



Distr.: General  
31 January 2007

Original: English



**United Nations  
Environment  
Programme**

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

Dakar, 30 April–4 May 2007

Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda\*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the Parties:  
measures to reduce or eliminate releases from wastes**

**Secretariat report on the guidelines relating to persistent organic  
pollutant wastes adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the  
Basel Convention**

**Note by the Secretariat**

**I. Introduction**

1. At its eighth meeting in decision VIII/16, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Wastes and Their Disposal adopted:

- (a) Updated general technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants (POPs);
- (b) Technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with 1,1,1-trichloro-2,2-bis(4-chlorophenyl)ethane (DDT);
- (c) Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with the pesticides aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, hexachlorobenzene (HCB), mirex or toxaphene or with HCB as an industrial chemical;
- (d) Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes containing or contaminated with unintentionally produced polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (PCDDs), polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDFs), HCB or polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs);
- (e) Updated technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with PCBs, polychlorinated terphenyls (PCTs) or polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs).

\* UNEP/POPS/COP.3/1.

2. Paragraph 4 of decision VIII/16 requested the Secretariat of the Basel Convention to submit that decision and the technical guidelines to the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention at its third meeting through the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention and invited the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention to consider them. The decision and guidelines, as submitted by the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, are set out in document UNEP/POPS/COP.3/INF/7.

3. In paragraph 6 of decision VIII/16, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention noted that, having considered comment compiled by the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, it was not practical or feasible for the time being to consider further, at the level of the Basel Convention, a methodology for further definition of low persistent organic pollutant content and of levels of destruction and irreversible transformation and that concerns expressed during its discussions on the issue might be better addressed through further work, as described in paragraph 7 of the decision. With paragraph 7 of decision VIII/16, the Conference agreed that a review of the definition of low persistent organic pollutant content and of levels of destruction and irreversible transformation would be included in the work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2007–2008, if appropriate.

4. At its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention adopted decision SC-2/6 on measures to reduce or eliminate wastes. In paragraph 3 of that decision, the Conference:

*“Requests the Secretariat to prepare a report on the guidelines relating to persistent organic pollutants if they are adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention at its eighth meeting. The report shall assess the guidelines to identify contents that are relevant for the purposes of the requirements of the Stockholm Convention and highlight the elements that are suitable for consideration at the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties for possible action under paragraph 2 of Article 6 of the Convention.”*

5. Pursuant to that request, the Secretariat has prepared the present report on the guidelines relating to POPs that the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention had adopted at its eighth meeting (hereinafter, the “POPs wastes guidelines”). As requested in decision SC-2/6, the report:

(a) Identifies contents that are relevant for the purposes of the requirements of the Stockholm Convention;

(b) Highlights the elements that are suitable for consideration at the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties for possible action under paragraph 2 of Article 6 of the Convention.

## **II. Contents relevant for the purposes of the requirements of the Stockholm Convention**

6. Each of the POPs waste guidelines is relevant for the purposes of the requirements of the Convention. In particular, they should be helpful for Parties in implementing paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Convention which requires Parties:

(a) To develop appropriate strategies for identifying stockpiles, products and articles in use and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs;

(b) To identify to the extent practicable, stockpiles consisting of or containing POPs on the basis of the strategies referred to in subparagraph (a);

(c) To manage stockpiles, as appropriate, in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner;

(d) To take appropriate measures so that wastes are handled, collected, transported and stored in an environmentally sound manner and disposed of in such a way that the POP content is destroyed or irreversibly transformed;

(e) To endeavour to develop appropriate strategies for identifying sites contaminated by POPs, with remediation undertaken in an environmentally sound manner.

7. Each of the POPs waste guidelines addresses issues pertaining to the areas described in the preceding paragraph and includes specific sections on :

(a) Legislative and regulatory frameworks;

(b) Waste prevention and minimization;

- (c) Identification and inventories;
- (d) Sampling, analysis and monitoring;
- (e) Handling, collection, packaging, labelling, transportation and storage;
- (f) Environmentally sound disposal;
- (g) Remediation of contaminated sites;
- (h) Health and safety;
- (i) Emergency response;
- (j) Public participation.

8. These issues are important to Parties in the management POPs waste in an environmentally sound manner and in order for them to satisfy the requirements under Article 6 of the Stockholm Convention. Parties could benefit from becoming familiar with the information presented in each of the guidelines and could take steps to ensure that the procedures outlined are implemented accordingly.

