



Rotterdam Convention Secretariat Progress report N°2

Progress made towards the implementation of COP-4 mandated activities (November 2009 - June 2010)

The current progress report provides an update on progress made by the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat towards the implementation of COP-4 mandated activities since the previous progress report published in October 2009. It covers the period November 2009 - June 2010.

This report focuses on updates to activities within this period, while the previous progress report published in October 2009 provides a more complete description of each activity and related mandates.

Activities covered in this report for the period November 2009 - June 2010 are linked to the Programme of Work 2009-2011, as adopted by the COP-4.

1. Resource Kit and publications
2. Training and awareness-raising meetings
3. National and subregional planning meetings
4. Trade related issues
5. Development of a monitoring programme on severely hazardous pesticides formulations
6. Resource mobilization to support Parties
7. Support to the preparation of notifications of final regulatory action
8. Working with customs authorities
9. Fostering cooperation
10. Provision of Legal Support to Parties and Secretariat
11. Follow-up to the synergies decision
12. Working directly with individual countries on specific issues
13. Working on industrial chemicals
14. Establishment of a clearing-house mechanism
15. Partners in the regional delivery of technical assistance
16. The sixth meeting of the Chemical Review Committee
17. PIC Circular
18. New Parties

1. Resource Kit and publications

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 8: - Resource kit: review and update existing documents as necessary including translation into all six official United Nations languages; print and disseminate to regional offices and partners and use in the regional and national delivery of technical assistance to Parties and at events.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Secretariat has continued its efforts in revising and printing the publications already developed and expanding with new information material the resource kit in order to meet the request of Parties different stakeholders.

The e-learning CD programme on the key operational elements of the Rotterdam Convention has been translated in French and Spanish and it will be finalised with the final CD formatting by the end of June 2010. It will be made available and downloadable from website. This e-learning course facilitates continuous and self-directed training at the national level to meet the challenges that arise from frequent changes in the designated national authorities in some countries.

The key publication Guidance to the Designated National Authorities has been revised and reformatted in English, French and Spanish and it will be made available on the website by the end of June. The next three languages will be made available by the end of 2010.

A new brochure on PIC Chemicals has been prepared and made available on the website. This is meant to be a short introduction on each chemical present in Annex III to the Convention and subject to the PIC procedure. Details on chemical formula, HS code, trade names and specific use of these chemicals are reported in a concise manner.

A brochure titled Chemicals Snapshot has been prepared and translated in 6 languages. This piece contains information on what are chemicals, fate of chemicals released to the environment, the identification of risks cause by chemicals, to health and the environment and how to address them. It also provides an introduction to the scope of the three different Conventions.

A new fact sheet on Pesticides has been produced and distributed in the occasion of Bali Extraordinary COP. This fact sheet mentions the role of pesticides in the food chain and of Agriculture's role in food security. It provides key fact and key issues regarding the use of pesticides by the most vulnerable groups in the world.

New guidance is now available to Designated National Authorities (DNAs) to assist in completing the Form for Notification of Final Regulatory Action, with the objective of improving understanding of the information requested and facilitating the preparation and submission of complete notifications.

All new publications are available on the Convention website.

2. Training and awareness raising workshops

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 9 - Subregional awareness raising and training meetings: Focus on Parties that are having difficulty in meeting their basic obligations of the Convention; meetings will provide practical training in meeting the operational elements of the Convention, including training in the use of existing decision guidance documents in national decision making, provide opportunity for countries to share experiences (4 subregional meetings, 5 countries

each and 25 participants per workshop). In cooperation with Basel and Stockholm Conventions.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Sub-regional training and awareness-raising meetings support Parties in meeting their basic obligations under the Convention, and so they might fully benefit from the Convention and its activities. The Secretariat has organized during the period Oct 2009-May. 2010:

- Training and awareness raising workshop for nine Francophone African countries in Ghana (Oct. 2009)
- Training and awareness raising workshop ten Anglophone African countries in South Africa (Nov 2009)
- Training and awareness workshop for eight eastern European and Asian countries in Armenia (Nov. 2009)
- Training and awareness-raising workshop for the Latin American region in El Salvador (March 2010)

