



# Technical Assistance Newsletter

Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions



Regional Green Customs Workshop in Asia and Pacific: Enhancing the Capability of Customs Officers to Address Environmental Crime. Seoul, Republic of Korea, 10 - 14 of November 2015.

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# Activities

1

## Overview of the year 2015

It is this time of the year again, auspicious to reflect on past achievements! Over the past 12 months, the Secretariat has organized 27 workshops –mostly in collaboration with Basel and Stockholm regional centres– and 70 webinars and online training sessions. In addition, the Secretariat organized 45 online meetings, and hosted a 1-week study tour in August for the Government Chemist Laboratory Agency of the United Republic of Tanzania.

As part of its partnership component, the Secretariat also continued monitoring for the Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment (PACE) the implementation of pilot projects and activities on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment in Jordan, Burkina Faso, Serbia, South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, Moldova and El Salvador, assisting the PACE Working Group in the revision of section 3 of the guidance document which deals with transboundary movements of used and end-of-life computing equipment and in the development of a strategy and workplan for the implementation of concrete actions at the regional and national levels, as well as in the development of a manual on the steps to establish and implement environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment. The Secretariat also participated in the Joint Meeting of National Authorities to implement the Bamako and Basel Conventions (in Nairobi, Kenya) and continued to participate in the contact group to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the e-waste target of the Connect 2020 Agenda for global ICT development. It joined initiatives such as the Global Expanded Water Monitoring Initiative (GEMI) and started an informal group as a follow-up to Basel COP-12 on household waste.

With regards to regional delivery, 12 projects initiated by Regional Centres were funded by the Small Grant Projects of the Secretariat. 5 regional focal points to the BRS conventions were nominated in the Secretariat (for Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Small Island Developing States). In October, the annual meeting to enhance cooperation and coordination between the regional centres under the Basel and Stockholm conventions took place in Geneva, with discussions focusing on the strategy for the strengthening and sustainability of the centres, their technical capacity, visibility and resource mobilization skills, as well as the clearing-house mechanism strategy. Two meetings were held in Geneva between representatives of countries hosting regional centres and the Secretariat, to help strengthen the work of the regional centres. Throughout the year, several framework agreements with regional centres were renewed (BCRC-Caribbean, BCRC for Southeast Asia, BCRC-Egypt, BCRC-Argentina). In November, as a follow-up to a direct request for assistance, a mission was organized in cooperation with UNEP OCHA Joint Environment Unit to provide assistance to Paraguay following a fire incident in an electrical storage facility with 20,000 transformers, including some containing PCBs, to develop waste management options for the government.

The database on technical assistance needs is now operational, and a first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on e-waste will be launched in February 2016,

in partnership with Climate-KIC and the University of Leuven in Belgium. A first module on e-waste is also under development. The web pages dedicated to technical assistance on the four websites are undergoing a thorough revision, which will allow us, we hope, to give you access to more user-friendly information in 2016!

Best wishes from the Technical Assistance team of the [BRS Secretariat](#).

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## Regional Green Customs Workshop in Asia & the Pacific: Enhancing the Capability of Customs Officers to Address Environmental Crime

The Regional Intelligence Liaison Office Asia Pacific (RILO AP) organized a workshop on “Enhancing the Capability of Customs Officers to Address Environmental Crime” together with the Korea Customs Service, in Seoul, Korea, from 10 to 14 November 2015, with 40 participants. The working language of the workshop was English.

The workshop provided a good opportunity for raising awareness on the linkages between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and environmental crime. Participants were given tools and room for discussions on, especially, the take back of illegal shipments under the Basel Convention. Lively discussions during the event signaled a strong interest of all participants in environmental crime and highlighted its relevance to the customs officer’s day-to-day work. As one of the major outcomes, participants were familiarized and introduced to useful material about the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions that will be useful when fast decisions have to be made in the field. More information can be found [here](#).

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## Sub-regional workshop to enhance capacity for the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes

The Sub-regional workshop to enhance capacity for the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes was organized by the Basel Regional Centre in Uruguay in cooperation with the BRS Secretariat, in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 17 to 19 November 2015. Thirteen countries from Latin America participated in the workshop. The objective of the training was to present the Basel Technical Guidelines on Mercury Wastes and discuss best practices and technologies for mercury wastes prevention, labeling, temporary storage, disposal and the management as well as management of sites contaminated with mercury. Synergies with the Minamata Convention and communication obligations under the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions were also discussed during the workshop. Experts from Harvard University and the Stockholm regional centre in Brazil introduced studies on human and environmental risk assessment. The workshop included a visit to the laboratories of Latu (*Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay*), where mercury analyses on human and environmental media are conducted. The participants shared both their experience and the challenges they are currently facing to manage mercury wastes in a sound manner, including their transboundary movements. The workshop was conducted in Spanish. For more information, please [click here](#).

# News

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## Training of Experts from Arabic-Speaking Countries on the Analysis of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Environmental Samples

The Basel Convention Regional Centre for Arabic-speaking Countries in Egypt (BCRC-Egypt) and the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for the African Region (BCCC-Africa) in Nigeria jointly organized the Training Workshop for Experts from Arabic-Speaking Countries on the Analysis of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Environmental Samples.

