

Guidance to assist Parties in updating their NIP to address the new POPs

The Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) is an international treaty aimed at protecting human health and the environment from the threats posed by POPs. The Convention goals are to restrict and ultimately eliminate the production, use, release, and storage of POPs. The Convention also establishes regulation on the international trade of POPs and their disposal upon becoming wastes. An initial 12 POPs were listed under the Convention when it was adopted in 2001. The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention decided to list 9 new chemicals in 2009 and an additional one in 2011. These newly listed chemicals are commonly referred to as the new POPs.

Parties to the Convention must develop a national implementation plan (NIP) for meeting the obligations of the Convention. To date the majority of Parties have submitted an initial NIP to the COP. When chemicals are added to the Convention, Parties need to review their NIP and update it with information on how they will address the newly listed POPs. The process of reviewing and updating the NIPs can be challenging for Parties that lack adequate resources and technical capacity. Parties have expressed the need for assistance in that regard and in particular in obtaining information on the presence of new POPs that are widely used for industrial purposes and are contained in articles.

To assist Parties in updating their NIP to address the new POPs, a set of guidance documents has been developed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), working in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention (SSC). The set of guidance documents aims at supporting Parties in developing strategies to restrict and eliminate the new POPs, by providing guidance on establishing inventories, monitoring the presence of products and articles containing new POPs, and selecting best available techniques and best environmental practices for situations when production, use and recycling of industrial POPs are allowed by the Convention. The scope and target audience of each of the guidance documents are summarized below. Although each document focuses on a specific topic, they complement one another in many areas and will be published together as a complete set. The documents seek to provide guidance to all Parties to the Convention and in particular developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition.

1. Guidance for the inventory of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) listed under the Stockholm Convention

Scope: the objective of this document is to provide step-by-step guidance that enables Parties to establish an inventory of products and articles containing polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) listed under the Stockholm Convention (hexabromodiphenyl ether and heptabromodiphenyl ether and tetrabromodiphenyl ether and pentabromodiphenyl ether) and industrial processes using these PBDEs. The guidance includes methods for estimating the quantities of products and articles containing such POPs in case accurate data is lacking. The inventory should provide Parties with baseline data on the presence of PBDEs at the national level. Such data would serve as a basis for Parties to develop strategies for meeting their obligations under the Convention in relation to PBDEs.

Main target audience: the focal point responsible for coordinating the process of updating the NIP, staff responsible for planning the inventory, and technical staff responsible for conducting the inventory of PBDEs.

2. Guidance for the inventory of perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and related chemicals

Scope: the objective of this document is to provide step-by-step guidance that enables Parties to establish an inventory of products and articles containing perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts, perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (PFOS-F) and PFOS related chemicals and industrial processes using these chemicals. The guidance includes methods for estimating the amount products and articles containing such chemicals in case accurate data is lacking. The inventory should provide Parties with baseline data on the presence of PFOS at the national level. Such data would serve as a basis for Parties to develop strategies for meeting their obligations under the Convention in relation to PFOS.

Main target audience: the focal point responsible for coordinating the process of updating the NIP, staff responsible for planning the inventory, and technical staff responsible for conducting the inventory of PFOS.

3. Guidelines on best available techniques and best environmental practices for the recycling and waste disposal of articles containing polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) listed under the Stockholm Convention

Scope: the Convention prohibits the use of listed polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) (hexabromodiphenyl ether and heptabromodiphenyl ether and tetrabromodiphenyl ether and pentabromodiphenyl ether) but contains a time-limited exemption for the recycling of articles that may contain PBDEs and the use and final disposal of articles manufactured from such recycling. However, recycling and final disposal have to be carried out in an environmentally sound manner and should not lead to the recovery of PBDEs for the purpose of their reuse. Furthermore, in 2011, the COP adopted a decision that encourages Parties to implement recommendations on the elimination of listed PBDEs from the waste stream, that call for the elimination of PBDEs from recycling streams as swiftly as possible. The objective of this guidance document is to assist Parties in developing strategies for complying with the obligations under the Convention relative to the recycling and waste disposal of articles containing BDEs, and implementing the recommendations of the COP.

