

**Stockholm Convention  
on Persistent Organic  
Pollutants**

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**Small intersessional working group on  
polychlorinated biphenyls  
First meeting (online)  
8 July 2020**

## **Report of the first meeting of the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls**

### **I. Opening of the meeting**

1. The first meeting of the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) was held online on 8 July 2020 from 3 p.m. CEST. Noting with thanks that the Government of Colombia, pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision SC-9/3, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention at its ninth meeting, had expressed its interest in serving as lead country in the preparation of a report on progress towards the elimination of PCB, pursuant to paragraph 6 (a) of decision SC-9/3, the participants agreed that Mr. Edwin Camelo Martínez (Colombia) would serve as the Chair of the small intersessional working group. The Chair opened the meeting and reminded the participants of the objective of the current meeting, which was to consider the draft workplan for the small intersessional working group on PCB.

### **II. Attendance**

2. The meeting was attended by the following 21 members: Mr. Tatkeu Jean Georges (Cameroon), Ms. Cynthia Bainbridge (Canada), Mr. Ren Yong (China), Mr. Edwin Camelo Martínez (Colombia), Mr. Gnamessou Koutoua Thomas D'aquin (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. Franklin Gabriel Góngora Ruiz (Ecuador), Ms. Heidelore Fiedler (Germany), Mr. Sam Adu-Kumi (Ghana), Mr. Yo Osada (Japan), Mr. Arturo Gavilan Garcia (Mexico), Mr. Jose Alberto Rosales Castillo (Mexico), Mr. Zaigham Abbas (Pakistan), Mr. Alexey Tkachev (Russian Federation), Mr. Mikhail Zapevalov (Russian Federation), Mr. Ablaye Diao (Senegal), Ms. Patience Nsereko (Uganda), Mr. Richard Hawkins (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Mr. Brian Gada (Zimbabwe), Mr. Alain Heidelberger (Hazardous Waste Europe), Mr. Philippe Ruat (Hazardous Waste Europe), Mr. Gamini Manuweera (United Nations Environment Programme).

3. Additionally, the following experts observed the meeting: Ms. Mayumi Tamiya (Japan), Mr. Toru Terai (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/2020/1/1):

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Draft workplan for the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls.

4. Other matters.
5. Closure of the meeting.

### III. Draft workplan for the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls

5. In considering this agenda item, the working group had before it a note by the Secretariat on the draft workplan for the small intersessional working group on polychlorinated biphenyls (UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG/2020/1/2).
6. Introducing the item, the Secretariat recalled that at its ninth meeting, the Conference of the Parties expressed its appreciation for the work on the review of progress towards the elimination of PCB taking note of the report on progress towards the elimination of PCB and the recommendations of the small intersessional working group on PCB established pursuant to decision SC-8/3; urged Parties to step up their efforts, *inter alia*, by urgently implementing actions to eliminate the use of PCB in equipment by 2025 and to achieve the environmentally sound waste management of liquids containing PCB and equipment contaminated with PCB having a content above 0.005 % by 2028; and took note of the consolidated guidance on PCB in open applications, and encouraged Parties to identify, as soon as possible, open applications and to manage them in accordance with the Convention.
7. The Secretariat further recalled that in decision SC-9/3, the Conference of the Parties decided to undertake, at its eleventh meeting in 2023, a review of progress towards the elimination of PCB and re-established a small intersessional working group, working by electronic means and, subject to the availability of resources, through a face-to-face meeting, to assist the Secretariat in preparing, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting:
  - (a) A report on progress towards the elimination of PCB;
  - (b) Guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB, as recommended by the small intersessional working group;
  - (c) A draft strategy for Parties to meet the 2025 and 2028 goals of the Stockholm Convention.
8. One member questioned why some Parties and observers had nominated more than one expert. The Secretariat confirmed that all nominations were submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 of decision SC-9/3, which did not specify the number of nominations per Party and observers. The Secretariat requested the members to review the information provided in the list of experts to participate in the small intersessional working group nominated by Parties and observers set out in document UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG/2020/1/3. Following the meeting, the list was updated as set out in document UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG/2020/1/3/Rev.1.
9. Subsequently, the Secretariat gave a presentation on the draft workplan for the small intersessional working group, as set out in annex I to document UNEP/POPS/PCBSIWG/2020/1/2.
10. In the ensuing discussion, while general appreciation was expressed for the preparation of the draft workplan, several members asked clarifying questions to the Secretariat.
11. Responding to one member, the Secretariat explained that the draft workplan included activities until year 2023 because the outputs requested in paragraph 6 of decision SC-9/3 were expected to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its eleventh meeting in 2023. The Secretariat also clarified that the outputs were to be submitted by the Secretariat and that the small intersessional working group on PCB were to assist the Secretariat in preparing those outputs. The Secretariat would consult the small intersessional working group on PCB in making the revised template for national reporting available by the end of 2021, in accordance with paragraph 6 (b) of decision SC-9/16, and in preparing the draft preliminary report, including on progress towards the elimination of PCB, to be submitted to the effectiveness evaluation committee by 31 January 2022, in accordance with paragraph 2 of decision SC-9/17.
12. One member reminded the group that it was important to ensure that the work of the current small intersessional working group would be built on the report and the recommendations developed by the former small intersessional working group.
13. Another member recalled that in addition to the national reports pursuant to Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention, the information from the national reports under the Basel Convention was crucial in preparing the report and the recommendations submitted to the ninth meeting of the

