



Distr.: General
22 January 2018



English only

**Second meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach
and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020**

Stockholm, Sweden, 13-15 March 2018

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

Considerations for beyond 2020

**The contributions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm
conventions to the sound management of chemicals and wastes**

Note by the secretariat

1. This note provides an overview of the contributions of 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 on Persistent Organic Pollutants towards the achievement of the 2020 goal on the sound management of chemicals and wastes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.
2. The report is presented as received by the secretariat, without formal editing.

Annex

The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their contribution to the sound management of chemicals and wastes

I. Introduction

1. The present document aims at assisting stakeholders of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in their deliberations on considering future arrangements for SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and wastes beyond 2020.
2. It provides:
 - (a) An overview of 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 on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and how they tie in to the 2020 goal and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - (b) Information on the effectiveness and evolution of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
 - (c) Information on current mandates for cooperation between SAICM and the conventions.

II. The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions: A framework for lifecycle management

3. The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions share the common objective of protecting human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes falling within their respective scopes. Taken together they cover key elements of “cradle-to-grave” management.
4. Through their implementation at all levels, the three conventions significantly contribute to achieving the 2020 goal as described in the sections below.

A. The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

5. The Basel Convention was adopted in 1989 and entered into force in 1992. As at 15 January 2018, it has 186 Parties. The Convention is the most comprehensive global environmental agreement on wastes. Its scope of application covers a wide range of wastes defined as “hazardous wastes” based on their origin and/or composition and their characteristics, as well “other wastes” (household waste and incinerator ash).
6. The provisions of the Convention centre around:
 - (a) Reduction of waste generation; (article 4)
 - (b) Promotion of environmentally sound management of wastes; (article 4)
 - (c) Restriction of transboundary movements of wastes except where it is perceived to be in accordance with the principles of environmentally sound management. A regulatory system based on a prior informed procedure applies for cases where transboundary movements are permissible. Under the Basel Convention, Parties consider that illegal traffic is criminal. (articles 4 and 6, 7, 8, 9, 11).
7. Other provisions of the Convention relate to cooperation between Parties, ranging from exchange of information on issues relevant to the implementation of the Convention to technical assistance (article 10), transmission of information (Article 13), financial aspects and establishment of regional or sub-regional centres for training and technology transfers (Article 14), secretariat functions, including to act as a clearing-house (article 16).
8. Examples of hazardous wastes covered under the Convention include waste streams such as clinical wastes, electrical and electronic wastes, and wastes having certain constituents such as lead, cadmium, asbestos or mercury.

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

9. The Rotterdam Convention was adopted in 1998 and entered into force in 2004. As at 15 January 2018, it has 160 Parties. It promotes shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among Parties in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals. The Convention aims at contributing to the environmentally sound use of those hazardous chemicals, by:

- (a) Facilitating information exchange about their characteristics;
- (b) Providing for a national decision-making process on their import and export;
- (c) Disseminating these decisions to Parties.

10. The Convention requires Parties to exchange information with respect to the import and export of the covered chemicals. Two procedures are established:

(a) The Prior Informed Consent procedure for chemicals listed in Annex III to the Convention, pursuant to which each Party may decide to consent, with or without conditions, or oppose the future import of such chemicals, and its decision must be respected (Articles 10 and 11)

(b) The Export Notification procedure for other banned and severely restricted chemicals not listed yet in Annex III. Where a chemical that is banned or severely restricted by a Party is exported from its territory, that Party shall provide an export notification to the importing Party. (Article 12)

11. Other provisions of the Convention relate to the requirement for a Party to inform other Parties when taking a domestic regulatory action to ban or severely restrict a chemical (article 5); listing of severely hazardous pesticide formulations (SHPF, article 6), targeting additional chemicals in Annex III (Article 7), information to accompany exported chemicals (Article 13), information exchange (Article 14), establishment/strengthening of national infrastructures and institutions for the implementation of the Convention (Article 15), technical assistance (Article 16) and non-compliance (Article 17).

12. 51 banned or severely restricted chemicals and SHPFs are currently listed in Annex III to the Convention.

C. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

13. The Stockholm Convention was adopted in 2001 and came into force in 2004. As at 15 January 2018, it has 182 Parties. Parties are required to ensure the environmentally sound management of persistent organic pollutants (POPs),¹ such as taking measures to:

(a) Prohibit and/or eliminate the production, use, import and export of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A (Article 3);

(b) Restrict the production, use, import and export of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B (Article 3),

(c) Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C (Article 5);

(d) Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner (Article 6).

14. Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans (Article 7), targeting additional POPs (Article 8), information exchange (Article 9), public information, awareness and education (Article 10), research, development and monitoring (Article 11), technical assistance (Article 12), financial resources and mechanisms (Article 13), reporting (Article 15), effectiveness evaluation (Article 16) and non-compliance (Article 17).

¹ Persistent organic pollutants (POPs) are chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife, and have harmful impacts on human health or on the environment.

15. 28 POPs are currently listed in the annexes to the Convention. The Convention sets out time-bound targets for achieving the elimination and other related provisions for the chemicals listed in the annexes. The table below sets out some of those specific time-bound targets:

Date	Target
2025	Elimination of the use of PCB in equipment (e.g. transformers, capacitors or other receptacles containing liquid stocks)
2028	Achieving the environmentally sound management of liquids containing PCB and equipment contaminated with PCB
2030	Elimination of hexa- and heptabromodiphenyl ether (expiration of the specific exemption); tetra- and pentabromodiphenyl ether (expiration of the specific exemption)
2036	Decabromodiphenyl ether: Expiration of specific exemption for parts for use in legacy vehicles defined as vehicles that have ceased mass production and for parts in vehicles as specified in the Convention

D. The contributions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to the 2020 goal on the sound management of chemicals and wastes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

16. An overview of the cross-cutting provisions of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and their contributions to the 2020 goal is set out in the table below:

Key provisions areas of work	Basel Convention	Rotterdam Convention	Stockholm Convention	Links to 2020 goal as specified in SAICM texts	
				OPS objective	OOG basic element
Evaluating/regulating new and existing chemicals and wastes	X	X	X	A. Risk reduction; C. Governance	(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (h), (j), (k)
Import/export controls	X	X	X	E. Illegal international traffic; C. Governance	(a), (b), (c), (d), (e)
Risk assessment and reduction	X	X	X	A. Risk reduction	(a), (c), (e), (f), (h), (j), (k)
Wastes management	X		X	A. Risk reduction	(a), (b), (c), (g)
Environmental releases	X		X	A. Risk reduction	(c), (h), (j), (k)
Alternatives		X	X	A. Risk reduction	(c), (k)

Knowledge and information	X	X	X	B. Knowledge and information	(c), (e)
Reporting	X		X	B. Knowledge and information	(c), (e)
Technical assistance	X	X	X	D. Capacity-building and technical cooperation	All
Financial mechanism	X	X	X	D. Capacity-building and technical cooperation	All

E. The 2030 Agenda's goals, targets and indicators of relevance to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

17. The sound management of chemicals and wastes is an essential and integral cross-cutting element of the sustainable development. The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions make important contributions to supporting the conventions' Parties in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets.² The Agenda's goals, targets and indicators relevant to the conventions are set out in the table below:

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	
2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality	2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	
3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination	3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution
	3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe WASH services)

² As emphasized by the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in their 2017 decisions on international cooperation and coordination (BC-13/16, RC-8/10, SC-8/20).

	3.9.3 Mortality rate attributed to unintentional Poisoning
Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	
12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	12.4.1 Number of Parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement 12.4.2 Hazardous waste generated per capita, proportion of hazardous waste treated and by type of treatment
12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	
6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	6.3.1 Proportion of wastewater safely treated 6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality
Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	
11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	11.6.1 Percentage of urban solid waste regularly collected and with adequate final discharge with regard to the total waste generated by the city 11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted)

18. In line with its relevant mandates,³ the Secretariat collects data submitted by Parties relevant to the SDGs indicators and makes it available to the United Nations Environment Programme, as a contribution to the overall follow-up and review by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

III. The implementation, effectiveness and evolution of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

19. The three conventions are dynamic legal instruments: their implementation is kept under continuous review by the conferences of the Parties, the lists of chemicals and wastes falling within their scope can be adjusted, and the rights and obligations of Parties to achieve their objectives can

³ Decisions BC-13/16, RC-8/10, SC-8/20.

be amended. Furthermore, the conventions' provisions may be supplemented by decisions of the Conference of the Parties. Examples of recent developments under the conventions are as follows:

(a) Under the Basel Convention, the Conference of the Parties, at its 2017 meeting, among other things: (i) established a new partnership on household wastes;⁴ mandated the Open-ended Working Group to consider relevant options available under the Convention to further address marine plastic litter and microplastics as well as waste containing nanomaterials;⁵ established a process on the Review of Annexes I, II, IV and related aspects of Annex IX;⁶

