



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

Distr.: General
29 March 2008



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

English only



**Stockholm Convention on Persistent
Organic Pollutants**

**Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and
Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
Third meeting
Rome, 25–28 March 2008**

**Report of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing
Cooperation and Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and
Stockholm Conventions on the work of its third meeting**

Introduction

1. The Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions was established pursuant to decision SC-2/15 of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, decision RC-3/8 of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and decision VIII/8 of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. The mandate of the group was to prepare joint recommendations on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions for submission to the conferences of the Parties of all three conventions.
2. The above-mentioned decisions provided for each of the conferences to nominate 15 members – three representatives of Parties from each of the five United Nations regions – to participate in the Working Group.
3. The Working Group held its first meeting in Helsinki, Finland, from 26 to 28 March 2007. At that meeting the group agreed on a non-exhaustive list of objectives and guiding principles to be applied in its future work. It also agreed that activities to enhance cooperation and coordination fell into three broad categories: activities which were already under way; forward-looking activities to enhance further administrative and programmatic cooperation and coordination; and activities relating to decision-making and oversight.
4. The group was of the view that activities relating to decision-making and oversight might require more profound deliberations and decided to focus its work at its first and second meetings on forward-looking activities to enhance further administrative and programmatic cooperation and coordination. The group agreed on a list of national needs to be used to guide its work on those activities as well as a table setting out for each activity its final objective, the work that it would require and at what level, the person responsible for carrying it out and the time frame for its completion. It was

agreed that both the list and the table, which were set out in annexes II and III, respectively, to the report of the group's first meeting,¹ were subject to revision. As indicated in that annex III, a number of members of the Working Group had volunteered to act as lead countries (while others had volunteered to collaborate) for work on specific activities during the intersessional period and to present the results of that work in "thought starter" papers based on the proposed areas of cooperation for consideration by the Working Group at its second meeting. The secretariats of the three conventions were also tasked with preparing a number of such papers. The report of the Working Group's first meeting (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.1/4) is available on the Working Group's website (<http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch>).

5. At its second meeting, which took place in Vienna from 10 to 13 December 2007, the Working Group agreed to focus its work on the subjects discussed in the thought starter papers that had been prepared during the intersessional period, which it grouped under the following four themes: organizational issues in the field; technical substantive issues; information management and public awareness issues; and administrative issues.

6. The Working Group decided that its goal during the second meeting would be to agree on proposed elements and rationales for draft recommendations to be made to the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. It also decided that, in the period between its second and third meetings, the Working Group co-chairs would use those elements and rationales to prepare for the Working Group's consideration at its third meeting a document containing draft recommendations to the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions, taking into account any amendments to the elements and rationales and any comments made by members of the group during its consideration of them at the second meeting and any written comments submitted by members of the group and others by an agreed deadline after that meeting. The Working Group also agreed that at its third meeting it would consider a proposal prepared by the Governments of Switzerland and Nigeria on the subject of joint managerial functions for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, including a single head of the secretariats of all three conventions (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/INF/8), as well as information to be presented by Switzerland, on the basis of work under way by UNEP, on how coordinated administrative arrangements might liberate financial resources that could be used to implement the three conventions. The report of the Working Group's second meeting (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/18) is available on the Working Group's website (<http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch>).

I. Opening of the meeting

7. The third meeting of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions was held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome from 25 to 28 March 2008. The meeting was declared open at 10.10 a.m. on Tuesday, 25 March 2008 by Mr. Osvaldo Álvarez-Pérez (Chile), co-chair of the Working Group. Mr. Álvarez-Pérez welcomed the participants and noted with pleasure the presence of Ms. Angela Cropper, the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), who had been invited along with a number of her colleagues from UNEP to attend the meeting as resource persons, as well as new members of the Working Group.

8. Mr. Álvarez-Pérez and his two co-chairs, Ms. Kerstin Stendahl (Finland) and Mr. Yue Ruisheng (China), then made brief remarks on the past, present and future of the Working Group's endeavours. Mr. Álvarez-Pérez outlined the genesis of the Working Group and its mandate in the decisions of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, noting in particular that the group had been established in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical representation and that its members were representatives of their regions. He also summarized the work of the group leading up to the current meeting.

