



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

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



**Stockholm Convention on Persistent
Organic Pollutants**

**Conference of the Parties to the
Basel Convention on the Control
of Transboundary Movements
of Hazardous Wastes and
Their Disposal
Twelfth meeting**
Geneva, 4–15 May 2015
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Programme of work and budget

**Conference of the Parties to the
Rotterdam Convention on the
Prior Informed Consent
Procedure for Certain Hazardous
Chemicals and Pesticides in
International Trade
Seventh meeting**
Geneva, 4–15 May 2015
Item 6 of the provisional agenda**
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**Conference of the Parties to the
Stockholm Convention on Persistent
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**Draft strategy for further development and operation of the joint
clearing-house mechanism for the Basel, Rotterdam and
Stockholm conventions**

Note by the Secretariat

As referred to in the note by the Secretariat on clearing-house mechanism for information exchange (UNEP/CHW.12/26-UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.7/20-UNEP/POPS/COP.7/35), the annex to the present note sets out a draft strategy for further development and operation of the joint clearing-house mechanism for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions which aims at strengthening regional delivery mechanisms by improving information and expertise sharing relevant to the implementation of the three conventions. The present note, including its annex, has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/CHW.12/1.

** UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.7/1.

*** UNEP/POPS/COP.7/1.

Annex

Draft strategy for further development and operation of the joint clearing-house mechanism for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

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I. Situational analysis

A. Background and mandates

1. The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal states the importance of information exchange between parties and through the Secretariat in its Article 3 on national definitions of hazardous wastes, Article 4 concerning the dissemination of information on the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes and other wastes, Article 6 on transboundary movement between parties, Article 10 on international cooperation, Article 13 on transmission of information as well as Article 16 concerning the functions of the Secretariat.
2. The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, in its Article 1 defines the objective of the convention "... to promote shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among Parties in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals in order to protect human health and the environment from potential harm and to contribute to their environmentally sound use, by facilitating information exchange about their characteristics, by providing for a national decision-making process on their import and export and by disseminating these decisions to Parties". Furthermore the convention uses a number of information exchange procedures defined in its Articles 5, 6, 8, 12, 13 and 14 to facilitate the prior informed consent for importing certain hazardous chemicals in international trade, as well as for increasing the knowledge about other chemicals which countries have domestically regulated or prohibited.
3. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, in its Article 9 states that "... each Party shall facilitate or undertake the exchange of information relevant to the reduction or elimination of the production, use and release of persistent organic pollutants and to their alternatives, risks and economic and social costs ..." and that "... the Secretariat shall serve as a clearing-house mechanism for information on persistent organic pollutants, including information provided by parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations." Article 9 also defines different groups of information providers, including parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations. Additionally information exchange is referred to in the Stockholm Convention Article 4, on specific exemptions, Article 10 on public information, awareness and education, Article 11 on research, development and monitoring, Article 15 on national reporting and 16 on effectiveness evaluation.
4. All three conventions operate through a network of national contacts and authorities that are officially nominated by their Governments, to serve as focal points for information exchange, among other functions.
5. The conventions also define their secretariats as having a key role in the information exchange procedures and mechanisms to facilitate their implementation, effectively serving as centralized hubs for collecting, repackaging, translating if necessary and disseminating information relevant to the implementation of the conventions, including information on human health and environmental impacts of hazardous chemicals and wastes, as well as legal and administrative measures that the states have put in place to mitigate those impacts and to produce, use and dispose chemicals in an environmentally sound manner.
6. At their meetings held in 2008 and 2009 respectively, the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions adopted the decisions on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (hereinafter the "synergies decisions")¹.
7. In section III B of the synergies decisions the conferences of the parties invited 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. The conferences of the parties also requested the Secretariat to develop systems of information exchange on health and environmental impacts, including a joint clearing-house mechanism, with the aim of these systems serving all three conventions.
8. At their ordinary meetings in 2011 and 2013, the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions decided² to include cross-cutting and joint activities in the

¹ BC-IX/10, RC-4/11, SC-4/34.

² SC-5/27, RC-5/12 and BC-10/29 in 2011; BC-11/26, RC-6/16 and SC-6/30 in 2013.

programmes of work of the three conventions, including activity S10 on the joint clearing-house mechanism for information exchange.

9. At their simultaneous extraordinary meetings held in 2013, the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions each adopted the omnibus decision on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions³ (hereinafter the “2013 omnibus decision”).

10. In paragraph 17 of the 2013 omnibus decision, the conferences of the parties requested the Secretariat to recommend areas for further development or adjustment of joint activities, which include the joint clearing-house mechanism, for consideration by the conferences of the parties at their meetings in 2015.

B. Other guidance

11. The Stockholm Convention has developed overtime a general approach for the development of its clearing-house mechanism through discussions and comments, and proposals made to Secretariat at different sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee⁴ and of the Conference of the Parties⁵. Some common suggestions can be identified, including that the clearing-house mechanism should:

(a) Be cost-effective and have a reasonable budget and be implemented in a phased manner, with the Conference of the Parties guiding the process and approving each phase and budget;

(b) Provide the means to identify and address the lack of specific information in several areas; the need for mechanisms to identify further information needs should be addressed;

(c) Take into account the need to focus on issues related to the provision of technical and financial assistance; the information provided by the mechanism should aim at the provision of technical and financial assistance;

(d) Take into account and integrate information acquired through feasibility and case studies on regional and subregional centres;

(e) Address the need to ensure the availability of information in the six official languages of the United Nations;

(f) Provide methods for selecting countries for case studies related to the clearing-house; elaboration of selection criteria for case studies related to the mechanism;

(g) Take into account the importance of searching for synergies and efficiencies by coordinating with and linking to related initiatives;

(h) Study how clearing-house mechanisms have been developed under other environmental conventions, and use existing best practices.

12. In addition, the United Nations Environment Assembly, in its resolution 1/5 on chemicals and waste, among others, invited parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm to promote an effective and efficient network of regional centres to strengthen the regional delivery of technical assistance.

13. Considering the above, the Secretariat has developed the present strategy for the joint clearing-house mechanism based on the overall principles of the Stockholm Convention strategy, taking into account the need to serve the information exchange needs of the three conventions as well as to provide emphasis on regional delivery mechanisms and strengthening the network of regional centres.

II. Mission

14. The joint clearing-house mechanism shall facilitate or undertake the identification, collection, management, distribution and exchange of information and expertise to support parties and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

³ BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1, SC.Ex-2/1.

⁴ UNEP/POPS/INC.7/INF/16.

⁵ UNEP/POPS/COP.3/INF/10.

III. Vision

15. The aim is to develop a global clearing-house mechanism that empowers stakeholders and users with the means to contribute and access up-to-date, quality information necessary to support the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, in a transparent, neutral, efficient and user-friendly manner and with strong emphasis on regional delivery.

16. The clearing-house mechanism will provide parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, regional centers, regional offices and other stakeholders with the means and capacity to contribute valuable information that is easily channelled and incorporated into the mechanism. The information will be validated, re-packaged and integrated, translated if necessary, processed and made accessible to different user groups in a user-friendly format by means of information products and services. Other multilateral environmental agreements and information exchange initiatives will profit from and contribute to the mechanism; cooperation and coordination will be enhanced, resulting in the further development of synergies beyond the three conventions.

17. The clearing-house mechanism will embrace all traditional, scientific and technological ways and means of transmitting information, including paper-based, electronic components and internet-based tools. It will operate as a global, open and transparent network. It will take a proactive and collaborative approach to identifying, prioritizing and meeting the information needs of its wide range of users. In so doing, it shall, under guidance from the conferences of the parties, be responsive in meeting the evolving needs of conventions' stakeholders and users, and contribute to achieving the broader objectives of the three conventions.

IV. Goals

18. In order to achieve the above mission and vision, two major areas of work need to be further developed and integrated. The first is related to the information content itself and the means and tools to identify, collect, manage, process and re-distribute it. The second is linked to the network of people and institutions that will provide and use the information.

19. The two strategic goals set out below will guide the work to be undertaken in these areas towards the achievement of the clearing-house mechanism mission and vision.

A. **First goal: Enhancement of infrastructure and services to facilitate identification, collection, integration and exchange of information and the creation of a global knowledge base relevant to support the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

1. Focus

20. The focus of this goal is on information content and information flow on a global scale, making efficient use of regional delivery mechanisms. The purpose is to identify and collect information relevant for the implementation of the three conventions, and to put in place the IT infrastructure and knowledge management services that facilitate the integration of such information, its sources and foster information exchange at large. The driving forces include conventions' requirements, mandates from the conferences of the parties, including synergies decisions, stakeholders' and users' needs.

21. This goal involves providing improved and integrated access to existing information sources, making the best use of regional delivery mechanisms, identifying information gaps and fostering the establishment and development of new information sources accordingly; and promoting and catalyzing the exchange of information, knowledge, experience and best practices.

22. Set out below are measurable objectives for guiding and evaluating progress towards this goal, strategies for achieving those objectives and approaches for their implementation.

2. Objectives

23. The objectives set out below reflect desired growth in seven necessary and complementary areas of action:

(a) Value added

24. The objective is to improve steadily the value of information available through the clearing-house mechanism for achieving the goals of the conventions.

25. Possible performance indicators include the number and percentage of surveyed users perceiving improvement in the value of the information, the number of information gaps identified

and addressed and the number of new information sources established and integrated into the mechanism.

