



# UNEP Chemicals *Newsletter*

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## Signatories/Parties

As of 31 May 2002, there were 151 signatories and 10 Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. (New Parties since last issue: Germany, Iceland, Lesotho, Liberia, Nauru, Netherlands, Samoa and Sweden).

The signature period ended on 22 May 2002.

## Stockholm Convention: INC Gets Down to Work

On 17 to 21 June 2002, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) will meet in Geneva for the first time since the Stockholm Convention on POPs was adopted in May 2001.

The INC is tasked with preparing for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP1) and overseeing implementation of interim activities. The INC will set in motion efforts to ensure a prompt start to the Convention and assist countries in implementing their Convention obligations and, in doing so, protecting their citizens and environment from POPs.

Issues that will be considered by the INC for COP1 include:

- review procedure for entries in specific exemptions register;
- information for evaluating the continued need for DDT use in disease control;
- guidance on evaluating releases of and best available techniques and best environment practices for sources of unintentionally produced POPs;
- arrangements for providing monitoring and other comparable data for use in evaluating Convention effectiveness;
- rules of procedure and composition of the POPs Review Committee;



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- arrangements for providing technical assistance, including through regional centres;
- guidance for the financial mechanism and proposals on its institutional structure;
- proposals for establishing a capacity assistance network and clearinghouse mechanism for POPs information;
- rules relating to Convention operation including procedure, finance, non-compliance and dispute settlement.

Other interim work of the INC includes considering the need for guidance for developing national implementation plans, adopting the budget of the interim secretariat and identifying the means to fund it.

## NIPs

The Guidance document for the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans will soon be available. This document provides guidance for planning the development of SC/NIPs as well as a format for preparing the action plans and strategies required under the Convention.

## The Power of Information for Developing Countries

Through the Chemicals Information Exchange Network project (CIEN), a joint US-EPA/UNEP project implemented in several developing countries in Africa, chemical management officials are finding the power of information technology at their fingertips.

The US, Switzerland and Canada support CIEN which aims to provide access to technical information and create synergies between national agencies involved in chemical management, thus strengthening their capacity and their participation in international activities.

CIEN's goals are achieved by the provision of equipment and services needed to access Internet and by training staff from national agencies. The use of Internet facilitates low cost access to chemical information and

effective and dynamic exchanges for national and regional networking. Equally important components of this partnership are the commitment and enthusiasm demonstrated by national organizations. ECOWAS (Economic Commission for West African States), SADC (Southern African Development Cooperation) and Central American countries are the present beneficiaries of the project.



C. Stéwé/UNEP Chemicals

Closing ceremony of CIEN training in Ouagadougou, February 2002

## From the Director



James B. Willis/UNEP Chemicals

In February 2002, the Seventh Special Session of UNEP Governing Council took two significant initiatives related to international chemicals management. Decision SS.VII/3 endorsed the further

development of a "strategic approach to international chemicals management". Building on the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety's Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action, a multi-stakeholder consultative process will develop measures to remedy gaps in international efforts

to address chemical safety issues. The World Summit on Sustainable Development will be invited to endorse the approach. The pace of progress in developing the "strategic approach" will depend on the availability of extra-budgetary funding.

In Decision SS.VII/1 the Governing Council adopted the report of the Intergovernmental Group on International Environmental Governance. In November 2001, at the request of the Group, the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions had prepared an issues paper outlining current cooperation and the potential for closer cooperation in future. The Group's report recommended more consideration of such "clustering" measures and the undertaking of pilot projects. The three Convention secretariats will be exploring options in consultation with their respective governing bodies.

## Global Mercury Assessment - Meeting of the Working Group

UNEP GC decision 21/5 called upon UNEP to undertake a global assessment of mercury. Governments, IGOs, NGOs and private sector were invited to submit information and nominate members to a Working Group (WG) that would provide technical input to the process.

A first draft report was circulated to WG members for comments by 7 June 2002. A revised draft, to be discussed at a WG meeting, tentatively scheduled for 9-13 September 2002, will be circulated in mid-July 2002. The final report, together with an outline of options for addressing any significant global adverse impacts of mercury will be submitted to the Governing Council (GC) in February 2003. By initiating this report, the GC will have a better basis for considering whether concerted

international action on mercury is required. The report will increase awareness and understanding among decision makers, thereby facilitating debate on the issue at the next GC.