9. Ms. Stendahl recalled that the Working Group at its second meeting had mandated the co-chairs to prepare for the group's consideration at the current meeting draft recommendations to be made to the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. In responding to that mandate, she stressed, the co-chairs had prepared draft recommendations based on the elements and rationales agreed by the Working Group at its second meeting, as set out in annex I to the report of that meeting (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/18), and the comments that members of the group had

1 UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.1/4, annexes II and III.

submitted following the meeting. They had also striven to incorporate in them the objectives and principles that the Working Group had agreed to at its first meeting. In addition the co-chairs had drafted a new recommendation, not based on the elements and rationales agreed at the Working Group's second meeting, calling for an extraordinary meeting of the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions to be convened back-to-back with the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The co-chairs proposed that recommendation as one measure to address the need to implement joint decision making. That subject, along with the question of joint management functions, though it had been raised at previous meetings, had not yet been fully addressed by the Working Group. Both subjects would therefore have to be discussed at the current meeting and the Working Group's conclusions on them reflected as necessary in the draft recommendations. In summary she said that the task of the Working Group at the current meeting was to consider and agree on strong draft recommendations that had the potential to make a real difference in the effective implementation of the three conventions.

10. Mr. Yue addressed the question of what would happen to the recommendations adopted by the Working Group, expressing the hope that the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions might adopt them without major changes. While not perfect, he said, they represented a plausible, realistic approach to achieving synergies among the three conventions and were the product of much hard work by a broadly inclusive group representing all five United Nations regions. He also expressed the hope that the issue of cooperation and coordination could be incorporated in the agendas of the upcoming meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions. Noting, however, that only 45 members of the three conventions were members of the Working Group he suggested that it might be necessary to provide information from the co-chairs' perspective to the three conferences of the Parties on the work of the group and the recommendations it would put forth. To that end the co-chairs proposed to prepare a co-chairs' summary that would explain the Working Group's mandate and work and introduce the draft recommendations. He expressed the hope that the members of the Working Group would act as ambassadors for the group and would advocate adoption of the draft recommendations at the meetings of the conferences of the Parties at which they would be considered. In closing he explained the rationale for the co-chairs' proposal to recommend an extraordinary meeting of the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions, which he said was intended to raise the awareness of ministers on the importance of synergies, to provide a forum for ministers to give guidance on cooperation and coordination and support for its implementation, and to make a beginning toward embedding the issue of synergies in the larger discussion on international environmental governance, of which it was an important element.

11. Following the introduction by the three co-chairs Ms. Angela Cropper, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, addressed the Working Group and Mr. Peter Kenmore, Chief of the Plant Protection Service of FAO and Co-Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, made welcoming remarks on behalf of the Executive Secretaries of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

12. She said that interest in synergies among multilateral environmental agreements was long standing, as evidenced by many decisions that had been taken over time by governance bodies throughout the United Nations system, including the Governing Council of UNEP, most recently at its tenth special session in February 2008. An historic opportunity therefore existed for the Working Group at the current meeting to give concrete expression to the aspirations expressed by Governments through those decisions. She highlighted the longstanding UNEP connections to chemicals issues. In addition to its executive role with regard to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, UNEP was heavily engaged substantively in the field of chemicals and wastes, giving it a programmatic connection with the work envisaged under the conventions. The UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2010–2013, recently approved by the Governing Council, identified harmful substances and hazardous wastes as one of its six priority areas and focused in particular on delivery of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. She expressed approval of the attention given in the Working Group's recommendations to synergistic implementation of the three conventions at the national level, where it would have the most impact.

13. She said that the recommendations that had been specifically addressed to UNEP and other United Nations entities, including FAO, would contribute to current attempts to achieve greater coherence within the United Nations system through, for example, the work of the Environment Management Group. The Executive Director of UNEP, once so requested by the respective conferences of the Parties, stood ready to respond positively to specific recommendations of the Working Group and to secure the additional financial resources that might be required to do so. The Executive Director was

also prepared to place before the Governing Council for its consideration at its twenty-fifth session, in February 2009, the Working Group's proposal that an extraordinary joint meeting of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions be held back-to-back with the eleventh special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. In conclusion, she said that the members of the Working Group had the opportunity to represent not only the three conventions but also their countries and regions and to raise the standard for arrangements through which the world might respond to the risks to human well-being arising from chemicals and hazardous wastes.