(b) Use

26. The objective is to achieve continuous expansion in the use made of clearing-house mechanism information products and services by diverse user groups and information providers, including use and provision of information, as well as expanding those information products and services to regional centres as appropriate.

27. Possible performance indicators include the number of providers and users of the clearing-house mechanism, the number of information products and services and the number of different user groups using the mechanism as well as the number of regional centres that have been engaged in the clearing-house mechanism.

(c) Quality

28. The objectives are to improve steadily the overall quality of clearing-house mechanism information, products and services and the ability of users to assess the quality of specific information, and the diversification of those information products and services in languages through better use of regional centres.

29. Possible performance indicators include the number and percentage of surveyed users perceiving improvement in the quality of clearing-house mechanism information, products and services and the amount of quality-related feedback received.

(d) Speed and facility

30. The objective is to enhance progressively the speed and facility of clearing-house mechanism transactions, including the ability of users and providers to contribute, locate and retrieve desired information through a variety of user friendly tools.

31. Possible performance indicators include the number and percentage of surveyed users perceiving improvement in the speed and facility of clearing-house mechanism transactions, the number and percentage of successes in contributing, locating and retrieving desired information and the number of information products and services, user applications and features available.

(e) User needs responsiveness

32. The objective is to improve continuously the ability of users and providers to articulate individual and collective information needs and of the clearing-house mechanism to meet those needs in a timely manner.

33. Possible performance indicators include the number and percentage of surveyed users perceiving improvement in the timeliness of the clearing-house mechanism in meeting their information needs and the number of individual and collective information requests received.

(f) Integration

34. The objective is to achieve steady growth in the helpfulness of the clearing-house mechanism for enabling comparisons between data and in providing summaries and syntheses of resulting information.

35. Possible performance indicators include the number and percentage of surveyed users perceiving improvement in the helpfulness of the clearing-house mechanism for enabling data comparison and providing summaries and syntheses and the number of features and services in the mechanism allowing for the comparison, aggregation and segregation of information.

(g) Volume

36. The objective is to expand progressively the amount of information, relevant for the implementation of the three conventions, referenced or directly accessible via the clearing-house mechanism in key areas of interest and focus (e.g., national reports; legislation and policies; scientific, technical and thematic issues, etc.) and from diverse sources.

37. Possible performance indicators include the number of documents, reports, articles, etc. available per category, the number of information sources covered and the number and size of websites, databases, publications, etc.

3. Strategies

38. The objectives relating to the first goal will be achieved through five strategies, which are described below. A strategy on building the clearing-house mechanism networks is provided in the section of the document dealing with the second goal.

(a) Ensuring compatibility through standardization and interoperability

39. The strategy involves providing and achieving acceptance of tools, guidelines, protocols and standards for promoting the compatibility of information content and network structure and processes, and can be achieved by:

- (a) Monitoring and facilitating the progress of appropriate standards organizations;
- (b) Coordinating with related initiatives e.g., InforMEA, UNEP Live, pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs), etc. This coordination can be achieved, for example, by attending and convening joint meetings and promoting interoperability between systems;
- (c) Identifying areas where information and infrastructure compatibility are necessary, while keeping standardization requirements to a minimum;
- (d) Identifying best practices, standards and protocols regarding:
 - (i) Clearing-house mechanism website formats, topic areas and terminologies;
 - (ii) Quality and reliability of information and methods for enabling users to assess them;
 - (iii) Information sharing protocols;
 - (iv) Indexing and searching protocols (including the use of metadata);
 - (v) Developing and adopting a standard taxonomy, compatible with existing initiatives, for use when cataloguing or retrieving information within the clearing-house.
- (e) Documenting standards and protocols to provide clear guidance and guidelines for countries and organizations to create or expand their own applications within the clearing-house mechanism;
- (f) Developing criteria and procedures for the full involvement of other actors, such as international businesses and non-profit organizations, as thematic focal points or partners;
- (g) Ensuring, where feasible, the use of standard protocols and formats for efficient data exchange between systems (e.g. web services, OData, XML etc.);
- (h) Regularly updating and enhancing the user guide for building applications for the clearing-house mechanism, associated training, and related compatibility and interoperability checklists.

(b) Tracking information needs, priorities and best practices

40. The strategy involves tracking gaps in information and expertise and national needs, priorities, best practices and lessons learned, on an ongoing basis. This can be achieved by developing and using multiple vehicles for enabling users to articulate individual and collective information needs and priorities, including national reports, user surveys, user requests and user satisfaction, workshops and user conferences.

(c) Prioritizing and promoting expansion

41. The strategy involves identifying priorities for clearing-house mechanism growth and improvement based on user needs and strategic considerations, and promoting expansion accordingly. Measures to undertake this include:

- (a) Coordinating with related initiatives at all levels, for example by attending their meetings and convening common meetings;
- (b) Supporting regional centres and country involvement through sponsored projects to promote, partnering and progress in priority areas;
- (c) During the periods between meetings of the conferences of the parties, focusing information expansion and synthesis on issues and topics to be covered at upcoming meetings;

(d) Prioritizing information expansion and synthesis for chemicals and wastes issues that are under consideration by subsidiary and scientific bodies under the three conventions.

(d) Providing open, worldwide access to existing information

42. The strategy involves engaging national focal points, regional centres and other actors in providing access through the clearing-house mechanism to existing information within their regions and countries and promoting open data policies.

(e) Rationalizing and customizing

43. The strategy involves developing and using the right tool for the right task and for the right target audience, bearing in mind the need for interoperability and ease of maintenance of those tools. This can be achieved by:

(a) Performing analysis and research to identify the most effective tool for each task (related to information technology or not). Give preference to existing tools over developing new ones, where appropriate;

(b) Using document-based systems for small volumes and heterogeneous information (information which is not structured and not easily integrated);

(c) Using database systems for larger volumes and for more structured types of information (structure and format must be defined);

(d) Using the internet and other electronic means of data transfer such as web services where feasible, thereby minimizing the use of paper-based data transfers while enabling automation of information exchange among stakeholders;

(e) Using specialized expertise for complex information analysis and using partnerships with universities and non-profit organizations for less complex tasks where use of information technology is not feasible;

(f) Using the internet for information dissemination where feasible, using CD-ROMs, paper and other media where internet use is not feasible and using the right dissemination media for the right target audience.

4. Relationship between strategies and objectives

44. The following table shows which of the strategies outlined in section IV-A-3 should be used to achieve the objectives outlined in section IV-A-2.

Strategy	Objective						
	Value added	Use	Quality	Facility	Responsiveness	Integration	Volume
Ensuring compatibility through standardization and interoperability		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Tracking information needs, priorities and best practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Prioritizing and promoting expansion	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Providing open, world-wide access to existing information	Yes	Yes		Yes			Yes
Rationalizing and customizing		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

5. Implementation

45. The strategies outlined above would be implemented through workplans prepared by the Secretariat as part of the programme of work for the biennium. These workplans will be developed taking into account the goals, objectives and strategies outlined in this document. The workplans will be carried out by the Secretariat and key stakeholders of the conventions.

46. Depending on the level of engagement, regional centres and other stakeholders may want to develop their own clearing-house mechanism implementation plans, in coordination with the Secretariat. To facilitate integration, compatibility and interoperability of systems and tools, stakeholders shall use, to the extent possible, the guidance document for parties and other stakeholders

to facilitate the implementation of the joint clearing-house mechanism at the national and regional levels, which will be reviewed by the Secretariat periodically⁶. The Secretariat will also develop a toolkit to facilitate building interoperable clearing-house mechanism nodes at regional and national levels.

B. Second goal: Establishment of the joint clearing-house mechanism global network of information providers, users and institutions, having the common needs of sharing information and expertise for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

1. Focus

47. The focus of this goal is to identify the components of the network for information exchange, including the information providers and users, the Secretariat, regional centres and regional offices, partners and other stakeholders and the conferences of the parties. The purpose is to develop a framework for efficient interaction among those involved in information exchange, to promote the clearing-house mechanism and its use, and to foster international cooperation for information exchange on issues relevant to the implementation of the three conventions. The driving forces include conventions' obligations, chemicals and wastes related pollution and health problems, the promotion of alternatives and alternative approaches, opportunities for research and development, synergies, funding and other common needs and interests.

48. This goal involves, among other things: identifying and enrolling network members; defining member groups, establishing their profiles, roles and responsibilities; identifying partner institutions and developing necessary agreements; conducting clearing-house mechanism awareness raising and capacity-building activities.

49. Set out below are measurable objectives for guiding and evaluating progress towards this goal as well as strategies for achieving those objectives and approaches for implementation.

2. Objectives

50. The objectives set out below reflect desired growth in four necessary and complementary areas of action towards the establishment of the clearing-house mechanism global network:

(a) Network membership and enrolment

51. The objective is to involve a critical mass of members in the network and to expand progressively the network membership across countries, regions, and institutions, including regional centres, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and cross-sectoral thematic focal points. The focus is on populating a comprehensive, global, selective but non-discriminatory, multi-sectoral network. The outputs include terms of reference for providers and users, lists of user groups, providers and experts, indicating their expertise, user profiles and provider profiles.

52. Possible performance indicators include the number of parties having designated national focal points, the number of regional centres engaged in the clearing-house mechanism, the number of network members by region, the number and percentage of network members by categories and the number and percentage of network members by social and economic sectors.

(b) Member responsiveness

53. The objective is to increase and steadily improve the capacity of network members to articulate information needs and agree on priorities, share experiences and expertise leading to a comprehensive global dialogue for exchange of information relative to the implementation of the conventions. The focus is on the commitment of network members and their active participation and outputs include member contributions.