The Secretariat has also recently completed the delivery of a training and awareness-raising workshop for 7 Asia-Pacific countries held in Vietnam from 7-11 June 2010;

3. National and sub-regional Action Planning (NAP) meetings

COP-4 MANDATE:

Activity 10 - Assist Parties to identify elements of national action plans or strategies for the implementation of the Convention and as appropriate national follow-seminars: arrange 6 national meetings, 6 subregional meetings (max. 3 countries and 15 participants) and 24 national follow up seminars. In cooperation with Basel and Stockholm Conventions.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The following national and sub-regional NAP meetings have been carried out:

- Libya, April 2010
- Uganda, March 2010
- Sub-regional NAP Anglophone Africa, Botswana, April 2010
- Sub-regional NAP for Near East Aleppo, Syria, 20 – 24 June 2010 (Jordan - Kuwait - Lebanon - Oman - Qatar - Saudi Arabia - Sudan - Syrian Arab Republic - United Arab Emirates – Yemen)

The following national NAP meetings have been scheduled:

- NAP for DPRK Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 28 June to 2 July 2010, convened in cooperation with UNITAR
- Subregional NAP Francophone Africa, Rwanda, 11- 16 July 2010
- NAP Madagascar, October 2010
- Sub-regional NAP for Central Asia (Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Khazakstan, October 2010
- Sub-regional NAP for South America, 15-19 November 2010 in Santiago, Chile

National Follow-up seminars: In cooperation with the FAO Regional Officers, national seminars are convened for Parties that had participated in the sub-regional planning meetings. A follow-up seminar took place in November 2009 in Belize.

4. Trade related issues

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 11 - Trade-related issues: National training sessions focused on exporting countries and their export obligations (2 national trade meetings); and trade partner meetings involving exporting country and key trade partners (2 meetings involving 4 trade partners)

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In 2009, the Secretariat conducted two meetings on trade related issues under the Rotterdam Convention, one for the European Community and selected trade partners and one for China and selected trade partners.

The overall objective of the workshops was to promote a shared responsibility in the implementation and enforcement of the trade related provisions of the Convention by facilitating dialogue among exporting Parties. The need to better understand the challenges associated with the operation of the trade aspects of the Convention, in particular the role of exporting Parties and the relationship between exporting and importing Parties, is an issue of concern to many Parties.

The workshops provided an opportunity for exporting Parties to receive feedback on the effectiveness of their operational procedure and for selected importing Parties to better understand any changes that may be needed at the national level to benefit more fully from this procedure.

These workshops will continue in the future pending adequate resources.

5. Development of a monitoring programme on severely hazardous pesticides formulations

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 12 - Develop monitoring programme on severely hazardous pesticide formulation (SHPF): arrange 4 monitoring progress meetings on SHPF and 4 programmes on SHPFs.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Secretariat continued to work on the development of a tool kit on monitoring and reporting of severely hazardous pesticide formulations. The tool kit will provide useful information and guidance to countries that wish to address the issue at national level.

In co-operation with partners such as WHO and PAN-UK, an inception workshop was convened in July 2009 and national pilot projects were implemented in Ghana, Tanzania and Togo.

In May 2010 an inception workshop on monitoring and reporting pesticide incidents was convened in Togo, and stake holders drafted national pilot projects for Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. Burkina Faso and Mali initiated implementation of such pilot projects on SHPF.

6. Resource Mobilization to support Parties

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 13 - Resource mobilization: develop and implement a programme to facilitate improved access to financial and other resources to assist Parties to meet their obligations under the Convention (4 subregional meetings on project proposal development). In cooperation with Basel and Stockholm Conventions.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Secretariat is working together with UNITAR, with the Stockholm and Basel Conventions and with SAICM on the planning and delivery of workshops and guidance materials, which will assist Parties access resources necessary for the implementation of the chemicals and waste conventions. Four sub-regional workshops are being planned for the period 2010-2011 in close cooperation with UNITAR. This series of subregional training workshops will be implemented together with the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions as well as the SAICM Secretariat.

