



BASEL CONVENTION

the world environmental agreement on wastes

BASEL CONVENTION *bulletin*

APRIL 2007

Editorial-Basel Convention Bulletin

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this issue of the Basel Convention Bulletin. As this is my last editorial before leaving the Secretariat at the end of April, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your continued support to the Basel Convention. It has been a privilege to serve the Convention as Executive Secretary since 2002. My time with the Convention has been challenging and stimulating, and I wish the Convention, its new Executive Secretary, the Secretariat staff and all stakeholders every success in the future.



Photo UNEP

The Basel Convention has been growing steadily and counts 169 Parties at the time of writing. As the broadest and most significant treaty on hazardous wastes in effect, it has evolved with its time, addressing new and important waste streams, such as electrical and electronic waste (e-waste), it explored new avenues for cooperation and capacity building with the private sector and it developed a unique network of regional centres which facilitate implementation, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to name just a few of its achievements.

The Convention is best known for its successful regulatory framework for the transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes globally. It is sometimes less well known for its second pillar, the promotion of the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes. To this end, Parties are expected to minimize the quantities of wastes that are moved across borders, to treat and dispose of wastes as close as possible to their place of generation and to prevent or minimize the generation of wastes at source. Much is being done to promote this aspect of the Convention and many tools such as Technical Guidelines, capacity building projects and knowledge transfer are in place. It is of paramount importance to stress this aspect of the Convention so as to create the best possible set of tools to tackle the management of hazardous wastes worldwide, based on the life-cycle approach.

The objectives of coordination and cooperation are the strengthening of the three conventions; coherent policy guidance; and, maximising the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels. Taking these objectives into account, the Group developed ten principles to guide its work. These include such items as: promoting the implementation and enforcement of the three conventions; respecting the legal autonomy of each convention; ensuring that form follows function; responding to the specific needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition; and promoting programmatic coordination and cooperation.

Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation and Coordination between the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions

A trio of complementary decisions adopted by the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions have established a framework for consideration of how to enhance cooperation and coordination between these three Conventions.

The three decisions establish an Ad hoc Joint Working Group, comprising fifteen representatives of Parties for each Convention, drawn in equal numbers from each of the five UN regional groups. The Group is tasked with developing joint recommendations to be presented to the Conferences of the Parties of the three Conventions, which should identify ways to enhance cooperation and coordination at the administrative and programmatic levels. In its deliberations, the Group may take account of the programmes of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, as well as developments in the wider UN reform process. The Group may make proposals that address enhanced coordination at the national, regional and international levels. The three secretariats are jointly providing support to the Group.

The Ad hoc Joint Working Group held its first meeting in Helsinki, Finland, on 26-28 March 2007, co-chaired by Chile, China and Finland. It developed guiding principles for its work, identified the national needs to be addressed in promoting cooperation and coordination, and identified the areas of cooperation and coordination that could be promoted. The Working Group concluded that

The principles will be applied in determining the proposed areas for increased coordination and cooperation that will be included in the joint recommendations that the Group will be forwarding to the conferences of the Parties.

The Working Group also identified the national needs that promoting cooperation and coordination should address. Such needs would further guide the Group in determining the proposed areas for increased coordination and cooperation that will be included in the joint recommendations. The needs identified include institutional and capacity needs, public awareness and information collection and exchange, as well as the mobilization of financial resources. With regard to specific areas of coordination and cooperation, the Group identified three main clusters:

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One World, Don't Waste It

First, areas of on-going cooperation and coordination among the secretariats. These areas, such as joint development of documentation, and joint project activities in the field, were welcomed, and the secretariats were encouraged to continue their efforts. These areas were not identified in detail at its first meeting.

Second, the Working Group identified areas where new or further coordination and cooperation should be explored. The Group spent a considerable amount of time discussing this cluster and identified areas including, but not limited to, joint outreach and public awareness-raising; coordinated use of regional offices; programmatic cooperation in the field; national reporting; information-sharing amongst bodies of each Convention; and shared legal and financial service arrangements. In respect of each area, the Working Group identified further information or analyses that would be required before it could fully deliberate on the proposal; and members of the Group, or the secretariats, were delegated to prepare documents before the next meeting of the group.

The third cluster related to formal oversight and management. The Group

agreed that this final cluster should be addressed at a later stage of its deliberations, as it should be informed by the discussions on the programmatic areas for cooperation identified in the second cluster.