### III. Elements of the guidelines for consideration by the Conference

9. Three issues for consideration by the Conference at its third meeting are based on the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article 6 of the Stockholm Convention which states that:

“The Conference of the Parties shall cooperate closely with the appropriate bodies of the Basel Convention on the control of Transboundary Movements of hazardous Wastes and their Disposal to, inter alia:

- “(a) Establish levels of destruction and irreversible transformation necessary to ensure that the characteristics of persistent organic pollutants as specified in paragraph 1 of Annex D are not exhibited;
- “(b) Determine what they consider to be the methods that constitute environmentally sound disposal referred to above; and
- “(c) Work to establish, as appropriate, the concentration levels of the chemicals listed in Annexes A, B and C in order to define the low persistent organic pollutant content referred to in paragraph 1 (d) (ii).”

#### A. Levels of destruction and irreversible transformation

10. The POPs waste guidelines recommend that the provisional definition for levels of destruction and irreversible transformation, based on absolute levels should be applied as follows:

- (a) Atmospheric emissions:
  - (i) PCDDs and PCDFs: 0.1 ng TEQ/Nm<sup>3</sup>;
  - (ii) All other POPs: pertinent national legislation and international rules, standards and guidelines shall apply.
- (b) Aqueous releases: pertinent national legislation and international rules, standards and guidelines shall apply.
- (c) Solid residues: POP content should be below the definitions for low POP content set out in the POPs waste guidelines (see paragraph 15 below). If, however, the POP content of unintentionally produced PCDDs or PCDFs is above the low POP content, the solid residues should be treated through an environmentally sound disposal method as described in the POPs waste guidelines.

11. It is stated in the guidelines that technologies for destruction and irreversible transformation should be operated in accordance with guidelines on best available techniques and best environmental practice being prepared under the Stockholm Convention. There are, however, no specifications for levels of destruction and irreversible transformation yet established for destruction technologies within the best available techniques/best environmental practices guidelines. Such specifications may be needed and their preparation could be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its third meeting.

12. Except in the case of atmospheric emissions of PCDDs and PCDFs, the levels of destruction and irreversible transformation for all other POPs for both aqueous and atmospheric emissions are defined according to the pertinent national legislation and international rules and regulations. Where these are lacking or insufficient, additional work is needed to promote their establishment. With the exception of PCDDs and PCDFs atmospheric emissions, more work is needed to determine the levels of destruction and irreversible transformation for all POPs based on emissions into the atmosphere and water.

## **B. Methods of environmentally sound disposal**

13. In section G of chapter IV of the general technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs, many methods of disposal of waste are recommended. The review of the methods is informative and an economic analysis of each method is presented in annex IV to the guidelines. There is no conclusion, however, on the levels of destruction or irreversible transformation obtained from the use of these methods.

14. The Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, at its seventh meeting, invited bodies of the Stockholm Convention to consider best available techniques and best environmental practices with respect to unintentionally produced POPs, including the more recent technologies for destruction and irreversible transformation listed in the Basel Convention's general technical guidelines. In response to the invitation, the Expert Group on Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices of the Stockholm Convention considered the technologies at its first and second meetings. It was pointed out that two of the methods (cement kilns firing hazardous waste and hazardous waste incineration) were already covered in the draft guidelines on best available techniques and the provisional guidance on best environmental practices. In annex II of the report of the second meeting of the Expert Group on Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices (UNEP/POPS/EGBATBEP.2/4) information is provided on known levels of unintentionally released POPs resulting from the remaining eight processes that are listed in the Basel general technical guidelines for the purpose of destruction and irreversible transformation of the persistent organic pollutant content in wastes when applied in such a way as to ensure that the remaining wastes and releases do not exhibit the characteristics of POPs. Although the information cited there is inconclusive because it came from only a few processes, the levels of unintentional release of POPs given for them are low. There is still a need to establish levels of acceptable releases of unintentionally released POPs for all methods of destruction and irreversible transformation of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs.

## **C. Low POP content**

15. The POPs waste guidelines provisionally define low POP content as 50mg/kg for PCBs and all POP pesticides, and 15 µg TEQ/kg for PCDDs and PCDFs. These levels are provided, bearing in mind the following considerations:

- (a) Wastes with a high POP content, including waste stockpiles should be given priority;
- (b) Availability of treatment capacity;
- (c) Limit values within national legislation are relevant;
- (d) Availability of analytical methods;
- (e) Lack of knowledge and data.

16. It is possible that a Party may have the resources and the technology to destroy wastes with a POPs content below the defined low POP content level, perhaps to the extent that they are eliminated altogether. While that may be welcome, first priority should be given to destroying any waste whose POPs content exceeds the low POP content values.

### **Possible action by the Conference of the Parties**

17. The Conference may wish:

- (a) To take note of the present report;
- (b) To welcome with appreciation the guidelines for environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention at its eighth meeting;

(c) To recommend to Parties that they make use of the guidelines as appropriate in implementing the waste related provisions of the Convention, in particular those contained in paragraph 1 of Article 6;

(d) To support training and other capacity-building activities to assist countries in implementing the guidelines, including those proposed in document UNEP/POPS/COP.3/INF/16, and request the Secretariat to work in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention to undertake those activities.

---