14. Mr. Kenmore, who spoke on behalf of Mr. Donald Cooper, Co-Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention and Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention, and Ms. Katherine Kummer Peiry, Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention, welcomed the members of the Working Group on behalf of FAO and the three convention secretariats. He then outlined the efforts of the Working Group to date, recalling its mandate and the principles, overall objectives and elements and rationales for draft recommendations that it had agreed at its first two meetings. He said that the Joint Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention was an example of existing cooperation and noted that the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions were increasingly cooperating on technical assistance activities. Finally, he said that closer cooperation with the Basel Convention had begun and would be enhanced as a result of the current meeting. He closed by reiterating the readiness of the three Executive Secretaries to assist in the successful outcome of the meeting.

II. Organizational matters

A. Adoption of the agenda

15. The joint Working Group adopted the agenda set out below, on the basis of the provisional agenda which had been circulated as document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/1:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (b) Organization of work.
3. 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 conventions.
4. Preparation of joint recommendations on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.
5. Process for submission of the joint recommendations to the Conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report.
8. Closure of the meeting.

B. Organization of work

16. The Working Group agreed to conduct its work in accordance with a proposal laid out in a scenario note prepared by the co-chairs (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/1). In accordance with that proposal the Working Group agreed to conduct its work in plenary and to establish drafting groups, as appropriate, to work on the draft recommendations prepared by the co-chairs.

17. In carrying out its work the Working Group had before it working and information documents pertaining to the items on the meeting agenda. Those documents had been made available on the website of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group (<http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch>).

C. Attendance

18. Representatives of the following Parties to the Basel Convention participated in the meeting: Australia, Bhutan, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Egypt, France, Kenya, Norway, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Slovakia.
19. Representatives of the following Parties to the Rotterdam Convention participated in the meeting: Armenia, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Finland, Japan, Jordan, Mexico, Mauritania, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay.
20. Representatives of the following Parties to the Stockholm Convention participated in the meeting: Austria, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, Germany, India, Nigeria, Romania, Sri Lanka, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
21. The representative of Barbados, who had been nominated by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to participate in the meeting, and the representatives of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Morocco and the Republic of Moldova, who had been nominated by the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention, were unable to attend. The Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention had not nominated a third member from Eastern Europe.
22. A complete list of the members participating in the meeting is provided in document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/11.

III. 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 Conventions

23. The representative of the secretariats recalled that at the Working Group's second meeting members of the group had made a number of requests for additional information. Most of the requested information was available to the Working Group in the form of information documents. While the secretariats had requested information from the secretariat of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol on experience with national ozone units, however, the Fund secretariat had not responded; there was therefore no information document on that issue. He then briefly outlined the contents of the information documents. Document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/3 contained extensive information provided by the secretariat of the Montreal Protocol on its experience with its compliance regime. Document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/4 contained information provided by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on its experience in organizing back-to-back meetings. Document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/5 contained, in annex I, a clarification from the Basel Convention Secretariat on its financial management staff needs and, in annex II, information provided by the UNEP Corporate Services Section regarding the possibility of UNEP providing the three conventions with audit services. Document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/7 contained a list of references to relevant material on resource mobilization prepared under the auspices of the three conventions, the Global Environment Facility and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.
24. The co-chair noted that some of the information contained in the documents had already been reflected in the draft recommendations and that no further information had been requested on some issues such as information management and public awareness.
25. Also under this item the member from Switzerland introduced document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/INF.8, on joint managerial functions, including a proposal for a joint head of the three conventions, which had been prepared by Nigeria and Switzerland for the second meeting of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group but had not been fully discussed at that meeting. The document had been developed examining solely the structure of the UNEP-administered secretariats, and not FAO, and provided examples of structures where joint heads existed for different conventions or entities.
26. The member from Switzerland then introduced document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF.8, which was based on a supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements prepared by UNEP (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.3/20) and contained information on coordinated administrative arrangements that indicated possible savings of between

\$300,000 and \$765,000 a year. Circumstances had changed since the study had been prepared, which might affect its conclusions, but he felt that the overall conclusion that such savings were possible was still sound.