For more details visit the GMA website at <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/Report/1stdraft-report.htm>.

### AFRICA STOCKPILES PROJECT

UNEP Chemicals is participating in a multi-agency steering group developing a programme to clear all obsolete pesticides stocks from Africa and prevent their recurrence. The "ASP" will be launched in 2003. Further details are available at [www.africastockpiles.org](http://www.africastockpiles.org)

## Termite Control



Termite control represents one of the bigger issues with regard to the elimination of POPs pesticides. During the negotiations of the Stockholm Convention, several countries indicated the continued need for use of chlordane, heptachlor and mirex in the control termites.

Termites, which are often mistaken for ants and sometimes called white ants, are insects of great importance in most parts of the world for recycling wood and other plant material. Unfortunately, a few of the more than 2600 recognized species have developed a taste for homes, other man-made constructions and certain agricultural crops.

In February 2000, UNEP jointly with FAO and the Global IPM Facility convened an Expert Meeting on Termite Biology and Management. The Expert Group that was established during this meeting has continued its efforts to provide guidance and advice in the biology and management of termites. It met again in November 2001 to initiate the development of web pages on termites that are of importance as pests in constructions and agriculture. These pages will be available through the POPs Homepage at [www.chem.unep.ch/pops/](http://www.chem.unep.ch/pops/)

Contacts with experts can also be found through the Homepage through an address database that has been established to help Governments identify experts for particular issues regarding POPs.

## Support for Rapid Implementation of the Stockholm Convention

In May 2001, the Stockholm Conference of Plenipotentiaries expressed a strong view that there be a rapid entry into force of the Stockholm Convention and its effective implementation. One specific item was the need for guidance on the preparation of implementation plans and action plans.

However, no standards or guidance for preparation of the required strategies, action and implementation plans are provided in the Stockholm Convention text, and to date they have not been formally developed and agreed upon by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC). There is however much guidance material to be drawn on. UNEP Chemicals is producing a CD-ROM that will bring together guidance material relevant to implementation of the Stockholm Convention.

UNEP Chemicals is also collaborating with the World Bank to prepare a Guidance Document aimed particularly at the preparation of the Implementation Plans, and that will propose a format to be used for the planning and documentation of POPs management. The document is a dynamic planning instrument that will be updated and refined in the coming years as and when formal requirements are agreed upon, new information and experience gathered and national environmental priorities evolve. The Guidance Document also aims to assist countries in establishing a state of preparedness for dealing with POPs.



## Three Deadly Pesticides and Asbestos Targeted for Action

The third meeting of the Interim Chemicals Review Committee (ICRC) under the Rotterdam Convention, held from 17 - 21 February in Geneva, concluded that three widely-used pesticides and all forms of asbestos should be added to the interim PIC procedure.

The first up for action is monocrotophos, an insecticide used in many developing countries, particularly in Asia, to control insects and spider mites on cotton, citrus, rice, maize and other crops. The Committee also launched the process for listing the related pesticides Granox TBC and

Spinox T, a mixture of fungicides and the highly toxic insecticide Carbofuran. The fourth chemical, DNOC, is an insecticide, weed killer and fungicide. It is highly toxic to humans and also poses a high risk to other organisms.

The recommendation to add five remaining forms of asbestos launches a process that will conclude in 2003.

Status of ratifications as of 31 May 2002:

73 Signatories. 22 Parties

(New Parties since last issue: Cameroon, Gambia, Samoa, Switzerland, Thailand).

The Convention has not yet come into force.

## Collaboration Between Conventions

The SBC and UNEP Chemicals are collaborating closely on the implementation of programmatic activities of relevance to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. These activities include:

- Regional PCB Management in Central America and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC): to be coordinated or supported by the Basel Convention Regional Centres (BCRCs);
- The Regional Workshop for the Caribbean for the Management, Prevention and ESM of Pesticides in the context of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions and the preparation of a regional project proposal for the ESM of pesticides (Trinidad, 22-25 April 2002);
- A GEF proposal for a Pilot Project for Integrated Implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions with the support of the BCRCs.

