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**Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants****Third meeting**

Dakar, 30 April–4 May 2007

Item 5 (l) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the
Conference of the Parties: synergies****Enhancing synergies within the chemicals and waste cluster******Note by the Secretariat**

1. At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants adopted decision SC-1/18, in which, among other things, it welcomed the proposal made at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, for the appointment of a joint head of the secretariats of the Stockholm and the Rotterdam Conventions and decided that the possibilities for additional synergies should be explored.
2. In paragraph 3 of decision SC-1/18, the Conference of the Parties requested:
“the Secretariat to prepare, in consultation with other relevant secretariats and the United Nations Environment Programme, a study on how the cooperation and synergies between the secretariats of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes, the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention and other relevant programmes could be improved, taking into account the special nature of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat, which is jointly provided by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to ensure maximum coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in the field of chemicals and wastes, including consideration of the role common structures might play”.

* UNEP/POPS/COP.3/1.

** Report of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention on the work of its first meeting (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/31), annex I, decision SC-1/18 and on the work of its second meeting (UNEP/POPS/COP.2/30) annex I, decision SC-2/15.

3. In decision SC-1/18, the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention also invited the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to consider the results of the Secretariat's study at their third and eighth meetings, respectively. It also invited the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to consider, at its twenty-fourth session, the results of the study and the considerations and decisions of the above-mentioned bodies.

4. In paragraph 7 of decision SC-1/18, the Conference of the Parties invited the Executive Director of UNEP, when making arrangements for the performance of the secretariat functions for the Stockholm Convention, to provide for the future adaptation of these arrangements to any decisions regarding this issue that might be taken by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting.

5. In response to the above invitation, the Secretariat prepared a study on improving cooperation and synergies between the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, with financial support from the Government of Switzerland, which is contained in document UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/12.

6. At its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention adopted decision RC-2/6 on enhancing synergies between the secretariats of the chemicals and wastes conventions.¹ In paragraph 5 of the decision, the Conference of the Parties considered:

“that to enable the conferences of the parties to the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions to take any decisions which they may deem appropriate at their next meetings, they will require in addition to the above-mentioned study a supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements that would be needed to implement any changes that the three convention secretariats and the United Nations Environment Programme may propose. In addition, such supplementary analysis should identify any financial savings that might accrue, as well as any implications for adjustments to secretariat expenditures on United Nations administrative fees.”

7. In paragraph 6 of decision RC-2/6, the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention invited:

“the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the secretariats of the conventions, to prepare the supplementary analysis referred to in paragraph 5 above and to make it available for consideration at the next meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Stockholm and Basel Conventions.”

8. In response to the above invitations, UNEP prepared a supplementary analysis of financial and administrative arrangements that would be needed to implement any changes that the three convention secretariats and the United Nations Environment Programme might propose to enhance cooperation and synergies among the chemicals and wastes conventions. The analysis is set out in a note by the Secretariat (UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/18).

9. At its fifth session the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention adopted decision OEWG-V/6 on synergies, by which, among other things, it requested the Secretariat of the Basel Convention to transmit the annex to its note on recommendations on improving cooperation and synergies (UNEP/OEWG/5/2/Add.8) to the secretariats of the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions and to invite them to make the annex available to their conferences of the parties as an information paper.

10. At its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention had before it the following documents on the issue of enhancing synergies among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions:

(a) The study on improving cooperation and synergies between the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/12) referred to in paragraph 5 above;

(b) The supplementary analysis of the financial and administrative arrangements that would be needed to implement any changes proposed to enhance synergies between the chemicals and wastes conventions (UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/18) referred to in paragraph 8 above;

¹ Report of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the work of its second meeting (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.2/19), annex I, decision RC-2/6.

(c) The document on recommendations on improving cooperation and synergies transmitted by the secretariat of the Basel Convention (UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/19) referred to in paragraph 9 above.