27. Following the introduction of the information documents some members voiced provisional support for the idea of a joint head of the three conventions within UNEP, suggesting that perhaps in future it might be extended to include FAO. They expressed caution, too, however, saying that that such a measure should not result in any increase in the costs of the conventions. Others suggested that for the short term the Working Group should consider relatively modest measures on the joint administration of the conventions, saying that more ambitious proposals might be considered later in the light of experience. One member said that the three conventions had substantially different objectives, in the light of which a single head of the three would offer little advantage.

28. Several members said that while it would be beneficial to achieve financial savings as a result of coordinated administrative arrangements, the primary purpose of having a joint head was not to save money but to increase the visibility of the chemicals and hazardous waste cluster. It was stressed that the goal of synergies was not cost cutting but enhancing the implementation of the conventions. Several members noted the importance of joint services, including financial management, legal services, information technology, public awareness and others, stating that it was at the heart of enhanced cooperation.

29. Reiterating the view that “form follows function”, several members said that it was necessary to first determine what services should be combined before deciding on an appropriate management structure. One member said that in considering joint management functions it was important to make use of existing personnel and to work with the three secretariats, which, he said, had already done an excellent job. Another member noted that enhanced cooperation was important to developing countries, as their resources were limited; he stressed, however, that it was important to avoid reinventing the wheel and abandoning existing structures that had never been adequately funded. Some members requested that the Working Group be provided with updates of the figures contained in the supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements.

30. In response to a request from the floor, the representative of the secretariats clarified the process for appointing staff members to the secretariats of the conventions and the options for the duration of related contractual agreements. He added that the financial figures in the supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements were based on 2006 data and that while some costs had increased, savings had also already been made through joint operations between the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions with regard to legal services, information technology, financial management and other matters. Implementation of the measures outlined in the supplementary analysis would therefore not likely result in savings of the magnitude suggested in the analysis.

31. Following the discussion the co-chair noted that the comments made would be taken into account by the group in considering the co-chairs’ draft recommendations under agenda item 4.

IV. Preparation of joint recommendations on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

32. In considering the item the Working Group had before it the draft recommendations to the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions prepared by the co-chairs of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/2), a compilation of comments received on the draft recommendations (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/9) and a compilation of comments on the elements and rationales for the draft recommendations set out in annex I of the report of the Working Group’s second meeting (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/INF/2).

33. The Working Group commenced its consideration of the draft recommendations with a brief introduction of the recommendations by the co-chair. He noted that the recommendations were arranged in accordance with the four themes that the Working Group had used to structure its work at its second meeting and he asked the group members to consider in particular whether a fifth theme should be added to encompass recommendations in the area of joint decision-making. He also asked them to address in their comments the question of whether the draft recommendations provided a sound basis for negotiations at the current meeting.

34. Following the introduction by the co-chair the members of the group made general comments on the draft recommendations. The work of the co-chairs in formulating the draft recommendations was widely praised by the members of the group and it was agreed that they provided an excellent basis for further negotiation and development of the final recommendations that would be submitted to the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. The Working Group then went through the draft recommendations section by section, with members making a number of more specific suggestions for improving them, including by adding recommendations on matters that they felt were not adequately reflected.

35. Following the discussion of the specific suggestions on the draft recommendations the Working Group agreed to establish two drafting groups to further refine the draft recommendations taking into account the comments made. The first drafting group was to be co-chaired by Mr. Reiner Arndt (Germany) and Mr. Mr. Adel Shafei Osman (Egypt) and was to take up themes I (Organizational issues in the field) and II (Technical substantive issues) in document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/2. The second group was to be co-chaired by Ms. Jacqueline Alvarez (Uruguay) and Mr. Lee Eeles (Australia) and would take up themes III (Information management and public awareness issues) and IV (Administrative issues). The second group would also consider the question of whether a fifth theme on joint decision making should be added to the recommendations.

36. Following its deliberations in plenary and in the drafting groups the Working Group adopted its final recommendation, which it agreed should take the form of a single recommendation with multiple paragraphs that would be embedded in a draft decision to be adopted by each of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. The recommendation and the draft decisions are set out in annexes I and II to the present report, respectively.