Conference of the Parties. She suggested to include the national reports under the Basel Convention as one of the primary sources of information. She also suggested to revise the title of the guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB to better reflect the expected content of the guidance.

14. One member questioned whether it was necessary to conduct another online survey, drawing attention to the experience of the online survey carried out in 2018. He mentioned the issue of low response rates and concerns over the accuracy of information provided. Another member, noting that the deadline for the fifth national reporting was 31 August 2022, while the next review of progress in the elimination of PCB and the effectiveness evaluation were scheduled to take place at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2023, asked whether it would be possible to suggest to the Conference of the Parties to consider streamlining the timing of information collection and the evaluation by the Conference of the Parties. Several members pointed out the importance of increasing the response rates of the national reporting, improving the questions asked and the format for collecting quantitative information necessary for the review of progress in the elimination of PCB, ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the information while avoiding duplication of efforts, and providing adequate guidance to Parties in collecting and submitting information on PCB.

15. The Chair suggested organizing a follow-up call among the members of the former small intersessional working group on PCB that had submitted the report to the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting, to exchange views on the conducting of an online survey in addition to the national reporting pursuant to Article 15, based on their experience in 2018, and to advise the Secretariat in preparing a draft revised workplan. The working group agreed to provide comments on the draft revised workplan to be prepared by the Secretariat following the current meeting.

16. The workplan for the small intersessional working group on PCB, as agreed by the working group based on the email exchanges after the meeting, is set out in the annex to the present report.

## **IX. Other matters**

17. Under other matters, 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**

18. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 4:40 p.m. CEST on 8 July 2020.

## Annex

### Workplan for the small intersessional working group on PCB

The work of the small intersessional working group on PCB (PCB SIWG) will build on the report and the recommendations developed by the former PCB SIWG (UNEP/POPS/COP.9/INF/10, UNEP/POPS/COP.9/6/Add.1).<sup>1</sup>

Information from national reports under the Stockholm Convention<sup>2</sup> as well as the Basel Convention<sup>3</sup> will be the primary sources of information.

Scheduled date	Activity
8 July 2020	First meeting of the PCB SIWG (PCBSIWG-1) to discuss the draft workplan.
July–August 2020	<p>The Secretariat prepares the documents requested by the COP as follows:</p> <p>For submission to the COP-10 in July 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• Proposal for a revision to the format for national reporting concerning information on PCB as per decision SC-9/16.</li> </ul> <p>For submission to the effectiveness evaluation committee by 31 January 2022 as per decision SC-9/17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary report on progress towards the elimination of PCB.</li> </ul> <p>For submission to the COP-11 in May 2023 as per decision SC-9/3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on progress towards the elimination of PCB, including recommendations of the PCB SIWG;</li> <li>• Revised guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided), taking into account the feedback from the COP-10, comments by Parties and observers;</li> <li>• Draft strategy for Parties to meet the 2025 and 2028 goals of the Stockholm Convention.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat will engage consultants, as necessary, to support the activities.</p>
30 September 2020	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft terms of reference for the preparation (objective, outline, scope etc.) of the guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• Draft terms of reference for the preparation of the proposal for a revision to the format for national reporting concerning information on PCB.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
October 2020	Second meeting of the PCB SIWG to discuss the draft terms of reference (PCBSIWG-2).

<sup>1</sup> [http://chm.pops.int/Implementation/IndustrialPOPs/PCB/Evaluation\(review\)/tabid/8304/Default.aspx](http://chm.pops.int/Implementation/IndustrialPOPs/PCB/Evaluation(review)/tabid/8304/Default.aspx).

<sup>2</sup> <http://chm.pops.int/Countries/NationalReports/FourthRoundPartyReports/tabid/6346/Default.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.basel.int/Countries/NationalReporting/NationalReports/BC2018Reports/tabid/8202/Default.aspx>.