Having identified these areas, the Group decided that it would hold a second meeting, possibly in December of this year. At that meeting, taking into account the documents prepared during the inter-sessional period, the Group will conduct substantive deliberations on each of the areas identified.

Extra-budgetary funding will be sought to cover the costs (participation and conference services) the next meeting as for the March meeting.

Further information and the full report of the meeting may be found on the Working Group's website: <http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch>

For more information, please contact:
Ms. Donata Rugarabamu, Senior Legal Officer, SBC,
Tel: +41 22 917 82 19, Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: Donata.Rugarabamu@unep.ch



Photo UNEP

Though we have been busy since then, our last major event was the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP8), which took place in Nairobi from 27th November to the 1st of December last year. The theme was “Creating innovative solutions through the Basel Convention for the environmentally sound management of electronic wastes”. In this context, electronic wastes include, in particular, end-of-life computers, including printers and accessories and television sets. As part of the high-level segment of COP8, a world forum on e-waste was convened, with the participation of eminent persons, which discussed matters relating to the theme. The panel discussion helped shape the Nairobi Declaration on the Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Waste, a global strategy adopted to address e-wastes, set in the broader context of end-of-life equipment, environmentally sound management and the Millennium Development Goals. The Declaration and related Decision (decision VIII/2 on the environmentally sound management of electrical and electronic waste) establish the Basel Convention as the main global instrument for guiding the environmentally sound management of hazardous e-waste and paves the way for the development of technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of e-wastes.

Many other key issues of immediate concern were discussed at the COP, such as the status of the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund to implement the Strategic Plan and sustainable and predictable voluntary financial mechanisms mentioned in Article 14 of the Convention, the adoption of the budget for the programme of work for 2007–2008, and the Basel Convention Partnership Programme. The role and activities of Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres (BCRCs) in the implementation of the Convention and related agreements and in the environmentally sound management of priority waste streams were also on the agenda. Further, issues of synergies within the chemicals and waste clusters of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, ships destined for dismantling or recycling,

including the cooperation and review of the on-going work in the International Maritime Organization to develop a new international convention to regulate ship recycling were discussed (please see related articles).

Finally, the COP also reviewed and adopted amendments to the general technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants (POPs), the guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polychlorinated terphenyls (PCTs) or polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs). The COP also adopted the technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of (i) wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with the pesticides aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, hexachlorobenzene (HCB), mirex or toxaphene or with HCB as an industrial chemical, (ii) wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with 1,1,1-trichloro-2,2-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)ethane (DDT), and (iii) wastes containing or contaminated with unintentionally produced polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (PCDDs), polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDFs), hexachlorobenzene (HCB) or polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) (“unintentionally produced POPs”). For the detailed report of COP8, please go to www.basel.int.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Basel Convention Bulletin and wish to renew my very best wishes to all.

Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto
Executive Secretary
Basel Convention

For the full report of COP8, please consult www.basel.int
For daily and an overall summary of COP8, please go to:
<http://www.iisd.ca/basel/cop8/>



Launch of Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central America and Mexico

A Basel Convention Regional Centre (BCRC) was officially launched on 9 February 2007 in El Salvador following the signing of a Framework Agreement between the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the Government of El Salvador.

The core functions of the Regional Centre are to develop training programmes in the field of the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes and to work on the transfer of environmentally sound technology and the minimization of the generation of hazardous wastes. The Centre is housed by the Central-American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD) and serves the following countries; Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama.

Present at the signing were Ms Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention Secretariat and The Hon Michelle Gallardo de Gutiérrez, Vice-Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of El Salvador. Ms. Kuwabara-Yamamoto underlined that “capacity building is essential for the implementation of the Basel Convention” and added that the Centres play an important role in the management of hazardous waste in an environmentally sound manner.

For more information, please contact
Mr. Nelson Sabogal, Senior Programme Officer,
Tel: +41 22 917 82 18,
Fax: + 41 22 979 34 54,
Email: Nelson.Sabogal@unep.ch



Photo UNEP

Opening of Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the African Region

A Basel Convention Coordinating Centre (BCCC) was officially launched on 7 March 2007 in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Basel Convention Coordinating Centre was created by a Framework Agreement signed between the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Basel Convention Coordinating Centre will coordinate the Basel Convention Regional Centres based in Egypt, Senegal and South Africa and work in the field of training and technology transfer regarding the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes as well as the minimization of the generation of hazardous wastes.