In addition, the topics listed below were discussed at the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Basel Convention in Geneva at the end of May 2002:

- Preliminary outline of the Technical Guidelines for the ESM of POPs as wastes;
- Revision of the Basel Convention Technical Guidelines on Wastes Comprising or Containing PCBs, PCTs, and PBBs (Y10);
- The draft Framework Agreement addressing the legal options available for the establishment of the regional centres as well as other organizational and financial arrangements;
- The draft Strategic Action Plan for the Basel Convention for the next ten years.

Reports of these meetings can be found on [www.basel.int](http://www.basel.int)



## Building Blocks for the Future

In responding to the call from the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries for effective implementation of the Stockholm Convention upon its entry into force, UNEP Chemicals is taking action to seek funding for two elements essential for success. The first reflects the priority given to the need for effective information exchange, in particular in Article 9 but often voiced throughout the negotiation. UNEP Chemicals has developed a proposal to network the focal points designated by countries. These focal



points are the basic building blocks for information exchange, and would comprise a key component of the clearing-house function. The second anticipates the need for global information on levels of POPs in

the environment both nationally and globally. The proposal would link the national to the regional level and finally to the global level. While it is not possible for every country to develop facilities for a complete monitoring and assessment of all POPs, including dioxins and furans, a few countries, each representing a region, could be selected to develop capacity to cover all POPs. Similarly, several countries in each region could be supported to develop capacity to monitor several of the POPs, with the exception of the polychlorinated dioxins and furans.

Finally, all countries could develop the capacity to participate in the controlled sampling of different media for further processing and analysis. The development of capacity to monitor and analyse POPs in a few countries would also enable those countries to more fully implement the Convention and also assist other countries in the region in their efforts to do the same. Collectively, the network of analytical capability would provide essential data on which to base the regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the Convention.

## Selected Publications

Booklet: Stockholm Convention on POPs – Text and Annexes Available in six UN languages in hardcopy and on Internet, 2001

Standardized Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Dioxin and Furan Releases. Available in E, F and S in hardcopy and on Internet, January 2001

International Activities Related to Chemicals (3rd edition). Available in E in hardcopy and on Internet, 2001

Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on POPs. Available in six UN languages in hardcopy and on Internet, April 2001

Meeting Report: Expanded Consultation on Global Network for Monitoring of Chemicals in the Environment. Available in E in hardcopy and on Internet, 2001

Joint UNEP/FAO/WHO document on Reducing and/or Eliminating the Use of POPs. Guidance on Alternative Strategies for Sustainable Pest and Vector Management, 2002

Thailand Dioxin Sampling and Analysis Programme Report. Available in E in hardcopy and on Internet, September 2001

Kick-off Workshop of the Asia Toolkit Project on Inventories of Dioxin and Furan Releases. Available in E in hardcopy and on Internet, October 2001

Proceedings: UNEP Chemicals Workshop on Management of Chemicals:

- Bangkok, Thailand, March 2001
- Cairns, Australia, April 2001
- Havana, Cuba, April 2001
- Accra, Ghana, September 2001
- Hanoi, Vietnam, October 2001
- Dakar, Senegal, October 2001
- Manama, Bahrain, November 2001
- Bangkok, Thailand, November 2001

## Calendar

**17-21 June 2002**  
(confirmed)

6th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Stockholm Convention on POPs Geneva, Switzerland

**9-13 September 2002**  
(tentative)

GEF-MSP Sub-Regional Workshop on Support for the Implementation of Stockholm Convention on POPs Kiev, Ukraine

**9-13 September 2002**  
(tentative)

Meeting of Working Group for the Global Mercury Assessment Geneva, Switzerland

**19-21 September 2002**  
(confirmed)

Stockholm Convention Workshop on Liability and Redress Vienna, Austria

**23-25 September 2002**  
(tentative)

Sub-Regional Training Workshop on Inventories of Stocks of Obsolete Pesticides Krasnodar, Russia

**30 September – 4 October 2002**  
(confirmed)

9th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Rotterdam Convention Bonn, Germany

**19-23 October 2002**  
(tentative)

Regional Workshop for the Implementation of the Rotterdam Convention Islamic Republic of Iran

**September-October**  
(tentative)

Sub-Regional Workshop with Stockholm Convention on POPs and Alternative Approaches to POPs Pesticides South America



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