



UNEP and the World Bank

UNEP and the World Bank sign a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on POPs. Please contact UNEP Chemicals for more information.

Conference of Plenipotentiaries for the Adoption and Signing of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

Under the leadership of Canadian Chair, Dr. John Buccini, the negotiations for a global convention on POPs came to a successful conclusion in Johannesburg during the early hours of Sunday morning, 10 December 2000. The successful outcome was also due to the dedicated efforts of delegates from 122 countries, as well as generous contributions from countries, IGOs and NGOs through the POPs Club, totaling US\$4 million to date.

Countries are now preparing themselves for the adoption and signing ceremony of the POPs Convention at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, which will be held at the City Conference Centre in Stockholm on 22 and 23 May 2001. This ceremony will mark the end of the negotiation process as well as the beginning of "real" work to make the world safe from POPs.

The Government of the Kingdom of Sweden has generously offered to host and fully fund the Conference of Plenipotentiaries. Invitations have been sent to governments, requesting them to come with full powers to sign the Stock-



Summer sailing regatta in Stockholm

holm Convention. Further underlining the importance of this Convention, which is the first to aim at risk reduction of chemicals, is that many countries will be represented at the ministerial level.

The Conference will also adopt resolutions on interim arrangements to maintain the impetus created throughout the negotiating process and encourage countries to start implementing the Convention on a voluntary basis.

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The Global Environment Facility Begins Development of National Implementation Plans on POPs

UNEP Chemicals is proposing to commence a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project to assist countries with the development of national implementation plans (NIPs) for managing POPs. The project will strengthen national capacities to manage POPs and assist countries in meeting their obligations towards the Stockholm Convention on POPs.

The project will initially be implemented in 11 countries (Barbados, Bulgaria, Chile, Ecuador, Guinea, Lebanon, Mali, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Slovenia and Zambia).

Generic and technical guidelines for the development of NIPs and the adoption of POPs management options will be developed based on the experience gained and the lessons learned in the pilot countries. The guidelines and the



GEF to target chemicals under POPs Convention experience will greatly facilitate the development of NIPs in other countries. Furthermore, sharing experience through regional and sub-regional consultations will help other countries sign and ratify the Stockholm Convention and prepare their NIPs.

From the Director



Photo/James B. Willis

Of course, the event on everyone's tongues these days is the upcoming Conference of Plenipotentiaries to adopt and sign the Stockholm Convention on POPs. But there are other notable developments, including the

recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNEP and the World Bank to cooperate in supporting countries' efforts to address POPs, as well as five new UNEP Governing Council Decisions on Chemicals.

Two of these Governing Council decisions call for strengthened support of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions during the interim period. These build upon UNEP's prior work on PIC and POPs.

Three new decisions, *inter-alia*, call for:

- (1) A global assessment on mercury to be considered at UNEP's next regular Governing Council in 2003,
- (2) A report to the 2002 Global Ministerial Environmental Forum on the need for a strategic approach to international chemicals management, and
- (3) A call to Governments who have not yet done so to eliminate the use of lead in gasoline.

James B. Willis, Director, UNEP Chemicals

Capacity Building Programme

The conclusion of the POPs Convention negotiations brings on a new phase in UNEP Chemicals' capacity building programme. In 2001, our priority will be to assist countries to ratify and implement both the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

The programme will focus on assisting countries in identifying their capabilities and needs, and, specifically for the Stockholm Convention, in developing their Implementation Plans and undertaking specific implementation actions.

In the latter category, the programme seeks to build on the successful dioxin/furans, PCBs and POPs pesticides workshops that took place during the last few years. Donor support has been secured for specific projects on alternative approaches to DDT use in disease vector control, PCB management, and in undertaking dioxin/furans sources inventories. The capacity building programme also recognises the close relationship between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

Rotterdam Convention - A New Chemical Is Recommended For Inclusion



Photo courtesy of IISD/ENB

Dr. Reiner Arndt, Germany, ICRC Chair

The second meeting of the Interim Chemicals Review Committee (ICRC) under the Rotterdam Convention was held from 19 - 23 March in Rome at the FAO Headquarters.

The ICRC is a subsidiary body consisting of 29 government-designated experts in chemicals management. Dr. Reiner Arndt of

Germany chairs the ICRC. The principal responsibilities of the ICRC are to make recommendations on the inclusion of banned and severely restricted chemicals and hazardous pesticide formulations and to prepare relevant draft decision guidance documents.

At this meeting, the ICRC addressed issues related to its operational procedures and chemicals identified for inclusion under the voluntary PIC procedure. It also considered a chemical – monocrotophos - notified as banned or severely restricted under the Convention procedure, and decided to recommend it for inclusion. The meeting also established a drafting group that will work intersessionally to prepare the draft decision document on monocrotophos.

A number of contact groups will work intersessionally on the following issues: pilot-testing of a severely hazardous pesticide formulation report form; development of an environmental incident report form; development of a format for a decision guidance document for severely hazardous pesticide formulations; and prioritization of work on old notifications.

The next session of the ICRC is scheduled for March 2002 in Geneva.