37. During the Working Group's consideration of the recommendations, several members of the group expressed concern that information sufficient to enable the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to make informed decisions on joint management and the establishment of joint services among the three conventions, as contemplated in the recommendation adopted by the Working Group, was not currently available. The Working Group accordingly requested the secretariats of the three conventions and the Executive Director of UNEP, in consultation with the Director General of FAO, to provide information on the costs and organizational implications of such activities and services. The Working Group requested that the information be provided in accordance with the schedule set out in annex III to the present report, which calls for certain information to be provided in time for the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to consider it at its ninth meeting, in June 2008.

38. Also during the Working Group's discussion, several members of the group stated that their support for the recommendation that coordinated extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions be held in conjunction with the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, as provided in paragraph 44 of the recommendation adopted by the Working Group, was premised on the understanding that such meetings would have no effect on the core budgets of the conventions and would be paid for out of extrabudgetary funds.

39. The Working Group also discussed the level of detail that it wished to provide for the agendas of the coordinated extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the Parties. The group agreed on the agenda items as they appear in paragraphs 44 and 45 of the recommendation. In order to provide additional guidance to the secretariats in their preparations for those meetings, however, the group agreed to provide them with a fuller and more explanatory informal version of the agenda. That version is set out in annex IV to the present report.

40. During the same discussion one member said that there was no precedent for the holding of joint meetings of the governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements and that he did not want the recommendations adopted by the Working Group to lead to such a precedent. Another member pointed out that such a precedent did exist, citing a number of examples, including joint meetings of the OSPAR Commission and the Helsinki Commission. At the request of the co-chair, the UNEP Senior Legal Officer attending the meeting as a resource person explained that there was no legal impediment to the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions holding three meetings at the same time and location.

V. Process for submission of the joint recommendations to the Conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

41. Under item 5 of the agenda a representative of the secretariats reported briefly on the steps that they proposed be taken to submit the final recommendation adopted by the Working Group to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention.

42. She explained that the recommendation adopted by the Working Group and the draft decisions by which the three conferences of the Parties might adopt the recommendation would be presented, in the six official languages of the United Nations, to the conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention as pre-session documents for its ninth meeting, which would take place in Bali, Indonesia, from 23 to 27 June 2008. In addition, the information to be provided as described in chapter IV and annex III of the present report would be submitted to the conference, in English only, in the form of information documents. All the documents would be presented as documents emanating from the Working Group. The same process would be repeated for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention, which would take place from 27 to 31 October 2008, and the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, which would take place from 4 to 8 May 2009.

43. The Working Group adopted the proposal.

VI. Other matters

44. The Working Group considered no other matters.

VII. Adoption of the report

45. The Ad hoc Joint Working Group adopted the present report on the basis of the draft circulated, on the understanding that the co-chairs, working in consultation with the secretariats, would be entrusted with its finalization.

VIII. Closure of the meeting

46. The meeting was declared closed by the co-chair at 8.00 p.m. on Friday, 28 March 2008.

Annex I

Recommendation of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

In accordance with decision SC-2/15 of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, decision RC-3/8 of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and decision VIII/8 of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions submits to the Conference of the Parties to each of the three conventions the following joint recommendation on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions at the administrative and programmatic levels.

The Ad hoc Joint Working Group recommends the following for adoption by the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions:

I. Organizational issues in the field

A. Coordination at the national level

(a) *Invites* Parties to establish or strengthen, as necessary, national processes or mechanisms for coordinating:

- (i) Activities to implement the Basel, Rotterdam and the Stockholm Conventions, in particular activities of the focal points and designated national authorities for the three conventions, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and other relevant policy frameworks, as appropriate;
- (ii) Preparation for convention meetings;

(b) *Invites* Parties to provide, through the joint information service referred to in subparagraph bb below, models of such coordination mechanisms as well as examples of good coordination practices from countries;

(c) *Recommends* that Parties, when implementing the three conventions, including through capacity-building and technical assistance, ensure close cooperation and coordination among relevant sectors, ministries or programmes at the national level with respect to, among other things, the following:

- (i) Protection of human health and the environment from the harmful impacts or adverse effects of hazardous chemicals and wastes;
- (ii) Prevention of accidents and emergency response in case of accidents;
- (iii) Combating illegal traffic and trade in hazardous chemicals and wastes;
- (iv) Information generation and access;
- (v) Technology transfer and transfer of know-how;
- (vi) Preparation of national positions for meetings of the Conferences of the Parties and other bodies of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions;
- (vii) Development cooperation;