Special emphasis is also placed on information exchange and on executing programmes of regional scope in the field of hazardous and other wastes with Parties to the Convention of the region and the Secretariat of the Basel Convention.

Further, the BCCC will contribute to the promotion of a lifecycle approach to the management of hazardous materials through the coordinated implementation of the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.

Present at the signing were Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention Secretariat and Mr. Frank Isoh, Minister and Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Geneva.

The decision to set up the Coordination Centre was taken at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention in December 2002.

For more information, please contact
Mr. Nelson Sabogal, Senior Programme Officer,
Tel: +41 22 917 82 18,
Fax: + 41 22 979 34 54,
Email: Nelson.Sabogal@unep.ch



Photo SBC

Update on Basel Convention Compliance Committee

By its decision VIII/31, the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP8) elected ten new members to its Compliance Committee. The new members are Ms. Farah Bougartacha (Morocco) and Mr. Larsey Mensah (Ghana) from the African region; Mr. Chung Suh-Yong (Republic of Korea) and Mr. Rasio Ridho Sani (Indonesia) from the Asian region; Ms. Magda Gosk (Poland) and Ms. Gordana Petkovic (Serbia) from the Central and Eastern European region; Ms. Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica) and Mr. Osvaldo Alvarez (Chile) from the Latin American and Caribbean region; and Mr. Damien Hall (Australia) and Mr. Martin Widstam (Sweden) from the Western European and other Countries.

These members will join Mr. Avignon Muusya Mwinzi (Kenya), Mr. Abdul Hamid (Pakistan), Ms. Ilze Donina (Latvia), Ms. Yocasta Valenzuela (Dominican Republic) and Mr. Jurg Bally (Switzerland) who were elected at COP7, and will serve for a period of two terms.

COP8 also adopted the Committee's work programme for the 2007-2008 biennium. To this end, the Committee will build on the work already carried out during the previous biennium, and will undertake tasks related to national reporting and illegal traffic. Biographies of the Compliance Committee members and more information on the Committee's prior and present work programme can be found at:

<http://www.basel.int/legalmatters/compcommittee/index.html>

For more information, please contact:
Ms. Donata Rugabamu, Senior Legal Officer, SBC,
Tel: +41 22 917 82 19,
Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: Donata.Rugabamu@unep.ch

One World, Don't Waste It

Establishment of the Africa Institute for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and Other Wastes

The Basel Convention Secretariat has been advised that the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania unanimously approved the ratification of the Agreement establishing the Africa Institute for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and other Wastes, and that the instruments of ratification will be deposited shortly. Tanzania's ratification joins that of Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria and Botswana and, as the fifth ratification, brings the Agreement into force.

The Agreement provides for the formal establishment of the Africa Institute which will be an intergovernmental organization aimed to serve its Members in the implementation of the Basel and Bamako Conventions, and related multilateral environmental agreements.

**For more information, please contact
Mr. Nelson Sabogal, Senior Programme Officer,
Tel: +41 22 917 82 18,
Fax: + 41 22 979 34 54,
Email: Nelson.Sabogal@unep.ch**

Status of Ratifications

The Basel Convention has 169 Parties. The number of ratifications to the Ban Amendment is of 63. The number of Contracting Parties to the Protocol on Liability and Compensation is of 7.

The following United Nations Members are not yet a Party to the Basel Convention:

1. Afghanistan
2. Angola
3. Congo (Republic of the -)
4. Democratic People's Republic of Korea
5. Fiji
6. Gabon
7. Grenada
8. Haïti
9. Iraq
10. Lao People's Democratic Republic
11. Myanmar
12. Palau
13. San Marino
14. Sao Tomé & Principe
15. Sierra Leone
16. Solomon Islands
17. Somalia
18. Suriname
19. Tajikistan
20. Timor-Leste
21. Tonga
22. Tuvalu
23. United States
24. Vanuatu
25. Zimbabwe

New Basel Convention Website

The Secretariat of the Basel Convention launched a newly designed website (www.basel.int) in March. The new structure helps navigability by guiding newcomers to a special section while regular users will continue to benefit from the usual sections available to them. The graphic design is in tune with the corporate identity of Basel Convention information material produced in the last couple of years.