54. Possible performance indicators include the total number of individual contributions by network members, such as information relevant for the implementation of the conventions, identification of information needs, priorities, experiences, expertise and feedback, the total number of collective contributions by network members, comparative geographical coverage of contributions received and comparative social and economic coverage of contributions received.

(c) Awareness and use of the clearing-house mechanism

55. The objective is to increase steadily awareness of the capabilities and benefits of the clearing-house mechanism and progressive expansion in the use made of the information and services

⁶ UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/19.

available under the clearing-house mechanism. The focus is on marketing the clearing-house mechanism and its use and outputs include promotional events and materials, with strong emphasis on better use of regional delivery mechanisms.

56. Possible performance indicators include the number of individuals and groups receiving information on clearing-house mechanism products and services, the number of promotional materials and events, the number of requests received for information or information products and the amount of website traffic per month or season.

(d) Collaboration

57. The objective is to develop and steadily improve collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements, regional centres, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and funding agencies in support of information exchange initiatives. The focus is on the development of synergies and partnerships and outputs include partnerships and agreements.

58. Possible performance indicators include the number of regional centres engaged in the clearing-house mechanism, number of partner organizations, the number of partnerships and collaboration agreements and the number of joint projects.

3. Strategies

59. The above objectives will be achieved through six strategies, as described below.

(a) Concentrating on key actors

60. To ensure an effective and efficient use of resources, the strategy involves maximizing on results while economizing on resources by identifying leverage points on which to focus efforts. In other words, it is important to concentrate initially on key actors with potential to have a major impact on the implementation of the conventions. This can be achieved by:

(a) Identifying and involving members and partners capable of producing a domino effect for information exchange, action and funding;

(b) Leveraging on the effective use of regional centres, official contact points and other technical contacts and experts designated by parties in line with relevant articles of each convention;

(c) Identifying key actors whose decisions may have greater impact on the objectives of the conventions and developing target marketing for them;

(d) Addressing marketing efforts on target actors and highlighting specific benefits for a specific target sector;

(e) Identifying champions of information exchange;

(f) Creating partnerships with existing networks to expand the clearing-house network;

(g) Creating partnerships with existing information exchange related initiatives such as InforMEA, UNEP Live, pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs), etc.;

(h) Using the strengths of partners and members to promote the clearing-house mechanism networks;

(i) Promoting the clearing-house mechanism at conferences, workshops and other events.

(b) Grouping actors according to their affinities and promoting their inter-linkages

61. The strategy involves considering multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approaches in addition to thematic or like-minded groups to avoid compartmentalization and to stimulate creativity and innovation. This can be achieved by:

(a) Identifying as comprehensively as possible the member categories, including providers, user groups and domain experts;

(b) Developing a framework for efficient interaction with network members and developing and communicating the roles and responsibilities of each group;

(c) Establishing membership and user categories, such as national focal points, intergovernmental organization focal points, non-governmental organization focal points, thematic focal points and groups such as information providers, users, experts, information owners and managers;

(d) Fostering teamwork capabilities and establishing a solid base to develop a network that works collaboratively to achieve the clearing-house mechanism goals, for example social network tools for virtual meetings, video conferences, discussion forums, blogs, etc., could be developed to strengthen links between network members at low costs.

(c) Fostering joint endeavours to develop synergies and avoid duplication of efforts

62. The strategy involves mentoring and learning between network members to profit from the network knowledge base to strengthen its capacity. This can be achieved, for example, by developing or further enhancing e-learning tools and databases of experts.

(d) Relying on partnerships and focusing on facilitation

63. The strategy involves relying on partnerships and focusing on facilitation, by:

- (a) Concentrating on facilitating, encouraging and promoting;
- (b) Engaging a wide range of conventions' stakeholders to pool resources and share work, including promotion of the clearing-house mechanism;
- (c) Contributing to partners' related activities through joint endeavours.

(e) Nurturing membership and partnership

64. The strategy involves nurturing membership and partnership, by:

- (a) Clarifying and communicating roles and responsibilities;
- (b) Ensuring satisfaction;
- (c) Rewarding valuable contributions and initiatives;
- (d) Developing good communication at all levels, organizing and improving communication resources between the Secretariat and network members and among network members, and developing communication mechanisms to ensure global participation, including areas with poor or no internet connection.

(f) Promoting use of the clearing-house mechanism

65. The strategy involves promoting awareness, understanding, use and expansion of the clearing-house mechanism through communication and education activities.

4. Relationship between strategies and objectives

66. The following table shows which of the strategies outlined in section IV-B-8 should be used to achieve the objectives outlined in section IV-B-7.

Strategy	Objective			
	Membership and enrolment	Member responsiveness	Awareness and use	Collaboration
Concentrating on key actors	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grouping actors according to their affinities and promoting inter-linkages	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Fostering joint endeavours to develop synergies and avoid duplications		Yes		Yes
Relying on partnerships and focusing on facilitation		Yes	Yes	Yes
Nurturing membership and partnership	Yes	Yes		Yes
Promoting use of the clearing-house mechanism	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

5. Implementation

67. As this goal consists of the development of the network per se, the Secretariat plays a key role in the implementation of the above strategies. However, other actors may also play important roles as proposed in the table below.

Strategy	Key actors and their possible involvement in the implementation of the strategies											
	COPs, SBs	Sec, CS	Parties	non-parties	E-NGOs	Industry	UNEP, MEAs	UN, SAs	FAs, donors	Resear chers	SRCs	Reg. Cntrs
Concentrating on key actors	O	L	C, P	C	C		C	C			C	C
Grouping actors according to their affinities and promoting interlinkages	O	L	C				P		F		P	P
Fostering joint endeavours to develop synergies and avoid duplications	O	L	L	C	C	C	L	C	C, F	C	L	P
Relying on partnerships and focusing on facilitation	C	L	C								C	C
Nurturing membership and partnership	C	L	C	C	C	C	C, P	C	C, F	C	C, P	L
Promoting use of the clearing-house mechanism	O, C	L	C	C	C	C	C	C	F	C	C, P	L

L: Leading, O: Overseeing, F: Funding, P: Promoting, C: Contributing

SBs: Subsidiary Bodies, Sec: Secretariats, E-NGOs: Environmental non-governmental organizations, SAs: Specialized Agencies, FAs: Funding Agencies, SRCs: Scientific and Review Committees, Reg. Cntrs: Regional Centres.

68. The strategies outlined above would be implemented through workplans carried out by the Secretariat and key stakeholders of the conventions.

V. Clearing-house mechanism: concept, implementation and management approach

A. Concept

69. The joint clearing-house mechanism is a multi-stakeholder global mechanism set up and operated by the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions Secretariat under the guidance and oversight of parties, to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise relevant for the implementation of the three conventions. Its three major components are:

(a) Information capital: The content of information exchanged by the clearing-house mechanism network members. It consists of information relevant for the implementation of the conventions, such as technical and scientific information on health and environmental impacts of chemicals and wastes covered under the conventions, information on legislation and other measures that states have put in place to mitigate those impacts, information on projects and implementation activities undertaken by different conventions' stakeholders as well as information on technical and financial assistance available to parties for implementation. Parties may also consider adding other types of information that they see necessary;

(b) Human capital: The global network of information providers, users and institutions working to implement the convention and formally contributing to and using the clearing-house mechanism;

(c) Operational capital: a set of information and technological tools, products and services, and the necessary processes and resources to design, implement, operate and further enhance them.

70. The proposed clearing-house mechanism concept, implementation and management approach is illustrated in figure 1 below. The implementation and management process will follow a phased approach, with each phase consisting of four years, coinciding with the biennia and budget cycles of the conventions. Each biennium, the Secretariat will prepare or undertake:

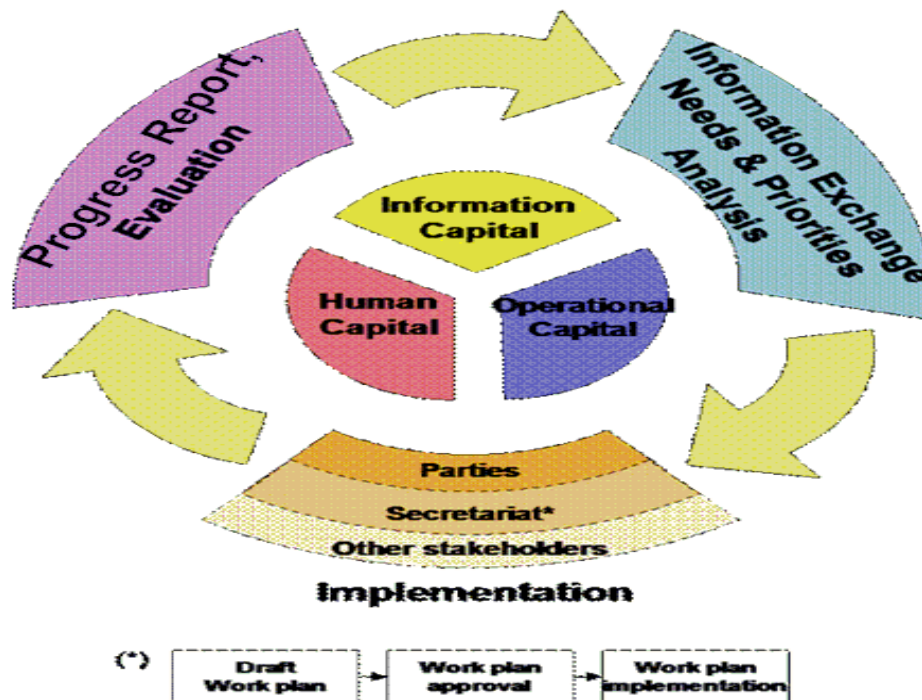
(a) Information exchange needs and priority analysis, on the basis of information obtained from parties and other stakeholders at the conferences of the parties and subsidiary body meetings, technical assistance and other types of workshops, country visits as well as user surveys;

- (b) Clearing-house mechanism workplan, taking into account the objectives, strategies and directions outlined in this document, for consideration and approval by the conferences of the parties, as part of the programme of work of the conventions;
- (c) Implementation of the approved workplan, during the course of the biennium;
- (d) Progress report on implementation of the workplan, for consideration by the next meetings of the conferences of the parties.