In addition, training modules to assist Parties develop project proposals and enable them to have improved access to financial resources to meet their obligations under the 3 Conventions was delivered to sub-regions during of the awareness raising workshops on synergies. These workshops were held in Pretoria, South Africa (October 2009), Montevideo, Uruguay (November 2009) and Beijing, China (April 2010) (see section "Follow-up to the synergies decision").

7. Support to the preparation of notifications of final regulatory action

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 14 - Preparation of notifications of final regulatory action (FRA): build the capacity of developing country Parties to prepare and submit complete notifications of final regulatory action that pass the scrutiny of the Chemical Review Committee (3 subregional meetings to support the preparation of notifications, each including 3 countries and 15 participants).

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

These activities are intended to build the capacity of developing country Parties to prepare and submit complete notifications of final regulatory action that pass the scrutiny of the Chemical Review Committee (CRC). This support is integrated within and as part of all Technical Assistance activities and workshops.

CRC Experts Training: The Secretariat organised a workshop for CRC experts to increase their awareness of the functioning, procedures and review mechanisms of the CRC to enable Parties to make informed decisions about chemicals being submitted to CRC. The Secretariat carried out one training for the CRC experts in Budapest, Hungary in Dec. 2009.

CRC/POPRC Training: The Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions chemical review committees (POPRC and CRC) have very similar structures and similar mandates. Consequently, the two Secretariats organized a joint workshop which took place in November 2009 in Cairo, Egypt with the attendance of over 50 participants from more than 20 countries. The training addressed several items of the work programme including the notification process, information exchange as well as achieving synergies with Stockholm and will be extended to other regions.

The next CRC/POPRC training workshop recently took place from 8 -10 June 2010 in Mexico with participation of DNAs and Focal Points from the Latin American and Caribbean region and several experts with previous experience on Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the operation of the chemicals committees. 35 participants attended this workshop.

A subsequent workshop is being planned for November 2010 to cover part of the Asian region.

8. Working with customs authorities

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 17 - Customs training activities: Customs training activities for both importing and exporting partners: working with the Green Customs Initiative in providing support to Parties on facilitating the implementation of the obligations under the Conventions (4 meetings each including 5 countries). In cooperation with Basel and Stockholm Conventions.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Capacity building for customs authorities: The Secretariat has been actively involved in the delivery of a number of training workshops in conjunction with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and with the Green Customs Initiative (GCI), of which the Secretariat is a partner. As part of the GCI, the Secretariat participated in the partners' meeting that was held on 8 and 9 February 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland.

In addition, the Secretariat participated in the following training activities to customs authorities which were organized by the GCI/WCO:

- For the EECCA region in Budapest (Oct 2009)
- For the GRULAC region in the Dominican Republic (Nov 2009)
- For the GRULAC region in Mexico City (Nov 2009)
- A border dialogue between India and Nepal (Nov/Dec 2009);
- GCI/WCO meeting Middle East, Lebanon, April 2010.

The Secretariat has also taken part of the third meeting of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements-Regional Enforcement Network (MEA-REN) in Bangkok, Thailand (Oct 2009) and has actively provided input to the MEA-REN Newsletter. Furthermore, the Secretariat has sent an invitation to all DNAs to join the WCO's newly established 'ENVIRONET' network for border protection and is also a partner in the activities by the Multilateral Environmental Agreements-Regional Enforcement Network (MEA-REN). These networks aim at promoting integrated regional cooperation for the control of transboundary movement of chemicals.

In April 2010 the Secretariat launched a dedicated website in order to provide readily accessible information on the Rotterdam Convention to customs authorities. The website can be viewed at: <http://www.pic.int/customs/Minisite/Roles.html>

Development of customs materials: Training and reference materials currently being developed by the Secretariat include:

- Brochure on HS codes (*finalized*)
- Poster on chemicals common to the 3 conventions (*finalized*)
- Rotterdam Convention -specific chemicals brochure (*in print, on the web*)
- Brochure on the environmental effects on chemicals across the 3 conventions (*presented at ExCOPs*) (*finalized*)
- Rotterdam Convention-specific - Customs Toolkit (*finalized*)
- New Customs specific section on the website (*finalized*)
- E-learning tool on the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (initiated)

Working with UNITAR on the GHS: *The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)* is a system for standardizing and harmonizing the classification and labelling of chemicals. The Secretariat is collaborating with UNITAR on the development of joint capacity building activities to support the existing GHS UNITAR training programme as well as the joint development of related training tools and materials. Under this initiative, the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat has taken the lead to develop a guidance tool on GHS and the three Conventions. The guidance tool is expected to be ready by July 2010. The tool will then provide the basis for future workshops and information materials on GHS and the three Conventions. A second phase of GHS related industrial chemicals management as a synergy activity will also be developed in the near future.

