

**Stockholm Convention
on Persistent Organic
Pollutants****Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee****Ninth meeting**

Rome, 14–18 October 2013

Item 10 of the provisional agenda*

**Coordination and collaboration with other scientific
subsidiary bodies****Coordination and collaboration with other scientific subsidiary
bodies****Note by the Secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. In 2011, at their first simultaneous extraordinary meetings, the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention adopted decisions BC-10/29, RC-5/12 and SC-5/27 (the “2011 synergies decisions”), respectively, which are substantially identical decisions on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the three conventions. In paragraph 4 of those decisions, the conferences of the parties approved the cross-cutting and joint activities set out in annex I to the decisions for inclusion in the programmes of work of the secretariats of the three conventions for 2012-2013. Those activities included activity S6, entitled “Support the work of and coordination between the scientific bodies of the conventions and identify common issues and linkages between the conventions”. Activity S6 has the following objectives:

- (a) “Technical and policy support are provided to the scientific bodies of the three conventions (the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention, the Chemical Review Committee of the Rotterdam Convention and the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee of the Stockholm Convention) in a coordinated manner;
- (b) “Information exchange and cooperation on cross-cutting scientific, technical and policy issues are established;
- (c) “Opportunities for the technical and scientific bodies to network, communicate and exchange skills are provided;
- (d) “Reflection on the role and performance of the scientific bodies is facilitated.”

* UNEP/POPS/POPRC.9/1.

II. Implementation

2. In summary, the following activities in support of the coordination and collaboration between the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee and the scientific subsidiary bodies of the Basel and Rotterdam conventions were undertaken during the biennium 2012–2013:

(a) As agreed by the bureaux of the Chemical Review Committee and the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, the Secretariat organized the ninth meetings of the two committees back to back, in Rome, during the two-week period between 14 and 25 October 2013, and a one-day joint meeting of the two committees on 20 October 2013;

(b) To support the effective participation of parties in the work of the Chemical Review Committee and the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, and to address common issues, a regional workshop for designated national authorities and focal points of the conventions, assisted by scientific and technical experts in fields relevant to one or more of the three conventions, is scheduled to be held in Dakar, in November 2013, for the Francophone African region. Several webinars, including briefings of the subsidiary bodies, were organized to facilitate the exchange and sharing of relevant information. More information on this subject may be found in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.9/11;

(c) A draft database of experts in matters relevant to the three conventions, including the contact details of the experts and their areas of expertise, is being developed and will be made publicly available in 2013. A forum on the social networking tool developed by the Secretariat during the biennium 2010–2011 as part of the strategic plan for the development of the clearing-house mechanism¹ was established to facilitate interaction among the experts;

(d) Studies on persistent organic pollutants in articles, alternatives to endosulfan and linkages between climate change and persistent organic pollutants were undertaken in cooperation with experts working on matters under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant entities. Technical documents such as decision guidance documents, risk profiles, risk management evaluations and guidance on alternatives were published on the website of the three conventions in a coordinated manner. In addition, a concept for scientific and technical analysis of the sound management of chemical products and the need for the development of joint scientific and technical documents are being assessed;

(e) As invited by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention in decision BC-10/9, seven current and two former members of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee participated in the small intersessional working group established by the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention for the review and updating of technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants.

3. At the second simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, which took place from 28 April to 10 May 2013, the Secretariat, in document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/10, reported on the implementation of the joint activities included in the programme budgets of the three conventions for 2012. It also, in document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/12, proposed new activities for the biennium 2014–2015, including activities to support the work of and coordination between the scientific bodies of the conventions. In addition, a document entitled “Potential for enhanced cooperation and coordination between the Chemical Review Committee of the Rotterdam Convention and the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee of the Stockholm Convention”, prepared by the Chair of the Chemical Review Committee, Ms. Hala Sultan Saif Al-Easa (Qatar), and the Chair of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, Mr. Reiner Arndt (Germany) (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/17), was presented.