(b) Under the Rotterdam Convention, the Conference of the Parties, at its 2017 meeting, among other things, listed four new chemicals in Annex III to the Convention, namely carbofuran, trichlorfon, short-chain chlorinated paraffins and tributyltin compounds;⁷

(c) Under the Stockholm Convention, the Conference of the Parties, at its 2017 meeting, among other things: (i) listed two new chemicals in Annex A for elimination: decabromodiphenyl ether (decaBDE) and short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) and (ii) listed one more chemical in Annex C for reduction/elimination of unintentional production: hexachlorobutadiene.⁸

20. The information made available by Parties under the conventions, for instance from reporting⁹, is a key element of the framework to monitor the implementation of the conventions, to evaluate their effectiveness and provides a basis for their further development. For instance, the evaluation of the Stockholm Convention's effectiveness was conducted by the Conference of the Parties at its 2017 meeting, based on a report prepared by the effectiveness evaluation committee, and led to the identification of 12 priority areas for action to address implementation challenges. Under the Basel Convention, the final evaluation of the strategic framework for the implementation of the Basel Convention for 2012-2021 is scheduled to take place in 2021. Under the Rotterdam Convention, the Conference of the Parties at its 2017 meeting established a working group mandated to prepare a set of prioritized recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention.¹⁰ Also of relevance is the establishment of the Implementation and Compliance Committee of the Basel Convention which is to assist Parties to comply with their obligations under the Convention and to facilitate, promote, monitor and aim to secure the implementation of and compliance with the obligations under the Convention. Under the Rotterdam and the Stockholm conventions, compliance procedures and mechanisms are to be approved as soon as practicable.

21. The conventions' science-policy interface is also at the core of well-informed decision-making for the effective implementation and further development of the conventions and provide an avenue to addressing emerging challenges within the scope of the conventions. The main scientific bodies supporting the conventions are: 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. Numerous expert and technical groups are also established by the conventions' conferences of the Parties to provide support on specific areas of work, as required.

IV. Overall mandates for cooperation between SAICM and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

22. SAICM has clear and direct links to existing international chemicals and waste management instruments (such as the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions). International agreements are

⁴ Decision BC-13/14.

⁵ Decision BC-13/17.

⁶ Decision BC-13/2.

⁷ Decisions RC-8/2 to RC-8/5.

⁸ Decisions SC-8/10-12

⁹ The Basel and Stockholm conventions set forth reporting provisions requiring Parties to submit information, as set out respectively in Article 13 and 15, in particular on the measures taken to implement the conventions, to the Secretariat at regular intervals.

¹⁰ Decision RC-8/8.

referenced in several different areas of the SAICM texts, including the Dubai declaration,¹¹ the Overall Policy Strategy¹² and the Overall Orientation and Guidance.¹³

23. Through various decisions¹⁴, the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions requested the Secretariat to enhance cooperation and coordination with SAICM. At their meetings in May 2017, the conferences of the Parties, among other things:

(a) Welcomed the resolutions adopted at the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, including in particular the endorsement of the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal, and the resolution to launch an intersessional process on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020;

(b) Requested the Secretariat to continue to cooperate with the secretariat of the Strategic Approach in this respect and to participate in and provide relevant input to the Strategic Approach intersessional process on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020;

(c) Requested the Secretariat to continue to enhance cooperation and coordination with the secretariat of the Strategic Approach in areas of relevance to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

¹¹ In the Declaration, ICCM expressed its determination “to implement the applicable chemicals management agreements to which we are Party, strengthen the coherence and synergies that exist between them and work to address, as appropriate, existing gaps in the framework of international chemicals policy” (Dubai Declaration, para. 8).

¹² One of the objectives of the OPS is “to strengthen enforcement and encourage the implementation of national laws and regulations regarding chemicals management, including those that serve to implement international agreements” (OPS, para. 16d). The OPS also provides that “in developing and implementing the Strategic Approach and the Global Plan of Action, Governments and other stakeholders should be guided by.....the following agreements, where applicable to them: i. Montreal Protocol; ii. Basel Convention; iii. Rotterdam Convention; iv. Stockholm Convention; v. ILO Convention No. 170 concerning safety in the use of chemicals at work.” (OPS, para. 20).

¹³ One of the 11 basic elements of the OOG is to implement chemicals and wastes-related multilateral environmental agreements, as well as health, labour and other relevant conventions and voluntary mechanisms (OOG, para. 19).

¹⁴ See the 2013 synergies omnibus decisions (BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1 and SC.Ex-2/1); the 2015 COPs decisions on international cooperation and coordination (BC-12/17, RC-7/9 and SC-7/27).