11. At that meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted decision SC-2/15 on synergies, by which, among other things, it:

(a) Requested the President, supported by the Secretariat and in consultation and cooperation with the presidents and secretariats of the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions, to ensure that the reports contained in documents UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/12, UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/18 and UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/19 were supplemented by a further report exploring the specific areas in which cooperation and coordination among the three conventions at the programmatic level would be to the mutual advantage of all three conventions and without prejudice to their autonomy;

(b) Decided to make that supplementary report available to the conferences of the parties to the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions as soon as it became available. It also suggested the establishment of an ad hoc joint working group as a possible way forward and invited the conferences of the parties to the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions to consider that option and, in the event of their endorsement, agreed to its establishment. It was suggested that the working group consider the supplementary report and prepare joint recommendations on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions at the administrative and programmatic levels to be forwarded to the next meeting of the conference of the parties to each convention;

(c) Requested that the supplementary report be made available to Parties and observers to the three conventions through their respective secretariats and invited Parties and observers to the three conventions to submit their views on the supplementary report through their respective secretariats to the ad hoc joint working group proposed in paragraph 6 of the decision;

(d) Decided, in the event of the establishment of such an ad hoc joint working group, that the Parties, through the Bureau, should nominate by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties fifteen representatives, i.e., three representatives of Parties from each of the five United Nations regions, to participate in an ad hoc joint working group of the three conventions.

12. The President of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, Mr. Nicholas Kiddle (New Zealand) prepared the supplementary report on cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, dated 28 September 2006. The report was subsequently made available to the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention and to the Parties and observers to the three conventions through their respective secretariats. Parties and observers to the Stockholm Convention were requested to provide comments on the supplementary report. The supplementary report will be considered at the first meeting of the ad hoc joint working group on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, discussed below, as document UNEP/POPS/COP.3/INF/13.

13. At its third meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention, adopted decision RC-3/8 on cooperation and coordination between the Rotterdam, Basel and Stockholm Convention by which, among other things, it:

(a) Agreed to participate in the process specified in decision SC-2/15, including the establishment of the ad hoc joint working group, and encouraged the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to do the same at its eighth meeting, acknowledging that it was highly desirable that all three conventions should be fully involved in the process in order to ensure further improved cooperation and coordination;

(b) Requested the Secretariat to invite Parties and observers to the Convention to submit their views on the supplementary report through the Secretariat to the ad hoc joint working group by 31 January 2007;

(c) Decided to nominate, through the Bureau, three representatives of Parties from each of the five United Nations regions by 31 January 2007 to participate in the ad hoc joint working group of the three conventions.

14. At the third meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Rotterdam Convention, the Government of Finland offered to host the first meeting of the ad hoc working group, in the event that it should be established.

15. By a letter of 22 November 2006 from acting Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention, Mr. Maged Younes, Parties to the Convention were requested to nominate, through their bureau members from their respective regions and by 31 January 2007, three representatives from each of the five United Nations regions, to participate in the ad hoc joint working group.

16. At its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention adopted decision VIII/8 on cooperation and coordination between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions by which, among other things, it:

(a) Agreed to participate in the process specified in decision SC-2/15, including the establishment of the ad hoc joint working group, acknowledging that it was highly desirable that all three conventions be fully involved in the process in order to ensure further improved cooperation and coordination;

(b) Requested the Secretariat to invite Parties and observers to the Convention to submit their views on the supplementary report through the Secretariat to the ad hoc working group by 31 January 2007;

(c) Decided to nominate, through the Bureau, three representatives of Parties from each of the five United Nations regions by 31 January 2007 to participate in the ad hoc joint working group of the three conventions.

17. The first meeting of the ad hoc joint working group on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions will be held in Helsinki, from 26 to 28 March 2007.

Possible action by the Conference of the Parties

18. The Conference may wish:

(a) To take note of the supplementary report on cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, prepared by the President of the Conference;

(b) To welcome the establishment of the ad hoc joint working group on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and take note of the report of its first meeting, if available;

(c) To provide budgetary resources to ensure conference servicing for the second meeting of the ad hoc joint working group in 2008 and for the costs of travel to that meeting by representatives of Parties to the Stockholm Convention from developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

(d) To note that the ad hoc joint working group will make joint recommendations to the conferences of the parties of all three conventions, including the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention at its fourth meeting.