Probo Koala project: The Secretariat is participating in the “Probo Koala enforcement Programme” led by the Basel Convention Secretariat. The Secretariat has provided inputs to the Programme currently being implemented in Côte d'Ivoire and which will be duplicated in various other African (and possible Caribbean) countries. Furthermore, the Secretariat was represented at the first consultation meetings in Abidjan in November 2009 and February 2010.

9. Fostering cooperation

COP-4 MANDATE:

Activities 20 - Fostering cooperation among designated national authorities: include the cooperation with technical focal points from related MEAs and other agreements as well as UNEP and FAO by continuing the meetings in each of the seven PIC regions (8 subregional meetings for DNAs, each including 10 countries and 25 participants).

Activities 21 - Regional and subregional meetings of DNAs and focal points of the Stockholm Convention: arrange for 4 subregional meetings for DNAs and Stockholm Convention focal points (each including 10 countries and 25 participants) in 2010. In cooperation with Basel and Stockholm Conventions

Activities 22 - Cooperation with SAICM, the Stockholm Convention, the Basel Convention and the Rotterdam Convention contact points: arrange for 10 meetings where the RC contributes an extra day for participants to discuss Rotterdam Convention issues.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Sub-regional co-operation among stakeholders of Rotterdam-, Stockholm- and Basel-Conventions was strengthened in the reporting period through convening of sub-regional training workshops, action plan meetings and synergies workshops.

10. Provision of Legal support to Parties and Secretariat

COP-4 MANDATE:

Activity 5 - Provide general and legal policy advice: respond to Parties' queries relating to the implementation of and compliance with the Convention(s).

Activity 6 - Develop technical assistance programme for Parties to ensure an effective legal basis for the implementation of the Convention: facilitate the development of national capacity including personnel and infrastructure to implement the legal obligations of the Convention and to develop new and innovative mechanisms for delivering the information and assistance package to Parties upon request.

Priority Activity 7 - Develop a legal and administrative framework in support of the sound management of industrial chemicals: to complement the agricultural chemicals management programmes in effect in most Parties.

Activity 19 - Develop and implement a component to the technical assistance package to facilitate the delivery of legal and related service information and projects to Parties at the regional and national levels.

Please note also that, as mentioned in the COP-4 decision, the legal programme and support are cross-cutting with the other activities.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Secretariat is providing advice and guidance on general legal and policy questions, including on implementation of the Convention and its related programme of work components, to individual Parties, to the Secretariat, to the Conference of the Parties (COP), including the simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the COPs, and to the Chemical Review Committee as requested and needed, fostering synergies with other relevant Secretariats, such as the Stockholm and Basel Convention Secretariats, as well as other entities where necessary.

The Secretariat is providing legal support in connection with technical assistance programmes, such as the “Probo Koala project” mentioned in the section “working with customs authorities” of the current progress report, and more specifically by developing the legal component of technical assistance programmes for Parties to ensure an effective legal basis for the implementation of the Convention and facilitate the development of national capacity, including personnel and infrastructure, to implement the legal obligations of the Convention. New and innovative mechanisms of delivering the information and assistance package to Parties include, among others, the inclusion of specific legal segments in the programmes of technical assistance workshops and the development of legal guidance materials such as case studies, fostering synergies with the Stockholm and Basel Convention Secretariats, where necessary.

