



BC
RC
SC

UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/3



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

Distr.: General
24 October 2007

English only



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



**Stockholm Convention on
Persistent Organic Pollutants**

**Ad hoc joint working group on enhancing cooperation and
coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

Second meeting

Vienna, 10–13 December 2007

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

**Consideration of the intersessional work undertaken by the
members of the ad hoc joint working group and by the
Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention**

Joint outreach and public awareness

Note by the secretariats

Attached is the thought starter on “Joint outreach and public awareness” prepared by the secretariats for consideration by the meeting. The document has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/1.

051107

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

Thought starter on Joint outreach and public awareness

Leads: the secretariats

Scope as stated by AHJWG 1: Paper on practical feasibility and resource implications

I. Background

1. Effective outreach and public awareness initiatives require implementation of activities at the national, regional and international levels. While the Secretariats of all three Conventions undertake considerable work in promoting outreach and public awareness of the Convention and its activities, Parties and others may also undertake similar such activities in respect of the national and regional levels.
2. It is noted that under Article 10 of the Stockholm Convention, a specific obligation is borne by Parties to promote and facilitate awareness amongst its policy and decision makers, and the general public, on persistent organic pollutants. This obligation also extends to the development and implementation of educational and public awareness programmes on POPs, public participation in addressing POPs, training, development and exchange of educational and public awareness materials, and developments and implementation of education and training programmes.
3. The outreach and public awareness activities of the Secretariats are funded from the regular budget of the Conventions. In some cases, financial contributions from other sources have been received to support special outreach activities, for example the Secretariat of the Basel Convention produced the publication *Vital Waste Graphics* on the basis of contribution received by the Secretariat, and from UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, and GRID-Arendal.

II. Scope for joint outreach activities

4. Thus far, the Secretariats of three Conventions have pursued separate outreach activities, noting the varying scope, subject matter, and specific national ministries associated with each Convention. Notwithstanding identified similarities between the three Conventions, there are a number of activities pursued by each Convention which may be specific to that Convention. For example, the environmentally sound management and disposal of non- POPs waste, ship dismantling, partnerships on e-waste are examples of Basel-focused activities.
5. The Secretariats have also pursued awareness raising activities with other partners, where areas of commonality exist. For example, the Rotterdam Convention has worked with the World Customs Organisation to promote awareness of the Convention, while the three Conventions all participate in the Green Customs Initiative aimed at raising awareness of customs officers on illegal trade in commodities of environmental concern. The Secretariat of the Basel Convention has been working with UNEP/GRID-Arendal, UNDP and INECE, among others, on specific public awareness issues.
6. Nevertheless, there are clearly issues in respect of which a common message can and should be expressed, as may be identified by the Conferences of the Parties to the three Conventions. This might include messages on the promotion of a life cycle approach, the principle of environmentally sound management, questions related to trade and the environment, working with customs authorities on illegal traffic, general chemicals management issues including legal infrastructure, and chemicals common to the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions in particular.
7. The current scope of public awareness and outreach activities carried out by the Secretariat might be considered as principally addressing two audiences, (i) Parties and non-Party States, whereby outreach activities are aimed at promoting an understanding of the Convention and their obligations, thus assisting implementation and facilitating participation in Convention meetings; and (ii) other stakeholders that play a direct role in the implementation of the Conventions, e.g. the chemical industry, customs officers, various user groups, etc. Further consideration is, however, needed, on how to inform the general public, media and bilateral donors to promote knowledge of the Conventions and their activities.
8. While the governments and non-governmental stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of the Conventions have been the primary focus of outreach by the three chemical related conventions, the general public, including users of chemicals, are the ultimate beneficiaries of the Conventions. Thus greater emphasis might be placed on promoting greater public awareness of the

Conventions in a coordinated manner. In addition, messages should also be targeted at other relevant sectors such as environment, industry, agriculture, health as well as to NGOs, donors, the media, educational institutions, other UN or international agencies and even at specific groups such as mothers, children, enforcement agents etc.

9. In order to maximize joint outreach exercises of the three Conventions, on issues common to the three Conventions, diversification of the varieties of formats and mechanisms utilized to deliver joint messages might be explored.

10. Efforts are already on-going to undertake joint outreach activities and partnerships on common issues in the short-term, and consultations are underway for the further development of longer-term activities and strategies, between the three Secretariats, and with other international, regional and national organizations on relevant topics and in different regions. Examples of on-going joint outreach activities pursued by the three Conventions, thus far, include:

(a) systematic organization of joint exhibition space for the three Conventions at each Convention meeting;

(b) production of a joint calendar of capacity building meetings, which are published on the Convention websites and printed in the Basel Convention's triennial bulletin;

(c) reciprocity of articles in newsletters, for example the Basel Bulletin has a special page in it for articles by the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and UNEP Chemicals also has space for Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions related information;

(d) mutual support in media relation activities of each Convention, for example the Basel Convention Information Officer organized the media relation activities (i.e. organization of press conferences, answers to journalists, writing of press releases) at the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention;

(e) production of joint information material, such as folders, leaflets and posters, which explains the three Conventions, highlighting the common aspects and differences between the three bodies, in a manner which is easily accessible by general public;

(f) links to websites.

11. In pursuing joint outreach activities, consideration should be given as to how to funding might be allocated by the three Conventions for such activities. For example, efforts might be made to undertake joint fundraising and resource mobilization for joint activities, or Conventions might agree to allocate a particular amount from the respective Trust Funds to be put towards joint activities. At present allocation of finances for joint activities between the three Conventions is carried out on the basis of funding received from a donor country, administered by UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions.

III. Joint dissemination at the national and regional levels

12. Joint outreach activities should also be pursued at the national and regional levels. In addition to efforts to be made by Parties and others, the Secretariat may look to develop simple information material which could easily be adapted at the regional, national, and even local level, at very limited costs for dissemination. This could include information material (printed and audio-visual), but also lists of suggested promotional activities from which the disseminators could pick and choose. In order for such joint activities to be effective, it must be supported through coordination and interaction between the various focal points dealing with the Conventions at the national level in identifying where joint activities might be appropriate and relevant to their national needs.

13. In addition, methods of regional dissemination of joint messages might be explored through using as appropriate, the Basel Convention Regional Centres, the Nominated Stockholm Convention Centres, as well as relevant UNEP and FAO regional offices as regional "translators" of outreach material, and organizers and hosts of regional outreach activities. Furthermore, consideration could be made as to how public awareness raising activities might be combined or linked to the efforts of other international organizations on themes of common interest and relevance, so as to benefit from their established activities, infrastructure and networks. For example outreach activities on chemicals and risk assessment methodologies might be pursued in cooperation with the WHO, while outreach to customs and enforcement officials might be carried in close collaboration with the WCO.