(d) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, in cooperation with relevant intergovernmental bodies such as the member organizations of the Intergovernmental Organization for the Sound Management of Chemicals and regional centres, to collaborate on the dissemination of good practices and, if necessary, the elaboration of guidance and training in the areas referred to in the preceding subparagraph;

(e) *Invites* United Nations Environment Programme/United Nations Industrial Development Organization cleaner production centres to contribute to the national implementation of the three conventions;

B. Programmatic cooperation in the field

(f) *Invites* Parties to promote cooperative activities at the national and regional levels as far as possible;

(g) *Invites* the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, working together with other bodies of the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, multilateral environmental agreements, and other international bodies, to develop programmatic cooperation in the field that would support implementation of the three conventions in areas of common concern such as sustainable development, trade, customs (for example through the Green Customs Initiative), transport, public health, labour, environment, agriculture and industry;

(h) *Invites* the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization to include such cooperation in their biennial work programmes;

(i) *Recommends* that Parties incorporate in their national development plans and strategies measures to implement the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions in order to ensure coherence in their national priority setting and to facilitate the provision of aid by donors in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and in response to country and regional demand;

(j) *Requests* the secretariats of the three conventions, in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, and taking into account the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, to initiate joint collaboration to promote the effective implementation of the decisions of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and their work programmes in the area of technology transfer and capacity-building;

(k) *Encourages* Parties to strengthen capacity-building and technical support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for coordinated national implementation;

(l) *Encourages* Parties to promote coordination between bilateral and multilateral donors to ensure consistent and non-duplicative assistance to Parties in their implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions;

(m) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to promote programmatic cooperation on cross-cutting issues, including in the area of technology transfer and capacity-building, in the development of their respective work programmes and to report thereon to the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions;

C. Coordinated use of regional offices and centres

(n) *Acknowledges* the role of the regional centres of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions in supporting Parties;

(o) *Invites* Parties and other stakeholders to promote the full and coordinated use of regional centres to strengthen the regional delivery of technical assistance under all three conventions and to promote coherent chemicals and waste management, bearing in mind the existing and ongoing work of other multilateral environmental agreements and institutions. This work should promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their lifecycles and of hazardous wastes for sustainable development as well as for the protection of human health and the environment;

(p) *Recommends* that a limited number of regional “focal centres”, with the responsibility to facilitate coordinated activities in the regions covering both chemicals and waste management, be selected from among the existing regional centres of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. These focal

centres will be designated following regional agreement and in accordance with the relevant procedural provisions of the respective conventions. These focal centres should:

- (i) Ensure that the regional centres deliver their work in accordance with defined priorities and serve as an entry point for countries needing assistance or guidance on which centre in a region could provide assistance for a specific purpose;
 - (ii) Strengthen regional centres to enable them to exercise a more synergistic approach as delivery mechanisms under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions;
 - (iii) Play a special role in providing an overview of their activities and results to the conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions as examples of lessons learned on enhanced practical implementation of the conventions;
- (q) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to initiate pilot projects on the coordinated use of regional centres, such projects to be undertaken by the regional centres and build on lessons learned;
- (r) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the regional centres to exchange information about their capacities and work programmes;
- (s) *Invites* the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, other relevant international financial institutions and instruments, the regional centre host countries and others from the donor community to provide financial support necessary for the regional centres to carry out projects aimed at cooperation and coordination in support of implementation of the three conventions;

II. Technical issues

A. National reporting

- (t) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions to prepare, for consideration by their respective Conferences of the Parties, proposals:
- (i) To synchronize the submission of Party reports under the two conventions in those years when the Parties to both conventions are to submit such reports;
 - (ii) To develop joint capacity-building activities to assist Parties in coordinated data and information collection and management at the national level, including quality control, to enable them to fulfil their reporting obligations;
 - (iii) To streamline their respective reporting formats and processes with a view to alleviating the burden of reporting, taking into account relevant activities by other bodies, including the United Nations Environment Programme;