The training, which is one of the activities of the second phase of the project managed by BCRC-Egypt and funded by the Finish Government, took place in the facilities of the BCCC-Africa in Ibadan, Nigeria, from 26 October to 5 November 2015. It was attended by participants from governments and academia from Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Sudan and Djibouti.

The intensive training session was aimed at enhancing the knowledge and strengthening the capacity of the participants in: POPs analysis and management, general laboratory hands-on practices with emphasis on POPs, identification and assessment of POPs contaminated sites, using the UNIDO POPs contaminated site toolkit, and laboratory report writing. The training adopted a train-the-trainer approach to replicate analyses and capacity building courses on POPs and other chemicals.

The training entailed one week of foundational theoretical courses on POPs and analytical methodologies, including Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) for POPs analysis, and one week of practical laboratory analyses of environmental samples undertaken at the Geo-environmental Research Centre (GRC) Laboratory, located in Ibadan, Nigeria.

The training will be followed up with further training sessions to strengthen generation of reliable scientific data from national and regional POPs monitoring activities. More information can be found at [BCCC-Africa](#).

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## The Fourth Meeting of the Basel Convention Expert Working Group on Environmentally Sound Management

The fourth meeting of the expert working group (EWG) on environmentally sound management (ESM) of hazardous and other wastes met from 10 to 12 November 2015, in San Francisco, United States. The Government of Japan funded the travel of eligible participants to the meeting, and Sims Recycling Solutions kindly provided the venue and on-the-ground logistics. The meeting, which was attended by 19 EWG members and 12 observers, welcomed two new members from Africa and Asia who held specific knowledge and expertise in the field of waste prevention and minimization (nominations for such experts from CEE, GRULAC and WEOG are still pending). The group progressed its work programme towards the development of an "ESM Toolkit". Draft practical manuals and waste stream fact sheets were revised on the basis of comments received from Parties and others since COP-12. Outlines of new manuals were developed, including on developing strategies for prevention and minimization, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and financing systems for ESM, which will be worked on interessionally. Other areas of work included the selection of three pilot projects for the implementation

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## Regional Workshop on sound life-cycle management of DDT under the Stockholm Convention

National health and environmental officials of several African countries participated in a workshop to undertake an analysis of the situation with respect to sound life cycle-management of DDT in their countries using a toolkit for sound life-cycle management of DDT, developed by the Secretariat.

The workshop also facilitated the consideration of opportunities to promote non-chemical vector management methods towards reducing reliance on DDT for disease vector control.

The participants also provided inputs for further improvement of the toolkit and the draft workshop document on non-chemical vector management methods.

Managers of national malaria vector control programmes, the focal points of the Stockholm Convention and officials representing the agencies, academia, researchers and NGOs from Botswana, Congo DRC, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iran, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia took part in the workshop. The workshop was funded by France and organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the Stockholm Convention regional center (ICIPE) in Nairobi. More information can be found [here](#).

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## Global workshop on developing, revising and updating National Implementation Plans in Jakarta, Indonesia

A global workshop will be held on developing, revising and updating National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 8 to 10 December 2015. The workshop will gather Parties from Asia and West Africa to support them in developing inventories and action plans for new POPs pesticides, industrial chemicals and unintentional POPs, listed in the Annexes A, B and or C after 2009. The workshop, which is co-organised by UNEP Chemicals, will be hosted by the Basel and Stockholm Regional Centre in Indonesia.

For more information, please click [here](#), or contact [Cherryl Andre de la Porte](#).

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## Informal group on household waste takes off

Based on a mandate from the last Basel Convention COP, the informal group on household waste met online, for the first time, on 5 November 2015. Gabriela Medina, representing Uruguay and Prakash Kowlessar, representing Mauritius, were confirmed as the two co-chairs of the group. The group discussed a draft concept note on household waste and agreed on the way forward for the preparation of the documents to be submitted to [OEWG-10](#). A first face-to-face meeting of the group is tentatively scheduled for the second half of February 2016.

# Engage with Technical Assistance

## Webinars & Online Training

### December

01 | 10h00

10 | 16h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Webinar on National reporting under the Basel Convention

Sessions in English

03 | 16h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Webinar on National reporting under the Basel Convention

Session in Spanish

02 | 10h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Online training prior to the workshop on NIP development and updating, to be held in Indonesia. (For workshop participants only)

Session in English

08 | 13h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Webinar on: National reporting under the Basel Convention

Session in Arabic

08 | 10h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Webinar on: National reporting under the Basel Convention

Session in French

10 | 16h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Webinar on National reporting under the Basel Convention

Session in Chinese

15 | 10h00 [Click here for registration](#)

Webinar on National reporting under the Basel Convention

Session in Russian

## Workshops & Meetings

### December

8 to 10 | Jakarta, Indonesia

Development, review and update of Implementation Plans and Strategies under the Stockholm Convention (including article 5 of Annex C), replacing Lindane by safer alternatives and exemptions

9 to 10 | Bratislava, Slovakia

TAIEX Multi-beneficiary workshop on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes. Organized by the Basel Convention Regional Centre in Slovakia, in cooperation with the Slovak Environment Agency

14 to 16 | Brno, Czech Republic

Expert Meeting on the Effectiveness Evaluation of Implementation of the Stockholm Convention for PCB and Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the PCB Elimination Network (PEN)

\* (All schedules are in Geneva local time: UTC/GMT+1)