Please send us your comments about the new design; Nicole Dawe, Information Officer, SBC, Nicole.Dawe@unep.ch or Alejandro Montero, webmaster, SBC, Alejandro.Montero@unep.ch



Basel Convention Bulletin

For further information about any or the articles in this issue or to obtain copies of the Basel Convention Bulletin, please contact Nicole Dawe, Information Officer, SBC, Nicole.Dawe@unep.ch, Tel. +41 22 917 82 20

Call for national measures to prevent and punish illegal traffic

The Secretariat maintains a large collection of national legislation and other measures which have been adopted by Parties to implement the Basel Convention. This collection is maintained in the languages in which they are received by the Secretariat. This collection, which can be organized by country or language, can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.basel.int/legalmatters/natleg/byparties/frsetmain.html>

As Parties know, by Article 4(3) of the Convention, Parties consider that illegal traffic in hazardous wastes or other wastes is criminal, and accordingly by Article 9(5) of the Convention, Parties are required to introduce national legislation which prevents and punishes illegal traffic. The eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties recognized the significance of the adoption of appropriate sanctions and penalties for illegal traffic in hazardous wastes within implementing national legislation.

The Secretariat invites Parties to submit texts of their national legislation and other measures which detail the sanctions and penalties for the illegal traffic in hazardous wastes. This may include applicable excerpts from the national penal code, or other such instruments.

Please send texts of national legislation and other measures which penalize illegal traffic to:

Ms. Donata Rugarabamu
Senior Legal Officer
Secretariat of the Basel Convention
International Environment House
Chemin des Anémones 15
1219 Chatelaine – Geneva – Switzerland

E-mail: legalsbc@unep.ch

Change of Designation of Focal Point or Competent Authority

Parties are kindly reminded that changes of Focal Points or Competent Authorities need to be formally transmitted by fax or letter to the Executive Secretary as this relates to an obligation under Article 5 of the Convention.

3R Workshop on Effective Waste Management and Resource Use Efficiency in East and Southeast Asia

The Secretariat of the Basel Convention (SBC) participated in a workshop on 15-16 February 2007 on the “Effective Waste Management and Resource Use Efficiency in East and Southeast Asia” at the Headquarters of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila, The Philippines. The workshop is part of the 3Rs process initiated by the the Ministerial Conference on the 3R Initiative held in Tokyo in April 2005, which formally launched the Initiative by G8 leaders at the Sea Island Summit (please consult the Basel Convention Bulletin of July 2005 <http://www.basel.int/press/bulleting0705.pdf>). The SBC gave a presentation on the Asia Pacific E-waste Project under the Basel Convention and participated in sub-working groups on Industrial Ecology and Management

of Industrial Waste and on Resource Efficiency in Energy and Water Management. The workshop attracted around 70 participants and observers from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. IGOs that attended included UNCRD (United Nations Centre for Regional Development), UNEP, ADB, IGES (Institute for Global Environmental Strategies), SACEP (South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme), and UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), among others.

This workshop covered not only municipal and industrial waste issues but also agricultural

waste, water and energy. The workshop achieved its aim of sharing of information and experiences on 3R-related areas and identify strategic policies and programmes to promote 3R in some countries. Some discussions took place about the use of the terminology “waste” with suggestions to replace it with “resources”, “materials” or “goods” but participating countries were very cautious, especially when referring to hazardous wastes.

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Ibrahim Shafii, Programme Officer (Technical)
Tel: +41 22 917 86 36,
Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: ibrahim.shafii@unep.ch

Update on the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative (MPPI)

At the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP8), Parties to the Basel Convention adopted a Decision welcoming the work of the Mobile Phone Working Group (MPWG) and the project groups, and provisionally adopted the Guidance Document on the Environmentally Sound Management of Used and End-of-Life Mobile Phones. The Guidance Document contains the executive summaries and recommendations found in each of the five Guidelines developed under the Partnership; refurbishment, material recovery and recycling, collection, transboundary movement, and design considerations.

COP8 requested the Open-ended Working Group, at its next session, to review the Guidance Document and to present it to COP9 for consideration and final adoption. The decision also encourages the initiation of pilot projects and requests the Basel Convention Regional Centres to disseminate the information contained in the Guidance Document and to organize training and outreach workshops. It re-emphasises its invitation to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to participate in the activities of the MPWG. It also invites developed countries and all stakeholders to provide financial and in-kind support to

the partnership initiative. In addition, the decision requests Parties and signatories to test the Guidelines.