71. The Secretariat will also conduct an evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism at the end of each phase, i.e. every four years.

72. Each workplan will aim at increasing the usefulness of the clearing-house mechanism for the implementation of the conventions through a steady improvement of its performance in the areas identified under each of the objectives outlined in sections IV-A-2 and IV-B-7.

Figure 1: clearing-house mechanism concept, implementation and management approach



B. Analysis, implementation and evaluation

1. Information exchange needs and priority analysis

73. Each biennium, during the preparation of the proposal for the programme of work, the Secretariat, in consultation with parties, will analyse the information exchange needs and priorities. This analysis will be presented for consideration at the next meeting of the conferences of the parties. Together with this analysis, the Secretariat will prepare a workplan and budget for the biennium. Parties will have the opportunity to consider the proposal as well as the workplan during the meetings conferences of the parties.

2. Implementation

74. On the basis of the amended proposal and workplan, the Secretariat will work with relevant stakeholders and partners in the implementation of the activities in the workplan, taking into account the priorities set by the parties at the conferences of the parties. During the implementation the Secretariat will collect relevant information and statistics for the evaluation that will take place at the end of the second biennium.

3. Evaluation

75. The evaluation will be conducted at the end of each phase, i.e. every four years, and it will be done through two main mechanisms: a user survey performed at the middle of the biennium, in time to report to the conferences of the parties, and through parties' and stakeholders' feedback during meetings and workshops. The results of those evaluations will be presented to the conferences of the parties for their consideration.

4. Timeframe

76. This strategy is proposed to be used to further develop the clearing-house mechanism during the biennia 2017-2018 and 2019-2020. Any comments and suggestions received from parties during the first biennium will be incorporated in the strategy and presented to the conferences of the parties in 2018 for their consideration.

VI. Performance indicators

77. To conduct the evaluations, the Secretariat has developed a series of performance indicators aimed at measuring the performance for each of the established objectives outlined in chapter IV above. Examples of these performance indicators are presented in appendix to the present annex.

78. Performance indicators are revised at the beginning of each phase and during the evaluation. The final evaluation for each objective is based on an analysis of indicators and on an expert judgment of the success of each of the objectives outlined in chapter IV above.

VII. Funding and staffing

79. Funding for specific activities or projects are organized through the normal process of the conventions programmes of work. The workplans developed by the Secretariat for each biennium would cover only the Secretariat activities of the clearing-house mechanism. Any national or regional information exchange projects or activities under the clearing-house mechanism would require separate funding.

80. The Secretariat currently has the required staffing to manage and undertake all activities related to the first goal, including working with regional centres. To be able to implement the second goal at a larger scale, the Secretariat will require two additional staff members at P3 and G4 levels, to manage the development of the global network of information providers and the user community and to keep the records generated by the network, its memberships and associated activities up-to-date. In this context the Secretariat will concentrate its efforts on the first goal during the biennium 2016-2017, while undertaking activities related to the second goal subject to availability of additional resources.

Appendix

Examples of performance indicators for the joint clearing-house mechanism progress reports and evaluations

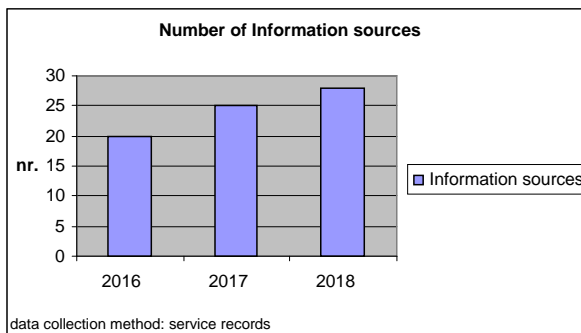
First goal: Enhancement of infrastructure and services to facilitate identification, collection, integration and exchange of information and the creation of a global knowledge base relevant to support the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Objectives and performance indicators

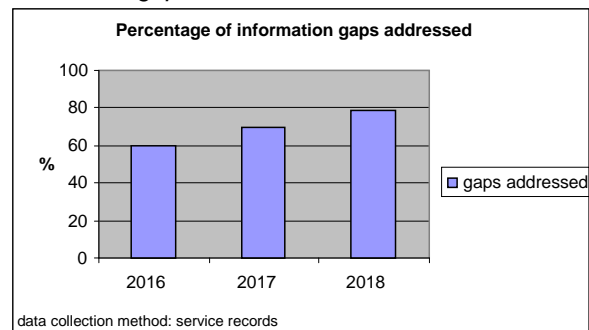
Value added

The value added of the clearing-house mechanism tools, services and information can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) number of information sources added to the clearing-house mechanism, (b) percentage of information gaps addressed, and (c) user perception of value of information to meet the goals of the conventions. The later will be evaluated through user surveys. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

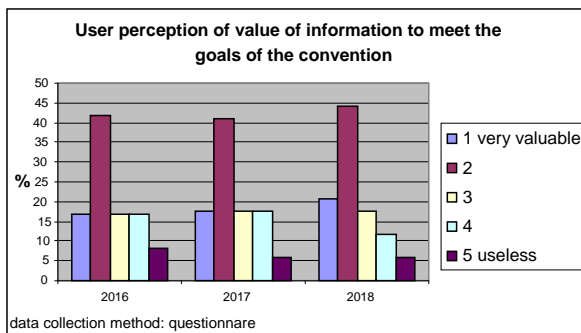
Information sources



Information gaps



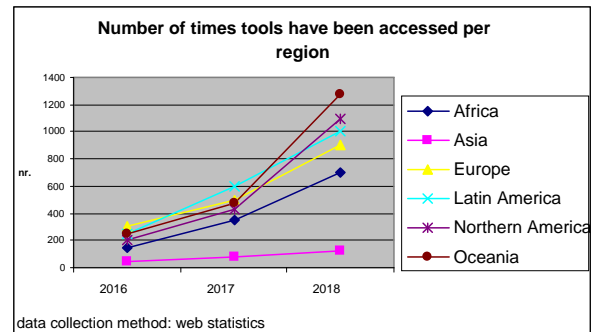
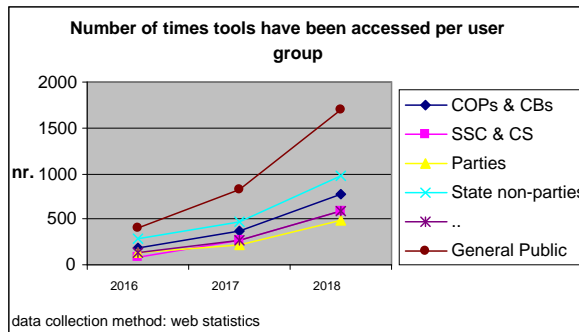
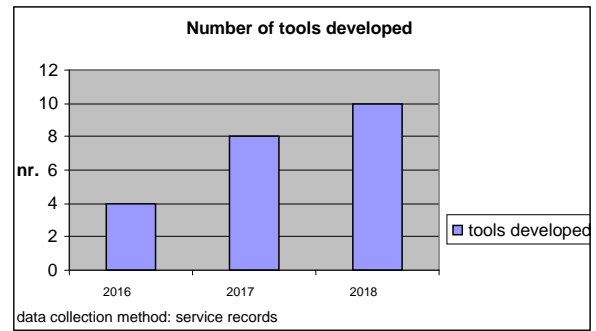
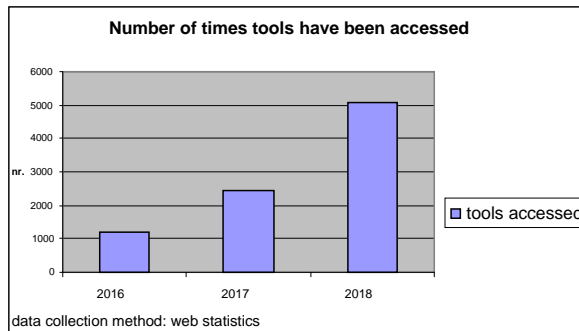
Value



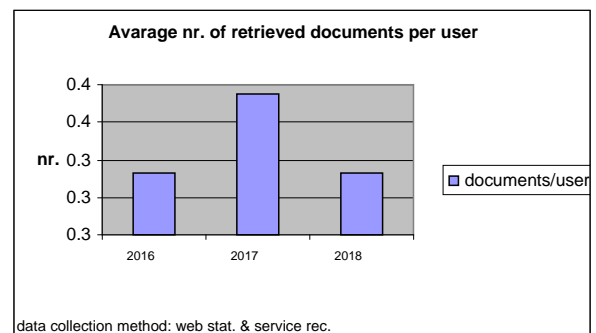
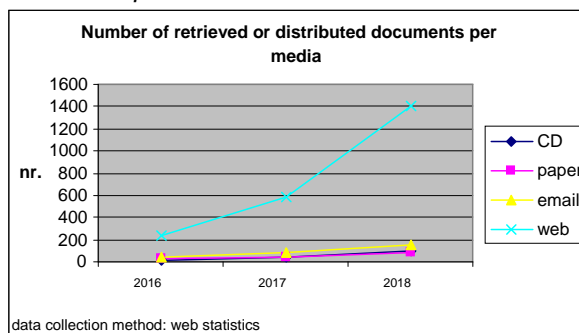
Use