Scheduled date	Activity
November–December 2020	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First draft guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• First draft proposal for a revision to the format for national reporting concerning information on PCB;</li> <li>• Draft terms of reference for the preparation of a draft preliminary report on progress towards the elimination of PCB.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
January 2021	<p>Third meeting of the PCB SIWG to provide feedback on the draft documents and discuss the draft terms of reference for the preparation of a draft preliminary report on progress towards the elimination of PCB (PCBSIWG-3).</p>
18 January 2021	<p>The Secretariat prepares a meeting document on PCB for the COP-10 including a report on the progress in the implementation of decision SC-9/3 and a draft decision on the matter.</p>
February–March 2021	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second draft guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• Second draft proposal for a revision to the format for national reporting concerning information on PCB.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
27 March 2021	<p>Deadline for inputs to the information document for the COP-10 (English only).</p> <p>The Secretariat finalizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• Draft proposal for a revision to the format for national reporting concerning information on PCB.</li> </ul>
April–July 2021	<p>Undertake training and awareness raising activities to support the submission of national reports using relevant guidance documents.</p>
19–30 July 2021	<p>Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (COP-10).</p> <p>As a follow-up to the COP, the Secretariat invites comments from Parties and observers on the draft guidance and revises the format for national reporting as agreed by the COP.</p>
31 October 2021	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First draft preliminary report on progress towards the elimination of PCB, taking into account the report and the recommendations developed by the former PCB SIWG,<sup>4</sup> and based on the information from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National reports under the Stockholm Convention,<sup>5</sup></li> <li>○ National reports under the Basel Convention,<sup>6</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/POPS/COP.9/INF/10, UNEP/POPS/COP.9/6/Add.1.

<sup>5</sup> <http://chm.pops.int/Countries/NationalReports/FourthRoundPartyReports/tabid/6346/Default.aspx>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.basel.int/Countries/NationalReporting/NationalReports/BC2018Reports/tabid/8202/Default.aspx>.

Scheduled date	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Other sources, as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
November 2021	Fourth meeting of the PCB SIWG to provide feedback on the first draft preliminary report (PCBSIWG-4).
December 2021	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second draft preliminary report on progress towards the elimination of PCB.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members. The Secretariat makes the revised format for the 5<sup>th</sup> national report available on the website, as requested in decision SC-9/16.</p>
31 January 2022	The Secretariat finalizes and submits to the effectiveness evaluation committee the preliminary report on progress towards the elimination of PCB, as part of the preliminary report to facilitate the evaluation requested in decision SC-9/17.
28 February 2022	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft terms of reference for the preparation of a draft strategy for Parties to meet the 2025 and 2028 goals of the Stockholm Convention.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
March 2022	Fifth meeting of the PCB SIWG to provide feedback on the preliminary report and discuss how to improve it; discuss the draft terms of reference for the preparation of the draft strategy (PCBSIWG-5).
April–July 2022	Undertake training and awareness raising activities to support the submission of national reports using relevant guidance documents.
31 August 2022	Deadline for Parties to submit the 5 <sup>th</sup> national reports.
31 October 2022	<p>The Secretariat prepares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First draft report on progress towards the elimination of PCB, on the basis of the preliminary report and taking into account the information from the 5<sup>th</sup> national reports of the Stockholm Convention and the national reports of the Basel Convention;</li> <li>• First draft revised guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided), taking into account the feedback from the COP-10 and comments by Parties and observers;</li> <li>• First draft strategy for Parties to meet the 2025 and 2028 goals of the Stockholm Convention.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
November 2022	Sixth meeting of the PCB SIWG to provide feedback on the draft documents (PCBSIWG-6).
November–December 2022	<p>Deadline for inputs to the working document for the COP-11 (six UN languages).</p> <p>The Secretariat prepares a working document on PCB including a report on the progress in the implementation of decision SC-9/3 and the decision to be taken at the COP-10 and a draft decision on the matter. The working document could include recommendations of the PCB SIWG.</p>
December 2022	The Secretariat prepares:

Scheduled date	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second draft report on progress towards the elimination of PCB, on the basis of the preliminary report and taking into account the information from the 5<sup>th</sup> national reports;</li> <li>• Second draft revised guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• Second draft strategy for Parties to meet the 2025 and 2028 goals of the Stockholm Convention.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat invites comments from the PCB SIWG members.</p>
January 2023	<p>Deadline for inputs to the information document for the COP-11 (English only).</p> <p>The Secretariat finalizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on progress towards the elimination of PCB;</li> <li>• Revised guidance on a standardized approach to developing inventories of PCB and to analysis for the identification and quantification of PCB (title to be decided);</li> <li>• Draft strategy for Parties to meet the 2025 and 2028 goals of the Stockholm Convention.</li> </ul>
May 2023	<p>Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The COP-11 undertakes the effectiveness evaluation pursuant to Article 16 and the review of the progress towards the elimination of PCB pursuant to para (g) of Part II of Annex A.</li> </ul>