A side event was held to inform Parties and other stakeholders on the progress of the Partnership and for stakeholders to describe their participation in the work undertaken by the MPPI. Speakers included Marco Buletti, Switzerland, Chair of the Mobile phone Working Group (MPWG), Joachim Wuttke, from Germany, Helena Castren, from Nokia, Jack Rowley, representing Global System GSM Association (GSMA) and Jim Puckett from the Basel Action Network (BAN). Claudia Fénerol, Senior Programme Officer from the Secretariat chaired the session as well as presented an update on the SBC Partnership Programme.

- Plans are underway to initiate pilot projects, in 2007, on collection and treatment schemes for used and end-of-life mobile phones in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as agreed in work programme. The objective is to test the Guidelines and effectiveness of the recommendations on collection and treatment.

- A pilot project to test the Guidelines on the refurbishment of used mobile phones

has been completed and the report with recommendations will be prepared in 2007. Testing of the Guidelines on the material recovery and recycling of end-of-life mobile phones and collection of used and end-of-life mobile phones will be initiated. A number of companies have expressed an interest to test the Guidelines on material recovery and recycling. The outcome of these studies, such as identifying areas (if any) that need improvements and/or changes, will be submitted to the MPWG for its consideration.

- Activities to undertake a training programme under the Convention on the five Guidelines will be initiated in 2007. These training workshops will provide the means to get the Guidelines and information to end users. The first workshop is provisionally planned for 2007 in Chile for Latin American countries. Funding contributions are currently being sought to support the workshop in Chile. Seven members have provided funding to the Partnership: Bell Canada, NEC, Nokia, Motorola, Panasonic, Sharp and Vodaphone.

For more information, please contact
Ms. Claudia Fénerol, Senior Programme Officer,
SBC, Tel: +41 22 917 87 67,
Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: Claudia.Fenerol@unep.ch

One World, Don't Waste It

Update on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire

COP8 mandated the SBC to look into the gaps between the Basel and MARPOL Conventions on cases of toxic waste dumping following the Probo Koala case. There was no decision by COP8 as to whether the Probo Koala incident was in breach of the Basel Convention. COP8 also requested UNEP to raise funds and establish a Trust Fund for the implementation of a strategic plan drafted by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire. The plan covers clean up operations, socio-economic consequences, impacts on human health and the environment and medium to long-term measures for the management of hazardous and other wastes. In the meantime, the SBC sent a consultant to Abidjan for a technical mission to assess the damage, suggest measures to prevent future incidents of this sort, to evaluate the technical and administrative needs of Côte d'Ivoire and to develop a comprehensive management plan for hazardous waste management. This report has been adopted by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Vincent Jugault, Programme Officer, SBC,
Tel: +41 22 917 82 23,
Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: Vincent.Jugault@unep.ch

Update on UNEP/GEF Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Project

The Secretariat of the Basel Convention (SBC) participated in the final workshop of the UNEP/GEF project on the "Assessment of Existing Capacities and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze Persistent Organic Pollutants in Developing Countries" held at the Free University in Amsterdam, on 5-7 March 2007. The aim of the project is to establish and build the capacity of laboratories in the participating developing countries to analyze POPs. The selected laboratories are located in China, Ecuador, Fiji, Kenya, Moldova, Uruguay and Vietnam. The back-up laboratories that carried out the assessment and training of the pilot laboratories are IVM of Free University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and MTM of Orebro University, Sweden. Analytical tests on samples containing POPs were performed on sediments, fauna and known standards.

The outcomes of the workshop were:

- Presentation of the outcomes of the project and exchanges of experiences;
- Analysis of results of intercalibration (cross-analysis of samples in different laboratories) and exchanges of samples;

- Exchange of experiences and lessons learned from pilot countries and back-up laboratories;
- Status of POPs Laboratory Databank on UNEP/Chemicals website (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/databank/Home/Welcome.aspx>);
- Assessment of Guidelines developed for the purpose of analyzing POPs as part of the project;
- Preparation of and discussion of reports from laboratories; and
- General assessment, future activities and conclusions.

As a member of the project's Steering Committee, the Secretariat also attended the Committee's third core group meeting, which assessed the outcome of the pilot projects and provided guidance to UNEP Chemicals, as the executing agency, in the preparation of the final report to be presented to GEF Council and to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to Stockholm Convention in May 2007.