The Secretariat is cooperating with the UNEP Division on Environmental Law and Conventions,, to assist Governments in more effective and coherent implementation of existing international commitments by participating in, among others: the ninth Global Training Programme (GTP-9) on Environmental Law and Policy, held in November 2009 in Nairobi 2009 (see http://www.unep.org/Law/Programme_work/Training/global_training_prog.asp), and the preparing of an integrated synthesis of existing international environmental goals, objectives and targets (see <http://www.unep.org/law/PDF/ExistingIntAgreedGoalsandObjectives.pdf>). In this context, the Secretariat participated in the “First open-ended meeting of government-designated experts on a compilation of internationally agreed environmental goals and objectives” which was held from 29 – 31 March 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland.

In further cooperative efforts, the Secretariat is working with the UNEP Chemicals branch for the delivery of UNEP/UNDP legal workshops, as launched in Cambodia in December 2009, and the development of legal guidance on the sound management of chemicals, including industrial chemicals. For this reason, it participated in the “First expert group meeting on the development of legal and institutional infrastructures and cost recovery measures for the sound management of chemicals”, held from 29 to 30 April 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland. In a synergistic approach to activities relevant to industrial chemicals, the Secretariat provided input on the following set of documents, currently in draft format and being tested in limited national situations.

11. Follow-up to the synergies decision

COP-4 MANDATE:

Decision RC-4/11: Enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In follow up to the synergies decision, the Secretariat has been involved in a number of activities:

Extraordinary COPs: In collaboration with the Rotterdam Convention Bureau, the Secretariat has actively contributed to the preparations of the First Simultaneous Extraordinary Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on enhancing cooperation and coordination, which took place in Bali, Indonesia, 22–24 February 2010. The report to the above meeting, including its decisions, is contained in document UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.1/8 (available on the website <http://excops.unep.ch/>).

Regional synergies workshops: The Secretariat continues to organize regional synergies workshops jointly with the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions to enhance cooperation and collaboration to facilitate joint implementation of the three Conventions at the national level. The first synergies workshops were held in October 2009 in Pretoria, South Africa, Montevideo, Uruguay in Nov. 2009 and Beijing, China in April 2010. Two additional regional workshops are foreseen before the end of 2010: One in Cairo, Egypt for the Arabic speaking countries and a second in Eastern Europe.

Regional synergies programmes: The Secretariat has been supportive to the development of regional and national programmes for the joint implementation of the three Conventions at the national and regional level, in close cooperation with the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. Expressions of interest have been received by countries from the South Asia region and the Latin American region.

Inter-Secretariat Thematic Groups: The Secretariat participates in 5 of the different thematic groups (Technical assistance, Public awareness and outreach, Regional Centres, Clearing house mechanism and Scientific and Technical matters) established between the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to focus on cross-cutting issues.

12. Working directly with individual countries on specific issues

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 23 - Develop programmes to assist Parties on specific issues upon requests: through integration with activities under way in the country or at the regional level including training in the use of existing DGDs in national decision making.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The way in which the specific needs of individual Parties are addressed depends on the issue of concern and the Parties involved. One recent example is the country consultation planned in February 2010 for Colombia, which recently has become a Party of the Rotterdam Convention. Colombia had requested some specific guidance on the Convention's implementation (see section on new Parties for more information). A joint supporting mission to Colombia was organized in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention.

Ethiopia is strengthening its capacities to reduce the risks from pesticides through a number of trust fund projects with bilateral donors and FAO. Upon request, the Secretariat is providing guidance and advice regarding import decisions and controls, and in setting up a pilot project on monitoring and reporting pesticide incidents.

Upon receipt of requests for specific assistance on technical issues related to the implementation from D.R. Congo, Benin and Guinea Bissau, a technical mission to provide hands-on advice in resolving issues and to provide practical training was conducted end of May 2010.

