



Background Notes to the 2017 Triple COPs

Some pertinent facts on chemicals and waste:

- 1) According to UN Environment, at least 140,000 chemicals are in circulation, of which only a fraction have been thoroughly investigated for their environmental impact;
- 2) According to FAO, 200,000 people die every year as a result of hazardous pesticides, and 99% of these deaths occur in developing countries.
- 3) According to WHO, each year 1.7 million children under 5 die as a result of an unhealthy environment, a quarter of all deaths in the age group, with pollution the major contributor.

Background:

With a common goal of protecting human health and the environment from the potentially harmful impacts of chemicals and wastes, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions are administered jointly by UN Environment (UNEP) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and have 186, 157 and 181 parties respectively, implying almost global coverage of international governance aiming for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

The three conventions together provide a “life-cycle” approach to chemicals and waste from production and use (Stockholm) to trade (Rotterdam) to disposal (Basel). Parties to the three conventions convene every two years in Geneva, Switzerland.

Full name: The thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-13), the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-8) and the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-8) will be held from 24 April to 5 May 2017.

Structure: The meetings will be organized back-to-back and will include joint sessions on joint issues. The meetings will also feature a high-level segment. The high-level segment is scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, 4 May and the morning of Friday, 5 May 2017. A Technology Fair will be staged Thursday-Saturday 27 to 29 April 2017.

Venue: Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG), 17 rue de Varembé, Geneva, Switzerland.

Theme: The theme of the meetings and the high-level segment will be "A future detoxified: sound management of chemicals and waste".

No. of participants (estimated): 1,500 participants from more than 180 countries, including representatives from government, civil society, intergovernmental organisations and the private sector

Website: www.brsmeas.org

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Basel Convention

Full name: Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

Entered into force:	5 May 1992
Number of parties	186
Current COP President:	Mr. Mohammed Oglah Hussein Khashashneh (Jordan)
Subsidiary bodies:	Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) & Committee Administering the Mechanism for Promoting Implementation and Compliance (ICC)
2017 COP Plenary days:	Monday to Tuesday 24-25/4 (Opening and Joint Sessions) then Friday 28/4 to Tuesday 2/5 and then Thursday 5/4 (Joint session) and Friday 5/5 (Closing)
Website for further info:	www.basel.int

Main Issues at 2017 COP:

1) Technical guidelines on POPs wastes: six new or updated technical guidelines will be considered for adoption, including on those addressing POPs listed at 2015 COPs i.e. hexachlorobutadiene, pentachlorophenol and its salts and esters, polychlorinated naphthalenes.

2) Strategic matters: Addressing the entry into force of the Ban Amendment will be discussed. "Revised set of practical manuals for the promotion of the ESM of wastes", "guidance to assist Parties in developing efficient strategies for achieving the prevention and minimization of the generation of hazardous and other wastes and their disposal", and "glossary of terms" will be considered for adoption. BC COP-13 will also consider review of Annexes I, III, and IV and related aspects of Annex IV to the Basel Convention, revised fact sheets on specific waste streams, practical manuals on extended producer responsibility and financing systems for ESM and any other guidance that needs to be developed or updated.

3) Basel Convention Partnership Programme: Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment will come to an end on its activities. New Partnership on Household Waste will be considered for its establishment.

Rotterdam Convention

Full name: Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade

Entered into force:	24 February 2004
Number of parties:	157
Current Bureau President:	H.E. Mr. Franz Xaver Perrez (Switzerland)
Subsidiary bodies:	Chemicals Review Committee (CRC)
2017 COP Plenary days:	Monday to Tuesday 24-25/4 (Opening and Joint Sessions) then Thursday 27/4 and then Tuesday 2/5 to Friday 5/5 (Closing)
Website for further info:	www.pic.int

Main Issues at 2017 COP:

1) Following chemicals will be considered for listing in Annex III: chrysotile asbestos, tributyltin compounds, short-chain chlorinated paraffins (industrial chemicals); trichlorfon, carbofuran, carbosulfan (pesticides); paraquat dichloride formulations, fenthion formulations (severely hazardous pesticide formulations).

2) The progress made in the intersessional work on the process of listing chemicals in Annex III will be considered, including the outcome of the meeting took place in Riga in July 2017.

3) The proposals for amending Articles 16 and 22 of the Rotterdam Convention submitted by African Parties will be considered. The amendment to Article 16 relates to financial assistance and the amendment to Article 22 relates to the process for adopting amendments to Annex III and the amendments.

4) Rotterdam Convention compliance mechanism will be considered for adoption.

Stockholm Convention

Full name: Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

Entered into force:	17 May 2004
Number of parties:	181
Current Bureau President:	Mr. Sam Adu-Kumi (Ghana)
Subsidiary bodies:	POPs Review Committee (POPRC)
2017 COP Plenary days:	Monday to Tuesday 24-25/4 (Opening and Joint Sessions) then Tuesday 25/4 to Friday 28/4 and then Thursday 5/4 (Joint session) and Friday 5/5 (Closing).
Website for further info:	www.pops.int

Main Issues at 2017 COP:

1) SC COP-8 will consider listing decabromodiphenyl ether (decaBDE) and short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCP) in Annex A and hexachlorobutadiene (HCB) in Annex C. DecaBDE is used as an additive flame retardant, and has many applications including in plastics, textiles, adhesives, sealants, coatings and inks. DecaBDE containing plastics are used in housings of computers and TVs, wires and cables, pipes and carpets. SCCPs are industrial chemicals used as a plasticizer in rubber, paints, adhesives, flame retardants for plastics as well as an extreme pressure lubricant in metal working fluids. HCB is listed in Annex A to the Stockholm Convention. Historically it was used as a solvent for rubber and other polymers, as a scrubber to recover chlorine-containing gas or to remove volatile organic components from gas. Listing in Annex C means that Parties will have obligations to manage unintentional releases of this chemical.

2) The effectiveness evaluation of the Stockholm Convention will take place for the first time under the framework adopted by the COP-6. The overall outcomes of the effectiveness evaluation was that the Convention provides an effective and dynamic framework to regulate POPs throughout their lifecycle, addressing the production, use, import, export, releases, and disposal of these chemicals worldwide. However, inadequate implementation is the key issue that has been identified in

the evaluation. Monitoring results indicate that regulations targeting POPs are succeeding in reducing levels of POPs in humans and the environment. For POPs listed in 2004, concentrations measured in air and in human populations have declined and continue to decline or remain at low levels due to restrictions on POPs that predated the Stockholm Convention and are now incorporated in it. For the newly listed POPs, concentrations are beginning to show decreases, although in a few instances, increasing and/or stable levels are observed.

3) Stockholm Convention compliance mechanism will be considered for adoption.

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