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Ibrahim Shafii, Programme Officer (Technical)
Tel: +41 22 917 86 36,
Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: ibrahim.shafii@unep.ch

The Ministry of the Environment of the Royal Government of Cambodia hosted the second meeting of the Steering Committee of the BCRC for South East Asia (SEA) on 12 March 2007 in the presence of HE Mr. Khieu Muth, Secretary of State for Environment, Cambodia. The meeting discussed the BCRC's business plan for 2006-2010 and adopted the 2007-2008 work plan. Please visit www.basel.int for more information.

A regional workshop followed on the environmentally sound management of electronic and electrical wastes (e-wastes), on 13-15 March 2007, which was officially opened by HE Dr. Mok Mareth, Senior Minister, Ministry of Environment of Cambodia. In addition to presentations by resource persons and experts on e-waste, two sets of Guidelines were discussed, namely the draft "Technical Guidelines for E-waste Inventory" and the draft "Technical Guidelines on 3Rs of EOL E-products and E-waste". Both sets of Guidelines were developed by BCRC SEA under the framework of the "Basel Convention Partnership for the

Environmentally Sound Management of E-waste for the Asia Pacific Region".

Funded by the Government of Japan, the workshop was attended by 50 participants from countries in the South East Asian Region, Australia and Japan. Participants also represented Regional Office for Asia Pacific, the World Customs Organization, the Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building, the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific, and the World Health Organization (Office for Cambodia and Lao PDR).

In his opening address, HE Dr. Mok Mareth noted that the issue of e-waste was a challenge common to all nations within the region and for Cambodia. He added that the prevention of pollution, particularly from e-waste, was of paramount importance. As for the transboundary movements of e-waste, he emphasized that all nations in the region had the common duty of controlling such movements, and the organization of the workshop was another step forward

towards ensuring the environmentally sound management of such wastes.

Both meetings were held in Siem Reap, location of the historic city of Angkor Wat.

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Ibrahim Shafii, Programme Officer (Technical)
Tel: +41 22 917 86 36,
Fax: +41 22 797 34 54,
Email: ibrahim.shafii@unep.ch



Photo SBC

Special page with articles from UNEP-Chemicals, SAICM, the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention and the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention



From UNEP-Chemicals

Mercury

Mercury is a heavy metal which is toxic to the developing brain, and can be transported long distances in the environment. As a metal, it is not destroyed by incineration or by reaction with other chemicals, and mercury waste and contamination poses a growing problem globally.

The mercury programme, located within UNEP Chemicals Branch, is pleased to cooperate with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention to develop Guidelines on the handling of mercury as waste, including possible options for long-term storage. This was highlighted as a priority area at COP8 of the Basel Convention, and was also considered a serious issue by the 24th Governing Council of UNEP.

Other activities of the mercury programme include working on a partnership programme, covering a number of relevant sectors, gathering information on options to address the mercury programme, and running an ad-hoc open-ended working group to discuss possible options for control of the mercury problem in the future.

For more information, visit the mercury website at : <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/>

From the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention

Stockholm Convention POPs Review Committee

Ten new chemicals have been proposed to be POPs by various Parties for consideration by the POPs Review Committee (POPRC) of the Stockholm Convention. The first five chemicals are: lindane, chlordecone (insecticides), pentabromodiphenyl ether, hexabromobiphenyl, (flame retardants), PFOS (industrial uses). These chemicals have been accepted as being likely, as a result of their long-range environment transport, to lead to significant adverse human health and/or environmental effects such that global action is warranted. Currently, risk management evaluations that include possible control measures are being developed. The other five chemi-

cals proposed are: alpha- and beta-hexachlorocyclohexane (insecticides), pentachlorobenzene (many uses), commercial octabromodiphenyl ether (flame retardant), and short-chained chlorinated paraffins (industrial). For these five, the POPRC has decided that all do satisfy the screening criteria based on the information provided and risk profiles are being developed to assess the danger of the POP qualities of the chemicals.

Guidelines to Manage POPs

The Basel Convention "General Technical Guidelines for the Environmentally Sound Management of Wastes Consisting of, Containing or Contaminated with Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)" have recently been approved by the eighth COP to the Basel Convention. These Guidelines will now be considered by the COP of the Stockholm Convention at its third meeting. If endorsed, both Basel and Stockholm Convention Secretariats will collaborate to support countries to implement the Guidelines to establish environmentally sound management for handling POPs waste.