13. Working on industrial chemicals

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 24 - Develop programme on industrial chemicals: to establish or increase the capacity of Parties to manage industrial chemicals on a national level, the programme should complement the facilities available nationally for the management of agricultural chemicals and should include the legal, administrative and financial components required as well as training and other capacity building initiatives to bring the programme into effect (6 meetings each including 6 countries and 20 participants)

Priority activity 7 - Develop a legal and administrative framework in support of the sound management of Industrial Chemicals: to complement the agricultural chemicals management programmes in effect in most Parties.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In collaboration with key partners, the Secretariat has been working on the development of a comprehensive industrial chemicals programme which comprises the following elements:

Roadmap on industrial chemicals: A strategy on industrial chemicals has been developed in collaboration with the Stockholm and Basel Conventions. This strategy provides a 'roadmap' for the implementation of a programme on industrial chemicals addressing the provisions of the Rotterdam Convention, while recognizing the need for an integrated approach. The road map also addresses the technical assistance components on industrial chemicals mandated by COP-4.

The above-mentioned roadmap on industrial chemicals addresses 4 key pillars:

- i. Awareness-raising on industrial chemicals management and information exchange on the Rotterdam Convention and other relevant chemicals MEAs (Basel Convention, Stockholm Convention, SAICM, Montreal Protocol etc.);
- ii. Building national capacity for performing risk assessments;
- iii. Building national capacities for developing and implementing risk management measures (development/strengthening of national legislation and policies for the sound management of industrial chemicals);
- iv. Knowledge development at the national and regional levels;

This roadmap will include, among others, the development of the following legal tools to support implementation of the Convention by the Parties:

- i. Legal case studies;
- ii. A compilation of key legal elements related to industrial chemicals;

Industrial chemicals in the Asia Pacific region: The Secretariat is in the process of implementing a project in collaboration with WHO, ILO and other partners to support the sound management of Industrial Chemicals in the Asia and Pacific region, focusing on industrial chemicals, with a special emphasis on asbestos. WHO's Risk Assessment Toolkit (see below) as well as other relevant guidance materials addressing health and environmental aspects will support a series of workshops envisaged for 2010.

Current status:

- Inception workshop scheduled for 18-20 May 2010 in Bangkok; this activity was further postponed to 31 August to 3 September 2010
- Pilot workshops are also being planned.
- A legal case study is also currently being developed.

Industrial chemicals in the Africa and LAC regions: Two regional awareness-raising workshops on industrial chemicals management were jointly organized with SAICM, WHO and the Secretariat for early 2010 for the Africa and Latin American regions. These workshops are intended to support the safe management of industrial chemicals.

The following activities have been undertaken:

- SAICM back-to-back workshop in Abidjan, 25-29 January 2010
- SAICM back-to-back workshop in Jamaica, 13 March 2010

A similar activity for the Asia Pacific region is being developed back-to-back with the Asbestos inception workshop scheduled for 3 September 2010, in Bangkok.

Checklist for the safe management of industrial chemicals: The Secretariat has developed of a checklist to be used as a tool during Technical Assistance activities for Parties to support the safe management of industrial chemicals. This checklist will provide Parties with some key elements to address industrial chemicals at the national level. It will also address synergies on industrial chemicals between the three conventions as well as with SAICM.

The Secretariat is also planning the following actions relevant to industrial chemicals:

- Development of a training tool with content and processes aiming to support to the implementation of a sound national chemicals management system for industrial chemicals in developing countries; (To be completed before end of 2010)
- Testing of the methodology through training workshops in three pilot countries in other UN regions; These workshops will be composed of awareness raising and needs assessment national workshops (1 day each), development of the implementation plan by countries and discussion in national workshops (2 days each); finalisation of activities within countries and preparation of case studies; (to be initiated before the end of 2010)

WHO's Risk Assessment Toolkit: the Secretariat has collaborated with the WHO on the development of a risk assessment toolkit that will support developing countries in their risk assessment efforts related to hazardous chemicals. The toolkit provides information, flowcharts and case studies on risk assessment methodology and includes a section on the Rotterdam Convention. The draft toolkit is already being utilized in the delivery of technical assistance activities on risk assessments, which are also being organized in collaboration with the WHO. The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat reviewed and commented on the toolkit and the toolkit has been finalized. The dissemination of the toolkit also took place during the industrial chemicals activities organized with SAICM.

Legal framework for industrial chemicals: As mentioned under the section "provision of support to Parties and Secretariat", the Secretariat is cooperating with the UNEP Chemicals branch for the development of legal guidance on industrial chemicals.