Main target audience: staff responsible for developing management plans for the recycling and waste disposal of PBDEs and technical staff involved in their implementation.

4. Guidelines on best available techniques and best environmental practices for the production and use of perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and related chemicals

Scope: the Convention prohibits the use of perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts, perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (PFOS-F) except in certain applications or as intermediate in the production of chemicals used in these applications. Production of PFOS, its salts and PFOS-F is allowed only for use in these applications and the production of chemicals used in these applications. Parties that produce and/or use PFOS have to register with the secretariat of the Convention and should take into account guidance on best available techniques (BAT) and best environmental practices (BEP). Furthermore, in 2011, the COP adopted a decision that encourages Parties to implement recommendations on risk reduction for PFOS, its salts and PFOS-F, that relate to the different stages in the life cycle of PFOS and processes and materials containing PFOS. The objectives of this guidance document is to assist Parties in developing strategies for applying of BAT and BEP for the production and use of PFOS and for implementing the recommendations of the COP on risk reduction for PFOS.

Main target audience: staff responsible for developing management plans for the application of BAT and BEP for the production and use of PFOS and technical staff involved in their implementation.

5. Guidance for the control of the import of POPs

Scope: in general, the Convention prohibits the production and use of POPs and bans their trade across international boundaries. However, the Convention contains exceptions to these rules for specific POPs when used in specific applications by Parties that have registered for such uses. The existence of these exceptions adds complexity to the task of understanding which POPs can be traded internationally. The objective of this guidance document is to facilitate the identification of POPs that can be traded across international boundaries. The document includes guidance on applying this information towards the implementation of measures to restrict the international trade of POPs, as required by the Convention.

Main target audience: customs authorities to enforce regulations on the international trade of POPs, and national stakeholders, e.g., government authorities and industry, who need to understand which POPs can be traded internationally.

6. Guidance for strengthening the regulatory framework to enable regular monitoring products and articles that may contain new POPs

Scope: obtaining information on the presence of new POPs in products and articles on the national market and in imported goods is essential for the enforcement of regulations aimed at restricting and eliminating POPs. The collection of such information on a regular basis by the relevant authorities is facilitated by the existence of an adequate national regulatory framework for the monitoring of products and articles that contain POPs. Such a framework should also promote the exchange among competent authorities, of information collected at different stages of the life cycle of products and articles. In addition, in light of the globalized nature of the supply chains of products and articles that contain POPs, obtaining up-to-date information on such products and articles can be facilitated by regional and international schemes for information exchange. The objective of this guidance document is to assist Parties in developing a regulatory framework that can facilitate the monitoring of products and articles that contain POPs. The document includes guidance on key issues to consider for the enforcement of regulations under such a framework.

Main target audience: policy makers responsible for developing regulations for the management of POPs, and authorities involved in the collection of information on new POPs.

7. Guidance on labelling of products or articles that contain new POPs or use new POPs during manufacture

Scope: the identification of products and articles that contain new POPs is a prerequisite for their environmentally sound management in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. The labelling of such products and articles represents an option for ensuring that information on their POPs content is clearly indicated and disseminated along the supply chain to stakeholders who can then implement appropriate management measures. Such labelling should take into account that stakeholders may be located in different countries due to the globalized nature of the supply chains of products and articles. The objective of this guidance document is to assist Parties in developing labelling schemes for products and articles that contain new POPs by enhancing understanding of the essential elements of such schemes and their value in facilitating the management of new POPs. The document includes guidance on adapting existing international labelling schemes for use specifically for the labelling of products containing new POPs.

Main target audience: policy makers responsible for developing regulations for the management of POPs, and authorities involved in the collection of information on new POPs.



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