

**Stockholm Convention
on Persistent Organic
Pollutants**

**Small intersessional working group on
polychlorinated biphenyls
First online meeting
17 November 2017**

**Report of the first online meeting of the small intersessional
working group on polychlorinated biphenyls****I. Opening of the meeting**

1. The first online meeting of the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) was held on 17 November 2017. Welcoming the participants, the Chair of the small intersessional working group, Mr. Edwin Camelo Martínez (Colombia), opened the meeting at 13.00 p.m. CET. The objective of the current meeting, he said, was to agree on the draft terms of reference for the small intersessional working group to prepare a report on progress toward the elimination of PCB for consideration at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention.

II. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by the following 14 members: Mr. Agustin Harte (Argentina), Ms. Cynthia Bainbridge (Canada), Mr. Edwin Camelo Martínez (Colombia), Mr. Mario Rodas Talbot (Ecuador), Ms. Heidelore Fiedler (Germany), Mr. Yo Osada (Japan), Ms. Mihaela Cluadia Paun (Romania), Mr. John Lotoft (Sweden), Ms. Aziza Hamorouni Kerrou (Tunisia), Mr. Allan Astrup Jensen, Mr. Ian Webber, Mr. Michael Mueller, Ms. Silvia Oliviero Ghietto, Mr. Victor Estellano.
3. Additionally, the following experts observed the meeting: Mr. Mayumi Tamiya (Japan), Mr. Jonathan Romero (Colombia).

III. Adoption of the agenda

4. The working group adopted the agenda set out below on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG.1/1):
1. Opening of the meeting.
 2. Adoption of the agenda.
 3. Draft terms of reference for the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls.
 4. Other matters.
 5. Closure of the meeting.

III. Draft terms of reference for the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls

5. In considering the item, the working group had before it a note by the Secretariat on the draft terms of reference for the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls (UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG.1/2) and background of the review relating to polychlorinated biphenyls by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG.1/INF/1).
6. Introducing the item, the Secretariat recalled that at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided to undertake, at its ninth meeting, a review of progress towards the elimination of PCB in accordance with paragraph (h) of part II of Annex A to the Convention and established a small intersessional working group, working by electronic means and, subject to the availability of funding, through a face-to-face meeting, to prepare a report on progress towards the elimination of PCB for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting and requested the Secretariat to support the group. The Secretariat informed that, in accordance with paragraph 10 of decision SC-8/3, 23 experts had been nominated by Parties and others. Furthermore, in accordance with paragraph 9 of decision SC-8/3, Colombia had indicated its intention to serve as lead country in the preparation of the report referred to in paragraph 8 of decision SC-8/3.
7. The Secretariat gave a presentation on the draft terms of reference for the small intersessional working group to prepare a report on progress towards the elimination of PCB for consideration at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention. The draft terms of reference included the following aspects: information collection; information analysis and preparation of draft report; draft schedule of activities.
8. In the ensuing discussion, general appreciation was expressed for the preparation of the draft terms of reference.
9. Responding to one member, the Secretariat clarified that the draft terms of reference had been prepared at the request of the lead country, and in accordance with the draft workplan of the working group circulated in July 2017 for comments by the members. Regarding the question related to another small intersessional working group on national reporting, the Secretariat clarified that the group was established by the Conference of the Parties in its decision SC-8/17 to develop a manual for completing the updated format for national reporting under Article 15, aimed at clarifying what is sought in each question and table of the format.
10. Several members posed questions on how to go about effectively collecting information on PCB from countries while avoiding duplication and ensuring accuracy and consistency as much as possible; what role the members could or should play in the information collection; whether and how the information should be collected on a regional basis for the five regions and how it should be submitted to the Secretariat; whether and how the Secretariat could verify the information submitted by Parties in their national reports.
11. One member, referring to the draft format for the collection of additional information on PCB set out in appendix II of the draft terms of reference, said that questions asking whether Parties consider themselves as being able to meet the target years 2025 and 2028 for PCB under the Stockholm Convention and what they have done or they were planning to do in order to achieve the goals. The member also said that paragraph 13 of the draft terms of reference should be revised to reflect that “equipment” referred to in subparagraph (a) of part II of Annex A and “other articles” referred to in subparagraph (f) of part II of Annex A were not limited to those items listed in the Convention but rather the items were given as examples.
12. One member suggested that Parties should be asked to provide any additional information obtained after undertaking the preliminary inventory. Another member said, since there are three national reports and other information source such as project database of the global environment facility and others, care should be taken to avoid duplicative counting of the same information.
13. Another member indicated that the information available in the consolidated assessment of efforts made towards the elimination of PCB (UNEP/POPS/COP.8/INF/10) had uncertainty as to the use of various parameters and due to data limitation and suggested that such uncertainty be indicated in the draft report to be prepared by the group.
14. Several members, while suggesting some amendments to the format, supported conducting an online survey to collect information from Parties and others.
15. With regard to the draft schedule of activities, one member suggested that the role of the lead country be clarified and distinguished from that of the Secretariat. The member also suggested that the

Secretariat send to the members as soon as possible the information relevant to PCB extracted from the first, second and third national reports and the indication of information gaps e.g. Parties that had not submitted national reports.

16. After extensive discussions, the working group agreed to work on a regional basis to collect information until 2 March 2018. The members requested the Secretariat to provide information as to where the information gaps were, for example the Parties that had not submitted information on PCB through their national reports.

17. Subsequently, the working group agreed that the draft terms of reference should be revised on the basis of the draft contained in the annex to document UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG.1/2, taking into account the comments provided by the members during the online meeting and by email to the Secretariat before 24 November 2017. The revised terms of reference are set out in the annex to document UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG.1/2/Rev.1.

IX. Other matters

18. Under other matters, the Chair informed the group of the next steps as provided in section VI of the draft terms of reference. In addition, the Secretariat informed that the documents relevant to the work of the intersessional working group had been made available on the shared folder of DropBox and that the group would continue to use the shared folder for sharing documents and other materials.

XI. Closure of the meeting

19. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 14:15 p.m. on 17 November 2017.