The Secretariat will also prepare case studies on the development of legal framework for industrial chemicals. These case studies will include an analysis of the challenges and lessons learned on the development of legal instruments in specific countries and are expected to serve as a practical guidance to Parties.

14. Establishment of a clearing-house mechanism

COP-4 MANDATE:

Priority activity 18 - Develop and implement a programme to increase the capacity of Parties to access and utilize the clearing house mechanism - In cooperation with the Stockholm and Basel Conventions. (Four meetings each including 5 countries)

Priority activity 38 - Clearing-house mechanism: establishing in cooperation with Basel and Stockholm conventions a clearing-house mechanism that would provide online access to information and facilities that would assist Parties to implement the Convention.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention is currently working in collaboration with the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions on the following activities to establish a clearing-house mechanism:

Development of a joint work plan completed: On activities relating to the implementation of a joint-clearing house mechanism for the three Conventions, a joint workplan

(UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.1/INF/2) has been established and endorsed by the extraordinary meetings of the Conferences of the Parties in February 2010.

Ongoing development of prototype modules of the clearing-house mechanism specific to the Rotterdam Convention: In the context of the Convention's clearing-house mechanism activities (priority 18 & 38 of the programme of work 2009-2011 approved by COP-4), elements of a clearing-house mechanism specific to the Rotterdam Convention, compatible with the information exchange activities of the Basel and Stockholm Convention's, are being developed and pilot-tested to provide specific support to Parties to increase their access to the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) database and other relevant available information resources, and facilities that would assist Parties in the implementation of the Convention.

To date, activities have focused on the development of a prototype Import-Response module, in addition to a prototype searchable contacts database for the 3 Conventions. Further clearing-house modules are scheduled for development including a Final Regulatory Action's module, and a section devoted to Industrial Chemicals.

First pilot training session on the prototype components of the clearing-house mechanism specific to the Rotterdam Convention: The first pilot training session on the aforementioned prototypes took place in Armenia for eight Central European countries in Nov. 2009. This pilot training session was designed for Designated National Authorities (DNAs) and other stakeholders and was organized in conjunction with the sub-regional training and awareness workshop for that region. The meeting was attended by representatives of 8 countries from the region.

Second pilot training session on the prototype components of the clearing-house mechanism specific to the Rotterdam Convention: The second pilot training session designed for DNAs and other stakeholders on the aforementioned prototype modules was held in conjunction with the sub-regional training and awareness raising workshop in Vietnam in June 2010. The meeting was attended by representatives of 7 countries from the region.

15. Partners in the regional delivery of technical assistance

COP-4 MANDATE:

Activity 25 - Facilitate annual meetings with representatives of the FAO and UNEP regional office: arrange for up to two meetings per year (5 UNEP and 14 FAO including 9 subregional offices)

Activity 26 - Facilitate annual meetings with the group of regional experts: arrange for up to one meeting per year for an estimated 20 representatives.

Activity 27 - Working with regional liaison offices in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe in collaboration with key partners: Coordinate the delivery of technical assistance and capacity building programmes at the regional and national levels. This is to ensure the maximum use of resources to benefit the Parties and to arrange for a synergistic approach to chemicals management at the national level. The programme will be done in conjunction with UNEP and the Stockholm and Basel Conventions and will be coordinated through chemicals waste cluster managers to be placed in the regional offices of UNEP.

Activity 28 - Participate in the 26th session of Asia Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC): promote integration with work on Rotterdam Convention; participate in one meeting during 2009 with regional experts.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

FAO and UNEP regional offices: A meeting for FAO and UNEP regional offices as well as Basel Convention Regional Centres and Stockholm Centres is proposed to be convened in September 2010 in Barcelona, Spain. One of the objectives will be to review progress in 2009 and develop further ideas for meeting the countries' technical assistance needs in preparation of fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Capacity building related to MEAs in ACP countries: The Secretariat is working with the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions to support the implementation of the joint UNEP-European Commission's MEA Programme for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The Secretariat has also (jointly with the chemicals conventions and SAICM) provided inputs to needs assessment meetings for the African, Caribbean and Pacific hubs. The Secretariat is in close contact with the UNEP Secretariat for this MEA Programme and reviewed the workplans for the regional hubs.