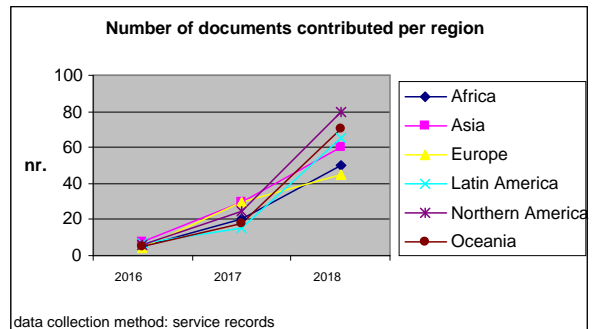
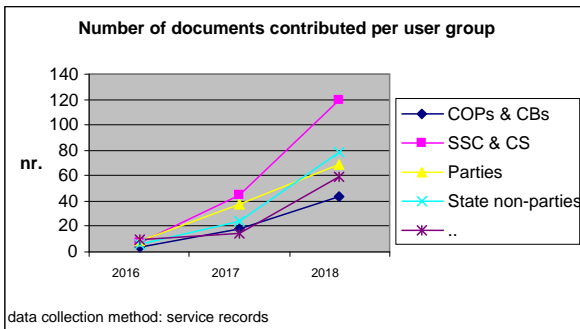
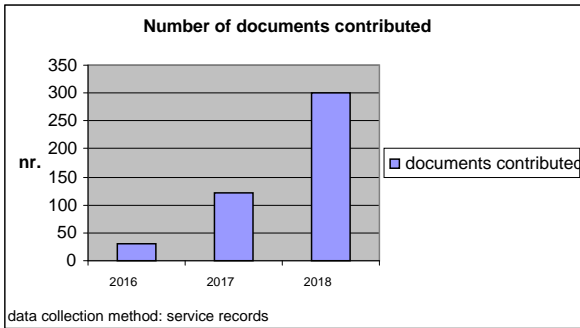
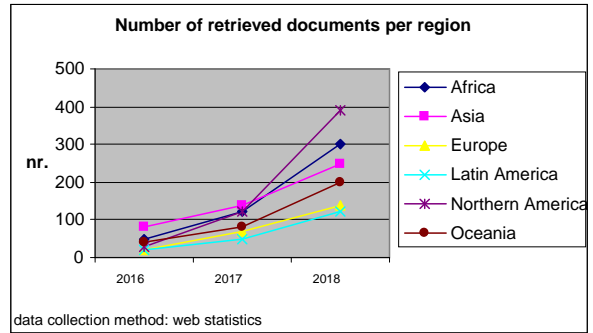
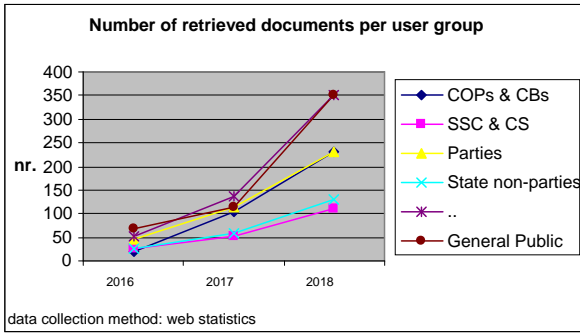
The use of the clearing-house mechanism can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) number of times tools have been accessed, (b) number of tools developed, (c) number of times clearing-house tools have been accessed per user groups, per region, (d) number of retrieved or distributed documents, (e) average number of retrieved documents per user, (f) number of retrieved documents per use or per region, (g) number of documents contributed per user, per region, (h) number of times clearing-house services have been used, (i) number of documents contributed by clearing-house members, number of times clearing-house services have been used. These indicators will be evaluated by analysing the website statistics and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

Tools

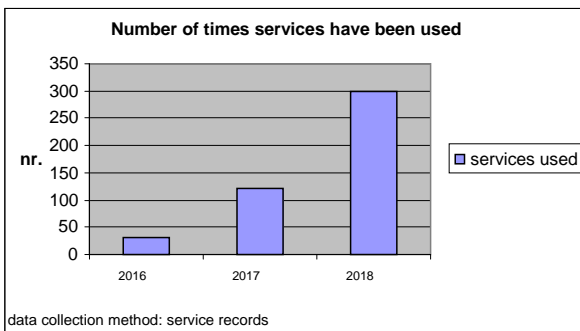


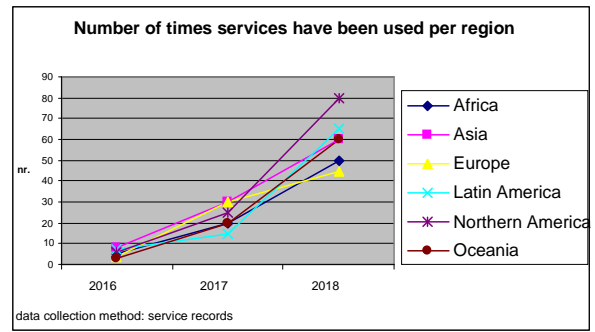
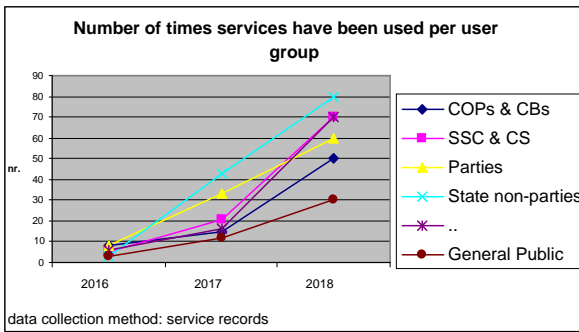
Information products





Services

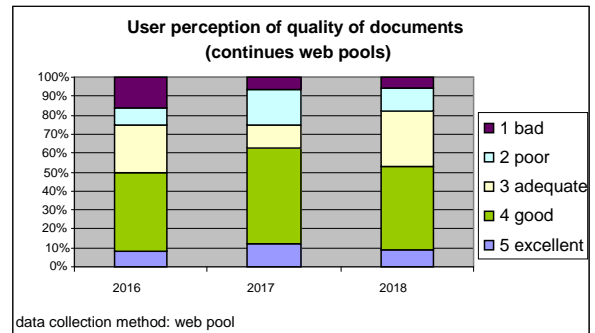
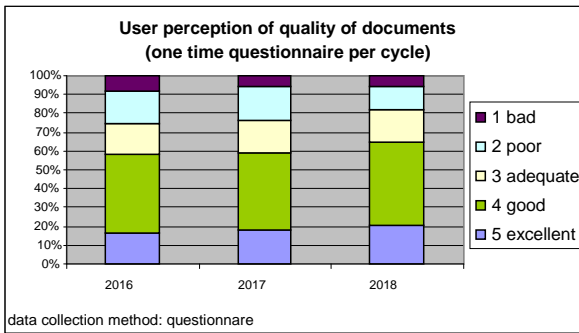




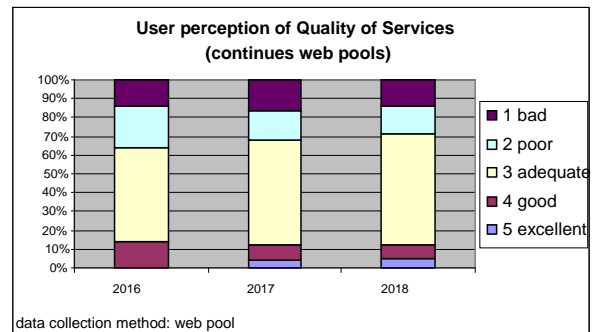
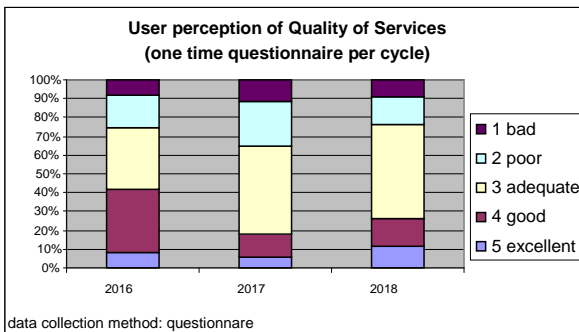
Quality

The quality of the clearing-house mechanism can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) user perception of quality of documents, (b) user perception of quality of services, (c) number of services performing for specific target audiences, (d) user perception of user-friendliest of the tools, (e) user perception of the quality of the information. These indicators will be evaluated by conducting user surveys and collecting user feedback during workshops and other meetings, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