**Status of ratifications as of 1 April 2001:
73 Signatories.
14 Parties (New Parties since November
2000: Germany and Mongolia).
The Convention has not yet come into force.**

Basel Convention - Unwanted Stockpiles of Hazardous Waste

In January this year, 34 African countries and partners gathered in Rabat, Morocco to take charge of the critical issue of unwanted stockpiles of hazardous wastes, a problem they share. The First Continental Conference for Africa for the Environmentally Sound Management of Unwanted Stocks of Hazardous Wastes and Their Prevention, jointly organised by the Kingdom of Morocco and SBC, was part of a priority activity being carried out under the Basel Declaration on Environmentally Sound Management. This meeting was supported financially by GTZ (Germany), SDC (Switzerland), DANCED (Denmark), and SBC.

Strong and large participation by African delegates has enabled to define the main priorities and elements of a programme of action that would meet their needs. Such progress was made possible because of the pioneer work and long experience of FAO in this domain.

The Conference adopted a Programme of Action and the necessary mechanisms, under the aegis of UNEP and SBC, to ensure follow-up of activities. Proposals were made for hosting the Second Continental Conference for Africa in 2003. In order to achieve high political visibility, the Conference, during its International Forum, considered the draft text of the Rabat Ministerial Declaration that will be presented to an appropriate forum for adoption.



Photocourtesy of SBC

The Conference agreed to invite UNEP and SBC to take on the responsibility of facilitating the implementation and monitoring of the Programme of Action in close co-operation with their partners, particularly FAO. The Conference also agreed to establish a follow-up mechanism composed of Parties, IOMC, Industry, NGOs and SBC.

From left to right:

Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary, SBC
 Mr. Mohamed El Yazghi, The Minister of Land Management, Environment, Urbanism and Habitat, Morocco
 Mr. Philippe Roch, State Secretary/Director, Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL) and President, Fifth Conference of the Parties
 Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP

Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, a Japanese national, is the newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention. Prior to her recent appointment, she was Principal Legal Officer of the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN.

Her previous appointments include: Coordinator of UNEP projects of Land-Based Sources of Pollution and on Environmental Impact Assessment; and Deputy Chief of the Environmental Law Unit of UNEP.

Global Mercury Assessment

At its 21st Governing Council, UNEP was requested to perform a global assessment of mercury and present its findings to the 22nd Governing Council for consideration. The assessment should include an outline of options addressing significant global adverse impacts of mercury, inter-alia, by reducing and or eliminating the use, emissions, discharges and losses of mercury and its compounds and improving international cooperation and communication.

The Governing Council decision calls for the assessment to be performed in an expeditious, open, transparent and inclusive process that includes contributions from governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector. In response to this request, UNEP Chemicals has developed a work plan for the assessment.

The first step will include data gathering, compilation and a preliminary evaluation of the data. This will then be followed by an open-ended working group meeting to review and agree on the assessment and consider possible further

steps needed at the international level to address the issue of mercury related impacts on health and the environment. The working group is expected to meet in mid-2002. The final assessment will be submitted to the 22nd Session of the Governing Council in February 2003. The total cost of the assessment is an estimated US\$640,000. To date, indications of financial commitments to the assessment have been received from Canada, Denmark and the United States.



A drop of mercury

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The UNEP Chemicals Newsletter is published periodically to give readers world-wide an update of activities to promote the environmentally sound management of chemicals and so help protect public health and the environment.

UNEP promotes sustainable development by catalysing vital global actions and building national capacity for the sound management of chemicals through information exchange, training, and capacity building.

Inquiries and editorial correspondence should be sent to the Director, UNEP Chemicals. Material may be reproduced without fee, with acknowledgement.

New CD-ROM



UNEP Chemicals' information sources are available on CD-ROM. This first issue contains a selection of Internet web sites, including information on POPs, PIC, PRTRs, IRPTC database, capacity building activities, and other areas.

The CD-ROM is distributed to our national correspondents, project focal points, and other UNEP Chemicals' partners.

Selected Publications

Press Coverage: Fifth Round of Talks on Treaty on POPs.

Available in hard copy, January 2001

Standardized Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Dioxin and Furan Releases.

Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet. January 2001

Proceedings: UNEP Chemicals Workshops on Management of PCBs and Dioxins/Furans.

- . Yaoundé, Cameroon April 2000;
 - . Cavtat, Croatia May 2000;
 - . Teheran, Islamic Republic of Iran June 2000;
 - . Montevideo, Uruguay September 2000.
- Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet

Report of the UNEP/FAO/Global IPM Facility: Termite Biology and Management Workshop.

Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet February 2000

Proceeding: Workshop on Sustainable Approaches for Pest and Vector Management and Opportunities for Collaboration in Replacing POPs Pesticides, Bangkok, Thailand, March 2000

Ordering Publications

A publications list is available from UNEP Chemicals and on the Web (www.chem.unep.ch). Documents are free of charge.

Calendar

21-23 May 2001

POPs Diplomatic Conference
 Stockholm, Sweden

18-22 June 2001

Regional Workshop on Chemicals
 Legislation with Reference to POPs
 Accra, Ghana

9-13 July 2001

National Conference on Dioxins/
 Furans and Dioxin-like Substances
 with participation from CIS countries
 St. Petersburg, Russia

17-20 September 2001

Subregional Workshop on Inventory
 of Obsolete Pesticide Stocks
 Rostov-on-the-Don, Russia

25-28 September 2001 (tentative)

Workshop to Promote
 Sustainable Alternative
 Strategies to POPs Pesticides
 West Africa

8-12 October 2001

8th Session of the
 Intergovernmental Negotiating
 Committee of the Rotterdam
 Convention
 Rome, Italy

19-22 November 2001

Workshop to Promote Sustainable
 Alternatives Strategies to
 POPs Pesticides
 East Africa