WTO: The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat was represented at a WTO Trade and Environment meeting for Middle East and Arab countries which took place in Amman, Jordan in Oct. 2009.

UNEP/ROWA: the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat was represented at a Regional Symposium on Chemicals Management in Arab States which took place in Damascus, Syria in Oct. 2009.

UNEP Chemicals Branch: the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat participated in a SC/DSD/UNEP organized workshop on Case Studies on sound chemicals management which took place in Geneva, Switzerland in Dec. 2009.

UNEP Chemicals Branch: The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat participated in a UNEP organized Meeting of Environment and Development Partners on Mainstreaming the Sound Management of Chemicals in Development Policies and plans in Geneva, Switzerland Dec. 2009.

16. The sixth meeting of the Chemical Review Committee (CRC)

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The sixth meeting of the Rotterdam Convention Chemical Review Committee took place from 15-19 March 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was attended by 30 government-designated experts and 62 observers from countries, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations.

The candidate pesticides sent to the Committee at its sixth session included: amitraz, azinphos-methyl, endosulfan, methyl bromide and paraquat.

The Committee reviewed the notifications for these chemicals and the supporting information provided by Parties and concluded to forward a recommendation to the Conference of the Parties that **azinphos methyl** be included in the Rotterdam Convention's Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure since two notifications had been found to meet the relevant criteria. Accordingly, a drafting group was established to work inter-sessionally on the preparation of the draft Decision Guidance Document (DGD).

When reviewing the notifications for the other chemicals, it concluded that only one notification met the criteria for inclusion in Annex III of the Convention for **amitraz** and **methyl bromide**, while the notification and supporting documentation for **paraquat** did not meet the criteria for inclusion in Annex III of the Convention. Accordingly, rationales on how the notifications for these chemicals met the criteria for inclusion in Annex III of the Convention were drafted and subsequently adopted by the Committee.

Regarding the new notifications for **endosulfan**, the Committee was unable to reach consensus that one new notification from **New Zealand** did, in fact, meet the criteria for inclusion in Annex III of the Convention and therefore agreed to defer further discussion on this notification to CRC-7.

Finally, the Committee considered and approved the DGD on **endosulfan** that had been prepared inter-sessionally by the task groups. The Committee decided to send the recommendation to include **endosulfan** into Annex III of the Convention together with the draft DGD, along with a summary of comments it received and a description of how those comments had been addressed, to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The report of the meeting is now available on the Convention website (<http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=b&id=6&sid=18&tid=42>)

17. PIC Circular

COP-4 MANDATE:

Activity 35 - PIC Circular: Preparation in English, French and Spanish, publication on CD ROM every every six months, posted on Convention website and sent to all Parties.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In October 2009, the Secretariat issued a letter to Parties who had submitted less than 20 import responses and/or import responses that had been interim for more than two years. This letter encouraged those Parties to review their import responses and, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 10 of the Convention, submit any outstanding import responses and/or inform the Secretariat of any modification that may have occurred since the interim responses were originally submitted. The Secretariat received a strong response from this letter and many new and updated import responses will be published in Circular XXXI of June 2010.

Since the start of 2009, three Parties that had not previously nominated a DNA have now done so (Croatia, El Salvador and Equatorial Guinea). The DNA register, which accompanies each PIC Circular, contains contact information for the over 230 Designated National Authorities (DNAs) for Parties to the Rotterdam Convention.

18. New Parties

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Since October 2009, four countries have acceded to the Rotterdam Convention increasing the total number of Parties from 130 to 134 (as of 27 May 2010). The new Parties are (listed in chronological order of ratification):

1. Trinidad and Tobago (acceded on 16 December 2009, entry into force on 16 March 2010);
2. Tonga (acceded 31 March 2010, entry into force on 29 June);
3. Mozambique (acceded on 15 April 2010, entry into force on 14 July 2010);
4. Guatemala (acceded on 19 April 2010, entry into force on 18 July 2010).

The new Parties to the Convention have received information and offers of assistance from the Secretariat in relation to implementation of their obligations under the Convention.