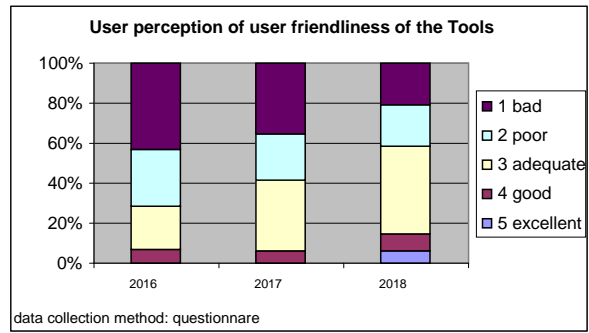
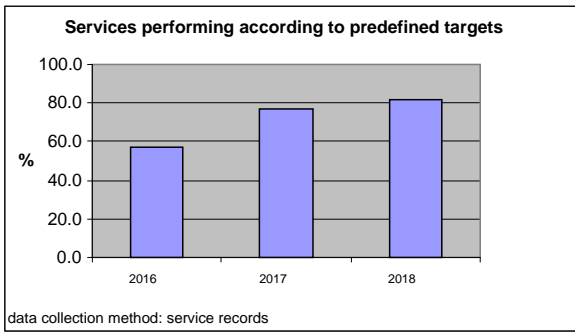
Information products



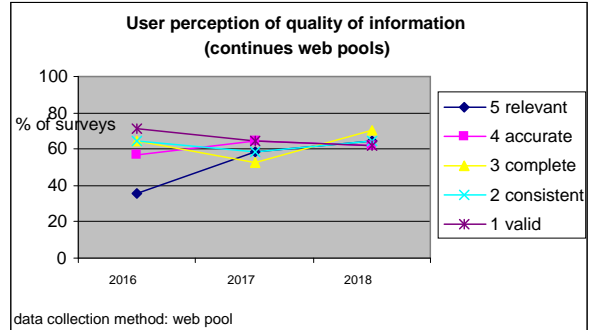
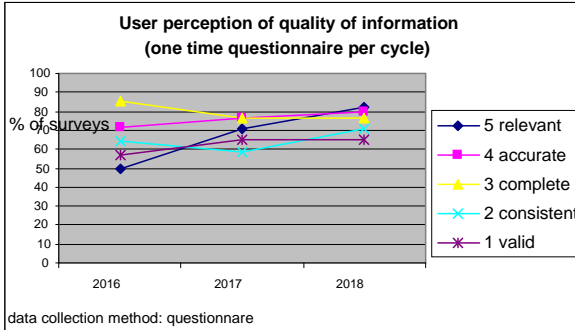
Services



Tools



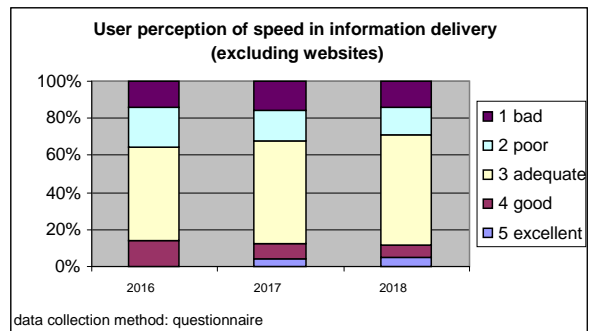
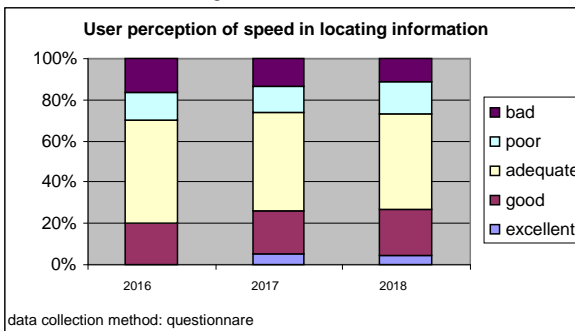
Information



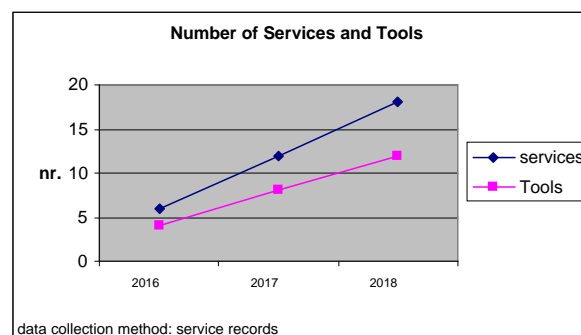
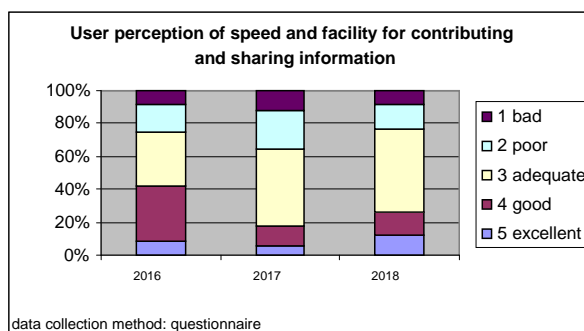
Speed and Facility

The speed and facility of the clearing-house mechanism can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) user perception of speed in locating information, (b) user perception of speed in delivering information (upon request to the Secretariat), (c) user perception of speed and facility for contributing information, (d) number of services and tools, (e) percentage of server uptime, (f) number of systems failures, (g) average number of reported bugs per tool. These indicators will be evaluated by conducting user surveys and collecting user feedback during workshops and other meetings, as well as statistics collected by the Secretariat from the Secretariat hosted systems, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth for performance indicators (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) each year starting from 2016, and to minimize the number of failures and bugs in the clearing-house systems during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

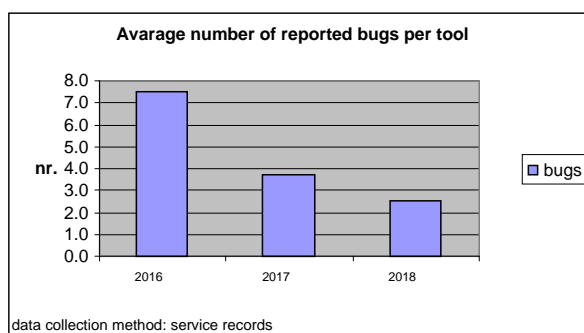
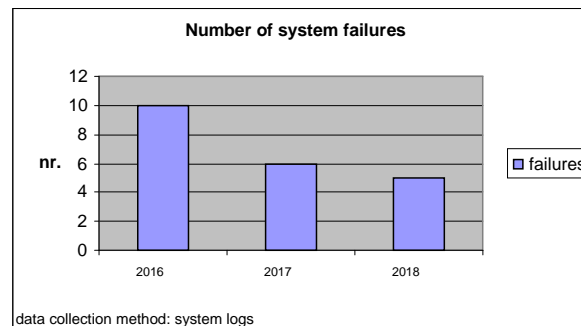
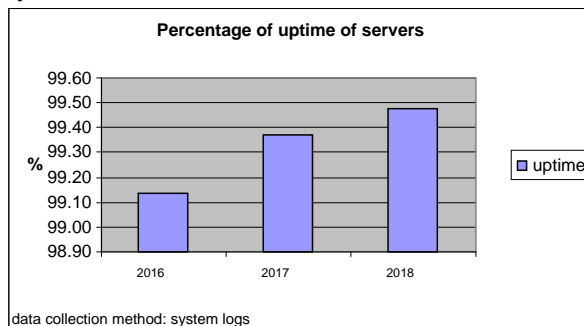
Information handling



Facilities



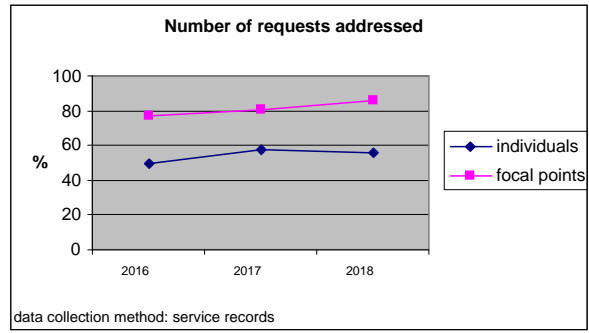
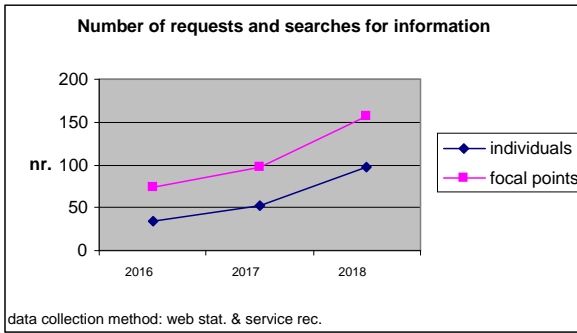
System



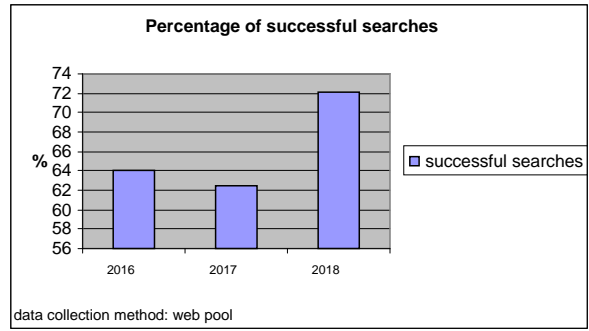
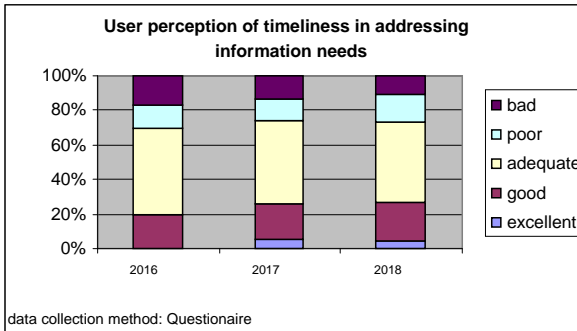
User needs responsiveness