4. Among the activities for 2014–2015 proposed by the Secretariat in document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/12 was activity 12 (formerly activity S6), entitled “Support the work of and coordination between the scientific bodies of the conventions”. That activity included the following subactivities:

¹ UNEP/POPS/COP.3/INF/9.

- (a) “Ensure coordination in the organization of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies, e.g. organization of back-to-back meetings;
- (b) “Organize a meeting of the chairs and Bureau members of the subsidiary bodies to identify and address cross-cutting issues;
- (c) “Implement follow-up activities identified by the chairs and Bureau members of the subsidiary bodies to enhance synergies at the subsidiary body level;
- (d) “Organize webinars and facilitate coordination to support the collaborative work between the scientific bodies of the conventions and to strengthen the linkage between the members of the subsidiary bodies (especially [the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee/Chemicals Review Committee]) and the contact points of party countries.”

5. At their second simultaneous extraordinary meetings the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions adopted decisions BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1 and SC.Ex-2/1, respectively (the “omnibus decisions”). Like the 2011 synergies decisions, the omnibus decisions are substantially identical decisions on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the three conventions.

6. In section III of the omnibus decisions, the conferences of the parties took note of the information provided in documents UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/2/Add.4, UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/10 and UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/12, on joint activities, and requested the Secretariat to prepare a report on the implementation of joint activities for consideration by the conferences of the parties at their meetings in 2015.

7. In section IV of the omnibus decisions, the conferences of the parties:

- (a) Welcomed the identification of the options for information exchange and improved communication and recommended that the implementation of joint activities between the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee and the Chemical Review Committee be accelerated;
- (b) Requested the alignment of the working arrangements of the Chemical Review Committee with those of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee to allow for mutual information sharing and, within available resources, the effective participation of experts and observers at committee meetings;
- (c) Requested the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee and the Chemical Review Committee to discuss and identify further steps to enhance the cooperation and coordination between those two technical bodies, where practical and in accordance with their autonomous mandates and terms of reference, and to develop guidance to assist parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the Chemical Review Committee in their work when a chemical under consideration was a persistent organic pollutant listed under the Stockholm Convention;
- (d) Encouraged the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee to involve experts from the Basel Convention when discussing waste-related issues.

8. With regard to coordination and collaboration with the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention in relation to its work programme on persistent organic pollutants for the biennium 2014–2015, by its decision BC-11/3 the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention welcomed the involvement of experts working under the Stockholm Convention, including members and observers of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee. By the same decision, the Conference of the Parties also invited experts of the Basel Convention to participate in the work under the Stockholm Convention to assess technologies for the destruction and irreversible transformation of persistent organic pollutants, taking into consideration existing guidance such as the technical guidelines under the Basel Convention.

9. With regard to coordination and collaboration between the Chemical Review Committee and the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, at the joint meeting scheduled for 20 October 2013 the two committees are expected to discuss ways in which to address the requests in subparagraphs 7 (b) and (c) above. The provisional agenda for the joint meeting is set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/POPS/CRC-POPRC.1/1. The annotations to the provisional agenda (UNEP/FAO/RC/POPS/CRC-POPRC.1/1/Add.1) identify issues for discussion and the expected outcome under each agenda item, as well as the documents that correspond to that item. The documents are available on the websites of the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (www.pic.int and www.pops.int, respectively).

10. As a follow up to the organization of the back-to-back meetings and the joint meeting of the Chemical Review Committee and the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, the conferences of the parties to the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions adopted decisions at their sixth meetings as follows:

(a) By decision RC-6/3, on the operation of the Chemical Review Committee, the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention decided to undertake an evaluation of “the experiences of the benefits gained” from the back-to-back meetings and requested the Secretariat to collect relevant information and report on it to the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting;

(b) By decision SC-6/14, on the operation of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention requested the Committee to report to the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting on the experience in its organization with the joint session with the Chemical Review Committee.