For more information, please go to: www.pops.int



From the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention

Chemical Review Committee

The Chemical Review Committee of the Rotterdam Convention met in Rome on 23 March 2007. It recommended that two pesticides- endosulfan and tributyl tin compounds - be included in the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure under the Rotterdam Convention. Widely used around the world, particularly for cotton, endosulfan has been recommended for inclusion on the grounds that it poses unacceptable risks to workers and to the environment. Tributyl tin compounds (TBT), used in anti-fouling paints for ship hulls, are a concern because they enter the marine environment, particularly in enclosed harbours, where they are toxic to fish, molluscs and other organisms. Governments will decide when they meet in Rome in 2008 for their biannual

Conference of the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade whether to accept the recommendations forwarded by this week's meeting of the Convention's Chemical Review Committee.

For more information, please go to: www.pic.int



From the SAICM Secretariat

UNEP Chemicals & SAICM

The Governing Council of UNEP noted at its 24th meeting in February 2007 the work plan for UNEP's implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The work plan consists of initial activities for 2007 and longer term activities for 2008-2012. The initial activities focus on implementation of a UNEP/UNDP partnership on mainstreaming of sound management of chemicals into the development agenda in a number of countries. UNEP/UNDP has initiated cooperation with the Basel secretariat on future country projects.

For further information see <http://www.chem.unep.ch/unepsaicm/default.html>

Basel COP8 & the QSP Trust Fund

SAICM initial implementation activities are furthermore being undertaken under the framework of the Quick Start Programme (QSP). The QSP objective is to "support initial SAICM enabling capacity building and implementation activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition". In its decision VIII/34, the 8th Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention recommended that eligible individual Parties propose projects to the QSP trust fund on chemicals wastes, including for persistent organic pollutants. Only countries with a SAICM national focal point are eligible. The next deadlines for the submission of applications for the QSP trust fund are 16 April and 14 September 2007. Application forms and guidelines are available at:

www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsptf.htm

One World, Don't Waste It

Regional Workshop on the Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste in Asia

A Regional Workshop on the Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste in Asia was held in Beijing, China, on 28-29 March 2007, organized by the Basel Convention Regional Centre in China with the contribution of the State Environmental Protection Administration of China (SEPA China) and the Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOE) under the guidance of Secretariat of the Basel Convention.

During the workshop, participants focused discussions on the exchange of information, regulation and experience, cooperation and capacity building for preventing illegal transboundary movement of hazardous wastes for Asia. The presentation of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention was on the progress of the management of transboundary movement of waste under the framework of the Basel Convention with an emphasis on the project on environmentally sound management (ESM) of e-waste in the Asia and Pacific region.

The representatives from EU IMPEL-TFS and the Netherlands made presentations on their latest activities, and expressed their interest in cooperating with Asian countries on information exchange and networking for controlling transboundary movements of wastes. Some participants expressed concern at considering waste electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) destined for recycling as second-hand EEE. Others stressed that the exporting state should strengthen inspection and control on waste destined for transboundary movements and proposed to follow the prior informed consent procedure. Many countries expressed their need for capacity building in the control of e-waste, namely through the development of e-waste inventories, a legal framework, practical guidance and other tools. Useful information would include definitions of and regulations on e-waste, effective communication between importing and exporting countries, updating of information on controlling e-waste and names of companies that conducted illegal transboundary movement of

hazardous wastes. Some participants hoped for the BCRCs to play key roles in capacity building and operational support for countries in the region.

The workshop was attended by 35 delegates from the competent authorities or focal points to the Basel Convention from 11 countries or administrative regions; 13 observers, including resource persons from the Secretariat of the Basel Convention (SBC), the Netherlands, European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law Trans Frontier Shipment network (EU IMPEL-TFS), Basel Convention Regional Centre for Southeast Asia, RILO Asia Pacific and observers.

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Ibrahim Shafii, Programme Officer
(Technical) at ibrahim.shafii@unep.ch
or tel. +41 22 9178636



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Secretariat of the Basel
Convention
13-15 chemin des Anémones
1219 Geneva - Switzerland

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Contact: Nicole Dawe
Information Officer
Tel. +41(0) 22-917-82 20
Fax +41(0) 22-797-34 54
Email:
Nicole.Dawe@unep.ch
www.basel.int



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agreement on wastes*