The user needs responsiveness is the capacity of the clearing-house mechanism to identify and address user needs in a responsive manner. It can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) number of requests and searches for information, (b) number of requests addressed, (c) user perception of timeliness in addressing their information needs, (d) percentage of successful searches, (e) number of requests for information integration, (f) number of requests for information integration that have been addressed, (g) user perception of helpfulness of the clearing-house for integrating information, (h) number of documents, (i) size of data in the clearing-house systems, (j) number of information packages, (k) number of website pages. These indicators will be evaluated by conducting user surveys and collecting user feedback during workshops and other meetings, as well as statistics collected by the Secretariat from the Secretariat hosted systems, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

Information needs

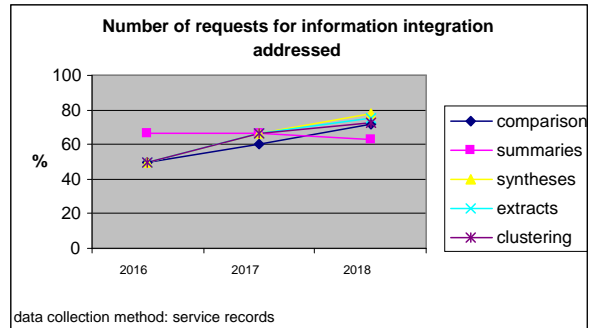
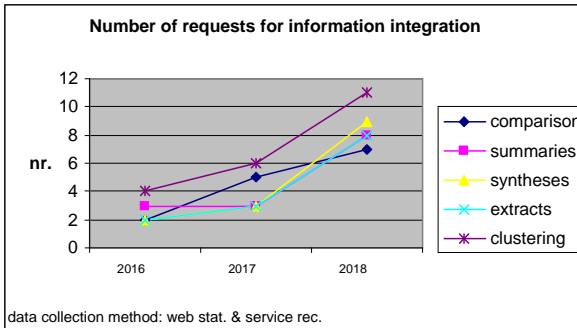


Response

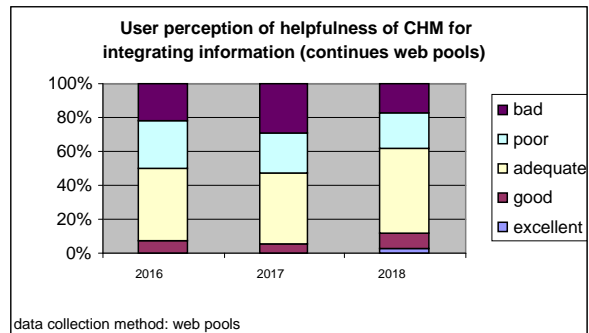
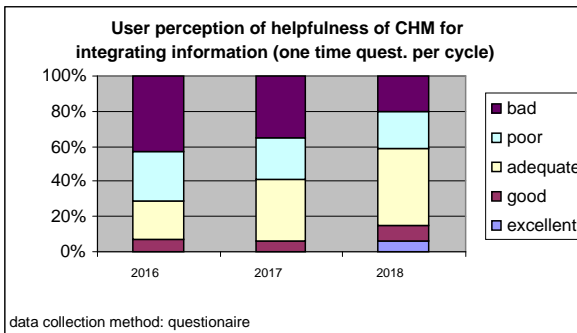


Integration

Needs

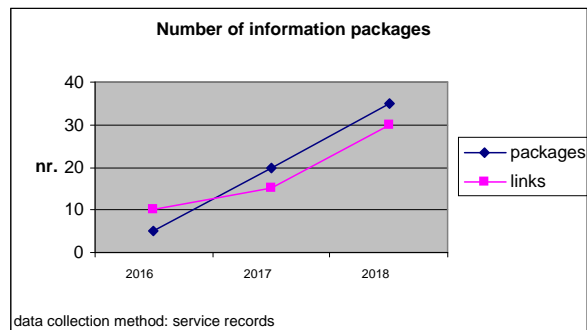
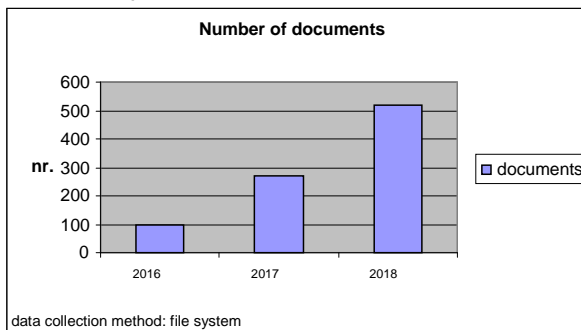


Helpfulness

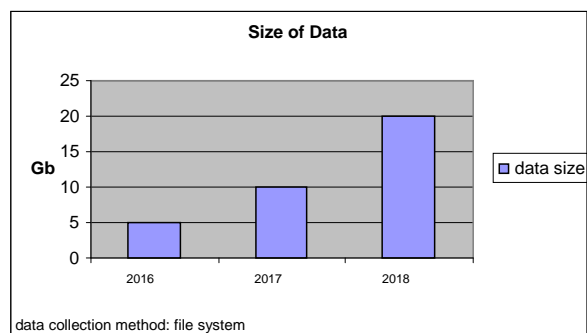
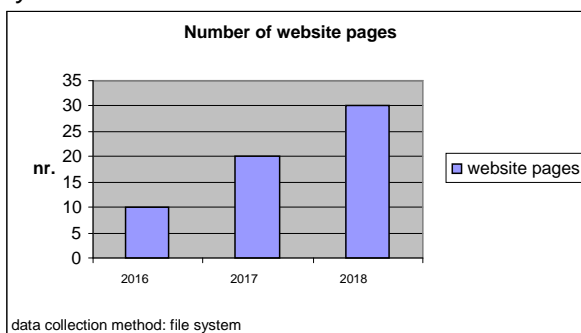


Volume

Information products



System



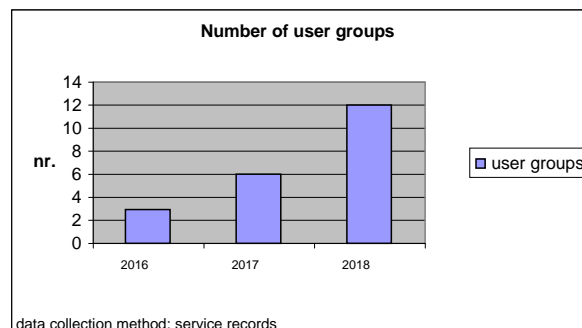
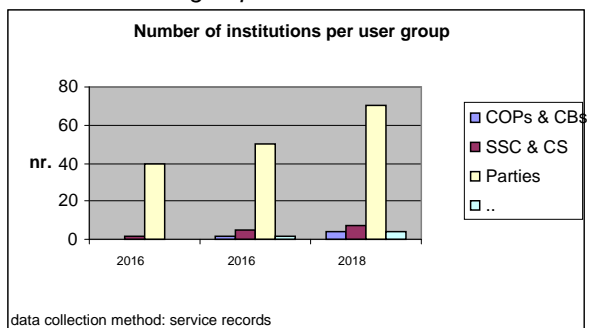
Second Goal: Establishment of the joint clearing-house mechanism global network of information providers, users and institutions, having the common needs of sharing information and expertise for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Objectives and performance indicators

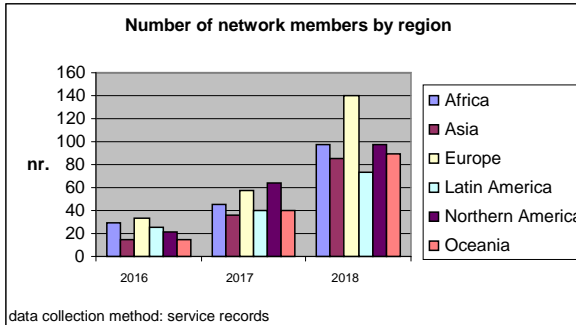
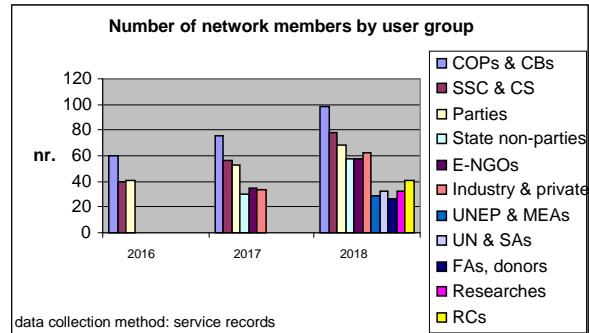
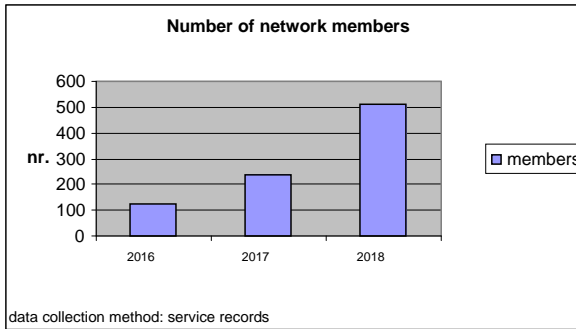
Network membership and enrolment

