular those from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

II. Objective and possible way forward

10. To provide scientific underpinning for decision and policy making and facilitate parties implementing sound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes, the Secretariat implements a number of activities to provide guidance and support to parties.

11. Ongoing and planned activities such as those mentioned in section I above to enhance the support parties receive to enable scientifically sound decision making, should be realistic, simple and achievable with clear and direct communication channels for both internal and external targets. There are many direct and indirect linkages that influence the scientific support for the implementation of the three conventions towards achieving their goal. The overall approach should be directed towards enhancing:

- (a) Scientific support to the conferences of the parties and the operations of the subsidiary bodies and expert groups;
- (b) Exchange of scientific and technical information with and between parties toward effective implementation of the conventions;
- (c) Collaboration with other agencies and stakeholders for the advancement of global chemicals and wastes agenda.

III. Activities

12. The activities related to the Secretariat’s approach include the following:

- (a) Provide scientific support to the conferences of the parties to the three conventions and their subsidiary bodies and expert groups in a coordinated manner;
- (b) Facilitate the exchange of scientific and technical information among parties and observers;
- (c) Promote the understanding of scientific and technical aspects of the three conventions;
- (d) Collaborate with and provide input to other agencies and stakeholders to ensure coherence with other chemicals and waste management regimes.

13. A number of tools to facilitate scientific support to the implementation of the three conventions have been developed, or are in preparation, as part of the clearing-house mechanism of the three conventions, including the following:

Activity	Outcome
Develop an online database / roster of experts involved in scientific processes under the conventions	Information on available expertise relevant to the implementation of the conventions is provided to parties and other stakeholders
Develop an online library / database of scientific and technical publications developed under the conventions	Scientific information relevant to the implementation of the conventions is accessible in a user-friendly manner

Activity	Outcome
Develop information resource and assessment tools to facilitate science-based decision-making	Parties are provided with scientific and technical resource tools for decision-making
Collect, compile and make available scientific information to support parties in their implementation of the conventions	Enhanced scientific base for decision- and policy-making relevant to the implementation of the conventions
Provide most recent information on scientific topics relevant to the conventions through the clearing-house mechanism	Up-to-date scientific information is made available in an easily digestible format
Provide inputs into the activities of other international organizations and stakeholders	Enhanced coordination and cooperation on scientific issues within the chemicals and wastes fraternity at the global level

14. In the long-term, exploring and engaging in new activities to foster increased, proactive intervention and provide added value contributions to mainstream science in the implementation of the conventions will provide further opportunities to support parties in the implementation of actions and measures to protect human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes. Contributions to the various related international processes will also serve in advancing the wider global chemicals and waste management agenda towards sustainable development.

15. Such efforts will be also be useful to further engage parties and other stakeholders in informed dialogue to trigger science-based action in the implementation of the conventions at the regional and national levels with novel and untapped resources and opportunities.