Teleconference of the Bureau of the Eleventh meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention

Tuesday, 19 June 2018, 5.30 – 6.30 p.m. (CEST)

Participants:

Co-Chairs: Ms. Justina Grigaraviciene (Lithuania) (Technical); Mr. Luay Sadeq Al-Mukhtar (Iraq) (Legal)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Ole Thomas Thommesen (Norway) (Technical)

Apologies:

Vice-Chair: Mr. Henry O. Williams (Liberia) (Legal)

Rapporteur: Mr. Alexander Alberto Moreta De Los Santos (Dominican Republic)

1. **Provisional agenda, scenario note and meeting documents for OEWG-11** 
   1. Provisional agenda

Co-Chair Grigaravicieneadvised that the provisional agenda for OEWG-11 was available on the meeting website as document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/1/Rev.1. She advised that the provisional agenda had just been revised to incorporate agenda item (vi) on amendment to the annexes to the Basel Convention, following receipt from the Government of Norway of an application form for the placement or removal of wastes on Annexes VIII and IX.

The Co-Chair highlighted that there would be a full agenda before the meeting with the introduction of new items, particularly those relating to marine plastic litter and microplastics and waste containing nanomaterials.

The Co-Chair advised that the meeting would open at 10 a.m. on Monday 3 September at which time the OEWG would be asked to adopt its agenda and to take up any matters pertaining to the organisation of work.

The Co-Chair then briefly outlined the substantive agenda items before the meeting, noting the addition of a new item to the agenda under scientific and technical matters: amendments to the annexes to the Basel Convention.

On the agenda item on marine plastic litter and microplastics, a Bureau member queried why this item fell under scientific and technical matters, as opposed to under strategic issues. It was explained that the provisional agenda for the meeting was developed in line with the work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2018-2019 and that the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting had decided to place this matter under scientific and technical matters.

A question was raised by another Bureau member as to whether it would be possible to finalise at OEWG-11 the draft work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2020–2021. The Bureau agreed that following introduction of this agenda item in plenary, consultations would be required with Parties, and possibly in regional meetings, to ensure that agreement could be reached on the work programme that would be submitted to the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth meeting for its consideration and possible adoption.

* 1. Scenario note

The Co-Chair advised that the scenario note for the meeting (document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/INF/1) had been developed to assist participants in preparing for OEWG-11 by communicating information regarding initial planning activity and expectations for the meeting.

* 1. Meeting documents

The Co-Chair confirmed that all meeting documents would be made available on the OEWG website in the six official languages of the United Nations two months prior to the meeting (i.e. by 3 July). Information documents would be posted over the coming weeks.

1. **Tentative schedule of the meeting** 
   1. Plenary sessions

The Secretariat introduced a draft tentative schedule for the meeting, which contained agenda items to be discussed in two plenary sessions per day (10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 3 p.m.-6 p.m.). Co-Chair Sadeq Al-Mukhtarthen advised that pursuant to paragraph 9 of decision BC-13/17, on Monday, 3 September, and Thursday, 6 September, simultaneous interpretation would be provided in plenary sessions. He expressed his gratitude to the Government of Switzerland for their provision of financial support which would allow an additional day of plenary sessions with interpretation on Tuesday, 4 September. On Wednesday, 5 September, contact or drafting groups would meet as needed in English only.

The Bureau agreed on the tentative schedule of the meeting as set out in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/INF/2.

* 1. Contact groups

On the matter of contact groups, the Co-Chair advised that it was anticipated that three contact groups would be established at the meeting on: strategic, technical and legal matters. A brief discussion ensued regarding the agenda items that would require further discussion in contact groups. It was noted that the technical matters contact group may be required to consider various technical guidelines, as well as the new agenda items on marine plastic litter and microplastics and amendment to the annexes to the Basel Convention. It was suggested that the meeting consider organizing its work in contact groups in a manner that would enable joint consideration of items of a scientific and technical nature, which might also be of interest to those in the strategic and legal matters contact groups, such as the Norwegian amendment proposal. The Bureau members emphasised the need for knowledgeable Co-Chairs to guide the work of the contact groups and requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts to identify Co-Chairs for each of the contact groups.

* 1. Side events

The Co-Chair advised that side events would be scheduled for lunchtimes and evenings during the meeting, noting that the deadline for requesting a side event was 31 July. The Secretariat advised that already significant interest had been expressed by various entities for hosting such side events.

* 1. Pre-meetings on Sunday and other meetings

The Co-Chair confirmed that pre-meetings on Sunday 2 September would include the OEWG Bureau meeting and regional meetings. He advised that there may be additional pre-meetings scheduled on the Sunday and that this would be confirmed in due course.

The Secretariat advised that following the meeting, there would be an informal consultation of the expert working group on the review of annexes on the Thursday evening. On the Friday following OEWG, the Implementation and Compliance Committee would commence its 13th meeting (until Monday 10 September). She advised that in addition, there may be other meetings and workshops organized by other entities (i.e. UNITAR and UNIDO).

1. **Logistics**

The Secretariat was invited to brief the Bureau on the logistics concerning the meeting. The Secretariat advised that meeting costs (i.e., conference services, translation of documents, interpretation and the meeting report) were covered by the Basel Convention core budget. The Government of Switzerland also made a significant contribution to cover the rental and many other services for the conference venue, CICG.

In terms of funding eligible participants from developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, the Secretariat had, as at 19 June, received approximately USD 300,000 in pledges from the following donor Parties: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. The Bureau expressed its sincere gratitude to these countries for providing such financial support and invited other countries in a position to do so to provide further financial support for the travel of eligible participants.

The Secretariat advised that as at 19 June, 179 participants had registered for the meeting, representing 112 Parties and 12 observers. She advised that the Secretariat was processing funding requests from eligible Parties, although it might not be possible to provide financial support to all those requesting it.

Lastly, the Secretariat advised that efforts were being made to reduce the use of plastic at OEWG-11. The Secretariat was consulting with the venue, CICG, and its caterers, to identify sustainable solutions for the meeting.

1. **Other matters**

Under other matters, a Bureau member enquired as to what efforts were being made to encourage the coordination and flow of information between the Ad-hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics established by UNEA-3 and OEWG-11. The Deputy Executive Secretary advised that he had participated in the first ad-hoc meeting in May 2018 and that the Secretariat had submitted documents to that meeting outlining the ongoing work under the Basel Convention. The Secretariat had also invited the Co-Chairs of the ad-hoc group to join the discussions at OEWG-11. A further meeting of the ad-hoc group was scheduled following OEWG-11 and the Secretariat planned to attend that meeting to advise on further developments under the Basel Convention.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_