The progress in network membership and enrolment can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) numbers of member institutions per user groups, (b) number of user groups, (c) number of network members (by user groups and by regions). These indicators will be evaluated by using the statistics collected by the Secretariat from the Secretariat hosted systems, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

Parties and user groups



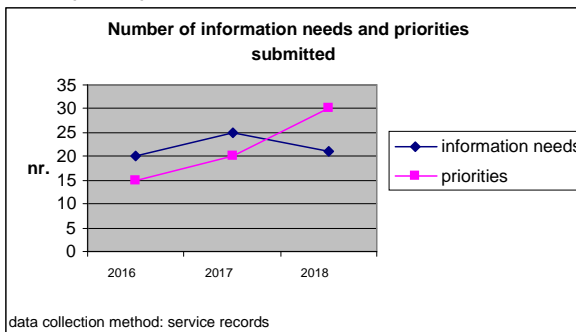
Members



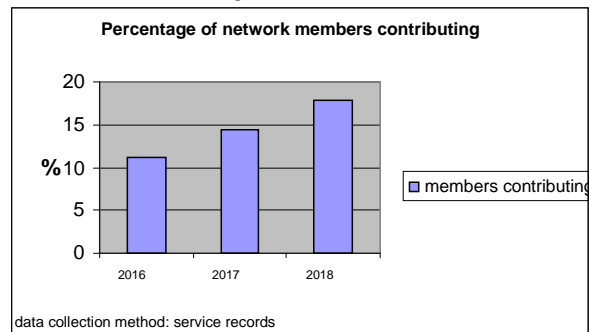
Member responsiveness

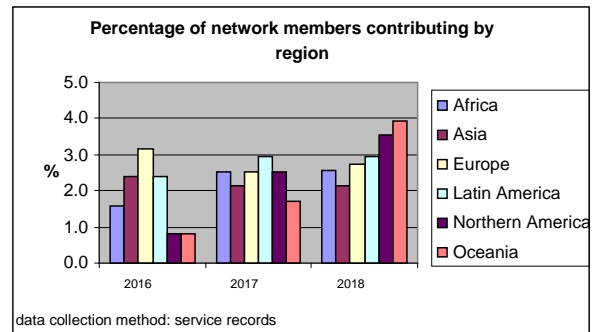
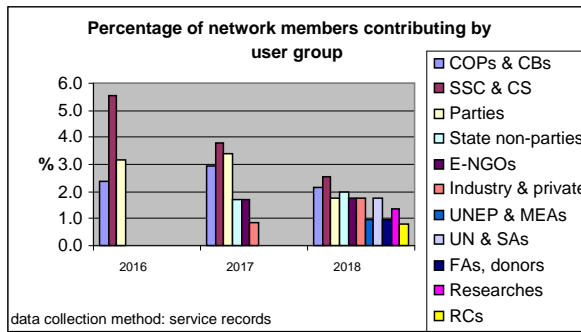
The member responsiveness is the capacity of the clearing-house members to contribute information and support other members of the community in a responsive manner. It can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) number of information needs and priorities submitted, (b) percentage of network members contributing information (by user groups and by regions), (c) number of available experts in the region, (d) number of sound measures, experiences and case studies contributed by members, (e) number of joint information contributions. These indicators will be evaluated by using the statistics collected by the Secretariat from the Secretariat hosted systems, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

Active participation

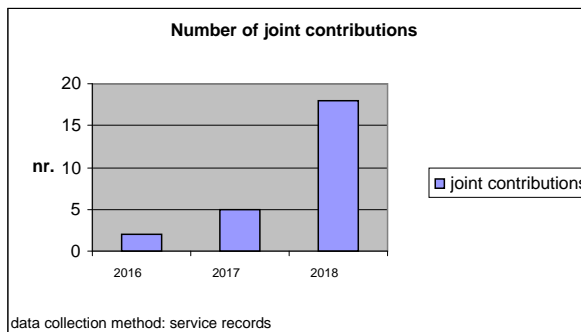
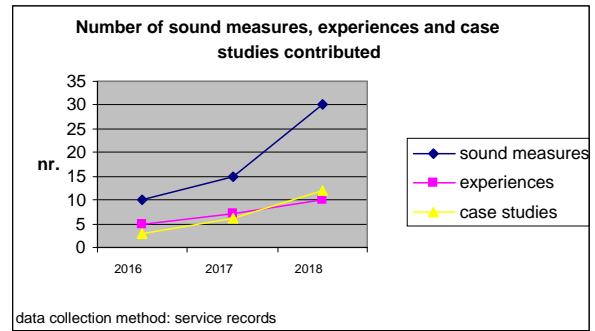
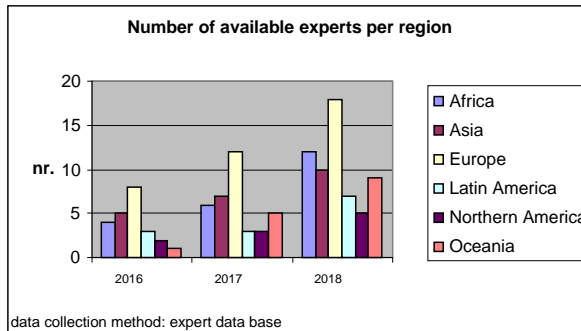


Members contributing





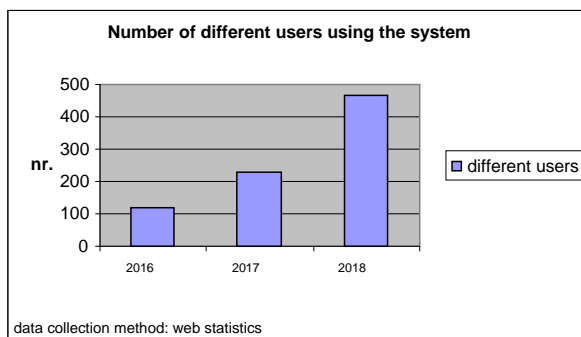
Member interaction



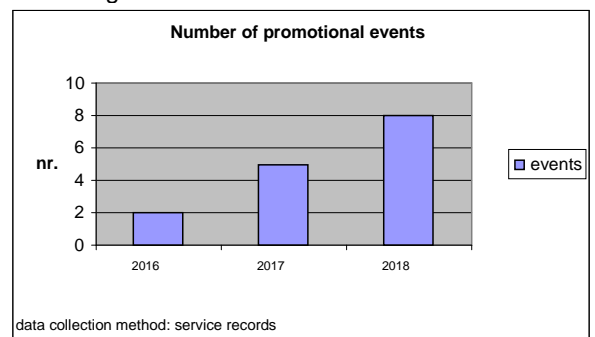
Awareness and use of the clearing-house mechanism

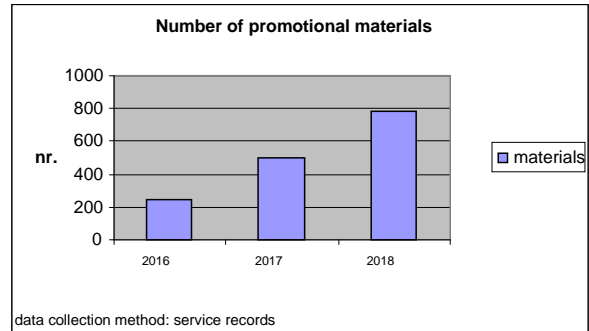
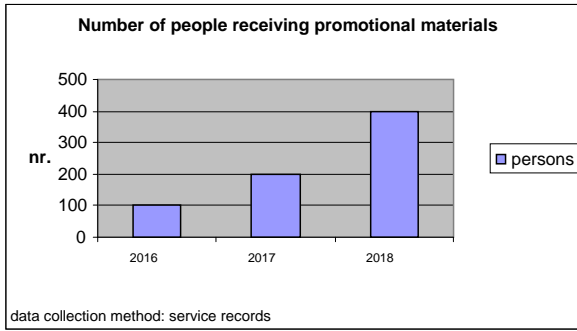
The awareness and use of the clearing-house can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) number of different users using the system, (b) number of promotional events, (c) number of promotional materials, (d) number of people receiving promotional materials, (e) number of unique visits to the websites. These indicators will be evaluated by using the statistics collected by the Secretariat from the Secretariat hosted systems, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

Users

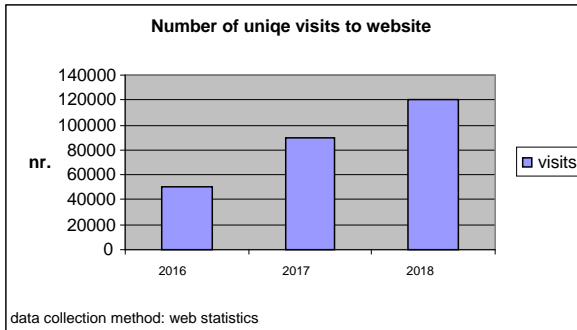


Promoting





Website



Collaboration

Collaboration between network members of the clearing-house can be measured with the following performance indicators: (a) number of partners, (b) number of funding institutions which are members, (c) number of collaboration agreements between institutions which are members of the clearing-house. These indicators will be evaluated by using the statistics collected by the Secretariat from the Secretariat hosted systems, and producing the graphs per year. The intention is to achieve growth in each of these indicators each year starting from 2016 and during the whole period of implementation of the strategy.