B. Compliance/Non-compliance mechanisms

- (u) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, once compliance/non-compliance mechanisms are established under all three conventions, to prepare proposals for consideration by the Conferences of the Parties to the three conventions exploring the possibilities for enhancing coordination among the agreed mechanisms to facilitate compliance by, for example, provision of joint secretariat support for the committees, the attendance of the chairs of the three committees at each others' meetings or encouraging the appointment of members to the committees who have experience with other compliance mechanisms;
- (v) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to exchange information on progress made on the operation or establishment of the compliance/non-compliance mechanisms established or under negotiation under the three conventions;

C. Cooperation on technical and scientific issues

(w) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to facilitate the exchange of relevant information between the technical and scientific bodies of the three conventions through the sharing of information with one another, with the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals Management and with other relevant intergovernmental bodies concerning the procedures developed and the chemicals being discussed under the three conventions;

(x) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to maintain or establish cooperation on technical issues that relate to more than one of the three conventions, involving other bodies and institutions beyond the three conventions as appropriate;

III. Information management and public awareness issues

A. Joint outreach and public awareness

(y) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to develop a common approach to awareness-raising and outreach activities among the three conventions;

(z) *Also requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to make full use of and build on existing information and outreach mechanisms and tools;

B. Information exchange/clearing-house mechanism on health and environmental impacts

(aa) *Invites* Parties to consider establishing common websites and documentation centres at the national and, where appropriate, regional levels, containing available information on human health and environmental impacts relevant to the three conventions;

(bb) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to develop systems of information exchange on health and environmental impacts, including a clearing-house mechanism, with the aim of these systems serving all three conventions;

C. Joint input into other processes

(cc) *Requests* the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, whenever feasible, to act jointly in participating in other related processes and in providing information to other related bodies, organizations, institutions and processes;

IV. Administrative issues

(dd) *Recommends* that possible cost savings gained through these more efficient administrative arrangements be used to support implementation of the three conventions;

A. Joint managerial functions

(ee) *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, to establish joint management involving the Executive Secretaries of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions for joint services and joint activities through, for example, a system of rotating management or the assignment of individual joint services to a particular convention;

(ff) *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, to explore and assess the feasibility and cost implications of establishing joint coordination or a joint head of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions for consideration at the extraordinary meetings of the Conferences of the Parties referred to in subparagraph rr below;

B. Resource mobilization

(gg) *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, in providing the secretariat functions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, to establish, on an interim basis, through the Executive Secretaries of the three conventions, a joint resource mobilization service within the secretariats in Geneva. The service should support the implementation of the three conventions beyond that achievable through separate action by:

- (i) Strengthening mobilization of resources through the development of a joint resource mobilization strategy for the short, medium and long term;
- (ii) Avoiding competitive and uncoordinated resource demands to donors;
- (iii) Prioritizing coordinated efforts to explore new, innovative and adequate sources of funding, including for national implementation;
- (iv) Promoting resource mobilization for a life-cycle approach to chemicals and waste management;
- (v) Mobilizing financial resources and technical assistance for programmes delivered through regional centres;
- (vi) Developing joint strategy options on what countries can do at the national level to generate funds and better to gain access to international and bilateral financing;
- (vii) Facilitating the exchange of experiences in mobilizing resources for national implementation;
- (viii) Building on available methodologies, guidance and case studies that have been developed by other institutions;

(hh) *Decides* that the final decision regarding the above-named joint service shall be taken at the extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the Parties;

(ii) *Encourages* representatives of Parties to support the delivery of coherent and coordinated messages from the conferences of the Parties of each convention to the Global Environment Facility and other relevant international financial institutions/ instruments on funding for the sound management of chemicals and wastes for the implementation of the conventions;

C. Financial management and audit functions

(jj) *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, in providing the secretariat functions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, to establish, on an interim basis, through the Executive Secretaries of the three conventions, a joint financial and administrative support service, within the secretariats in Geneva, taking into account relevant support services provided by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization;

(kk) *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, in providing the secretariat functions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, to prepare a proposal for joint audits of the accounts of the secretariats of the three conventions;

D. Joint services

(ll) *Welcomes* the support provided by both the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization to the work of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and encourages the continuation of such support;

(mm) *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, in providing the secretariat functions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, in addition to the joint

