

RC-1/14: Regional delivery of technical assistance

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the targets for chemicals agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Noting that hazardous chemicals and pesticides covered by the Rotterdam Convention can contribute to poverty through their adverse effects on human health and environmental resources,

Recalling the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, in particular its decision INC-10/7 on the regional delivery of technical assistance to Parties,

Also recalling the provisions of the Convention on technical assistance, especially its article 16,

Stressing the importance of technical assistance in enabling Parties, especially developing countries, and in particular the least developed among them, and countries with economies in transition, to implement the Convention,

Emphasizing the need to promote coordination and cooperation among international organizations, Parties and others in the provision of technical assistance,

Recalling the role of the secretariat of the Convention as laid down in its article 19,

Emphasizing also the need to achieve effective and coordinated delivery of technical assistance,

Noting with appreciation the work of the secretariat in producing a comprehensive proposal for the regional delivery of technical assistance to Parties.¹

Decides:

- (a) To invite countries, donors and other stakeholders to promote chemicals and waste management regional cooperation programmes within existing regional cooperation frameworks;
- (b) To invite developed countries, other donors and international organizations to ensure the better integration of chemicals management in their development cooperation policies and programmes and to take account of the needs and interest of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their chemicals and pesticides strategies;
- (c) To request the secretariat to take the following initial steps to operationalize the regional delivery of technical assistance to the Parties of the Convention:
 - (i) To facilitate coordination of regional activities using existing bodies such as the regional offices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme;
 - (ii) To implement the activities contained in the annex to the present decision subject to available resources;
 - (iii) To invite other regional entities, in particular the Basel Convention regional centres and regional coordinating centres, international organizations and multilateral environmental agreements to participate in the regional delivery system to make full use of synergies among those entities, organizations and multilateral environmental agreements;
 - (iv) To prepare a detailed costed programme of activities based on the elements in the annex to the present decision, identified gaps in the light of experience and further developments in the international context for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting;

¹ See document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.1/28.

- (v) To report to the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting on the experience gained in implementing these actions;
- (d) To welcome World Bank and Global Environment Facility support for chemicals management and encourage synergies between those activities and actions necessary to enable developing countries to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention;
- (e) To request the secretariat to provide to the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and to the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management information on options to enable developing countries to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention;
- (f) To review at its second meeting the operation of the regional delivery system and the progress in its implementation, based also on input from Parties and other actors.

Annex

Initial technical assistance actions

A. Elements unique to the Rotterdam Convention

1. The following initial topics for technical assistance actions are identified for priority attention:
 - (a) Upon request, assistance will be provided to support national efforts to ratify the Convention by countries seeking to do so. To assist in the initiation of these actions, interested countries should contact the secretariat to request action within their region. It is anticipated that these actions will be further defined at the level of actual delivery.
 - (b) Articles 6, 7, 10 and 14 of the Convention contain important functions of the Secretariat in respect of which facilitation of assistance may be required, in particular:
 - (i) Preparation and submission of notifications of final regulatory action to ban or severely restrict a chemical;
 - (ii) Preparation and submission of proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations (based on adverse human health effects or adverse environmental effects);
 - (iii) Procedure for making decisions on future imports of chemicals in Annex III to the Convention and for reporting those decisions to the Secretariat;
 - (iv) Export notification, indicating to exporters how to develop and implement a programme of export notification and export notification and, to importers, how to use the information provided through export notifications;
 - (v) Exchange of information with Parties on transit movements of chemicals through their territory.

B. Cross-cutting elements

2. In addition to actions identified under section A above, the secretariat should systematically explore synergies with and contribute, where possible and feasible, to other international processes, programmes, activities dealing with chemicals management such as the strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM), other multilateral environmental agreements related to chemicals management and the intergovernmental strategic plan on technology support and capacity-building, in particular for the following cross-cutting elements:
 - (a) National legislation with regard to chemicals management in general and on the implementation of the international conventions in particular;
 - (b) Development of plans for the implementation of chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements (e.g., the Stockholm Convention);

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- (c) Customs procedures to combat illegal traffic in chemicals;
 - (d) Collection of information on pesticide poisoning incidents (human health and the environment);
 - (e) Regulatory decision-making on chemicals; and
 - (f) Notification, at the national level, of all stakeholders associated with implementation of the Convention.

3. For those aspects of the Convention that are relevant to a broader programme of chemicals management – the cross-cutting issues – consideration will be given to contributing to the updating of already existing materials relevant to the Convention that might be integrated with the existing technical assistance activities of other organizations. The following opportunities and recommended actions are highlighted:

- (a) The guide under development by the Rotterdam Convention secretariat on the appropriate legal or administrative infrastructure for the implementation of the Convention should be compatible with similar guidance in preparation by the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm conventions;
 - (b) National profiles on chemicals management have been developed or are under development in a broad range of countries. Such profiles are a good starting point in assessing the needs of countries and for the development of national plans for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. Supplementary guidance should be developed that would assist countries to use their national profile as a basis from which to define gaps in their chemicals management infrastructure for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention;
 - (c) Guidance should be developed for national customs authorities on matters relevant to the Rotterdam Convention to supplement that developed by other multilateral environmental agreements or programmes and with a view to developing fully integrated guidance on relevant chemicals conventions in the future;
 - (d) Under the Stockholm Convention substantial progress has been made in developing national implementation plans. In view of the close relationship with the Rotterdam Convention, it would be useful to examine the extent to which the Rotterdam Convention has been incorporated in those plans and to consider what guidance might be needed to help ensure that relevant aspects of the Rotterdam Convention are considered by countries in developing or implementing their national implementation plans;
 - (e) Opportunities should be explored for the integration of the severely hazardous pesticide formulation reporting requirements of the Rotterdam Convention with the WHO pesticide data management system and community-based approach to pesticide poisonings piloted in selected countries.
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