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**United Nations
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**Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
First meeting**
Punta del Este, Uruguay, 2–6 May 2005
Item 6 (d) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference
of the Parties: implementation plans**

**Development of guidance to assist countries in the preparation of
national implementation plans****

Note by the Secretariat

1. Paragraph 1(a) of Article 7 of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants requires each Party to “[d]evelop and endeavour to implement a plan for the implementation of its obligations under [the] Convention”.
2. To assist countries in this task, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank, with the financial support of the Government of Denmark, developed draft guidance on planning and developing national implementation plans. This draft (UNEP/POPS/INC.6/INF/8) was submitted to the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an International Instrument for Implementing International Action on Certain Persistent Organic Pollutants. It was then revised to reflect intersessional comments from Governments and, as so revised, presented in document UNEP/POPS/INC.7/INF/20 for further consideration by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at its seventh session. In its decision INC -7/7, the Committee endorsed the revised guidance as set out in document UNEP/POPS/INC.7/INF/20 as interim guidance. By the same decision, the Committee also invited Governments, in particular those with experience in using the interim guidance, to prepare national implementation plans, and invited other interested stakeholders to provide further comments on the guidance to the Secretariat by 30 September 2003. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to prepare by 31 December 2003, based on these comments, a revised interim guidance that it would submit to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its first meeting.

* UNEP/POPS/COP.1/1.

** Stockholm Convention, Article 7, paragraph 3; Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, resolution 1, paragraph 4 (UNEP/POPS/CONF/4, appendix I); Report of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the work of its sixth session (UNEP/POPS/INC.6/22), annex I, decision INC-6/6; Report of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the work of its seventh session (UNEP/POPS/INC.7/28), annex I, decision INC-7/7.

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3. Comments were submitted by twelve Governments, one regional economic integration organization and its member States, and two non-governmental organizations. These submissions are contained in document UNEP/POPS/COP.1/INF/14.

4. In response to the above request and taking into account the comments referenced in paragraph 3, above, the Secretariat prepared the interim guidance contained in document UNEP/POPS/COP.1/INF/13. The following considerations were also taken into account in the preparation of the guidance:

- (a) National implementation plans should:
 - (i) Be suitable for use by Parties to meet their obligations under the Stockholm Convention;
 - (ii) Be tailored to meet the individual needs of Parties;
 - (iii) Build on existing work and assessments where available;
 - (iv) Take due account of the aims of sustainable development in the sense of implementing socially, economically and environmentally appropriate policies and actions to maximize overall benefits;
 - (v) Be linked to related initiatives, where possible, to ensure maximum efficiency and reduce duplication of effort;
 - (vi) Be able to respond to changes in Convention obligations, including any resulting from the listing of new chemicals in Annexes A, B or C of the Convention;

(b) Guidance on the development of national implementation plans should be used in conjunction with the Convention text and annexes and should not be considered as a legal interpretation of the Convention text or as a point-by-point analysis of the measures required of a particular Party.

Possible action by the Conference of the Parties

5. The Conference may wish to:

- (a) Consider the information provided in the present note;
 - (b) Adopt, with any amendments, the guidance contained in document UNEP/POPS/COP.1/INF/13;
 - (c) Encourage Governments to use the guidance in developing their national implementation plans;
 - (d) Request Governments to provide comments to the Secretariat, based on their experience in using the guidance, on how to improve its usefulness;
 - (e) Request the Secretariat to update the guidance, as appropriate, on the basis of comments received and related information.
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