



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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<b>ENV</b>	<b>555</b>
<b>COMER</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>CHIMIE</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>ONU</b>	<b>59</b>

**NOTE**

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from: General Secretariat  
to: Delegations

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Subject: International Meetings and Events  
- Outcome of the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, the 6th Conference to the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention, the 6th Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention and the 2nd Simultaneous Extraordinary Meetings of the Parties to the three Conventions (Geneva, 28 April – 10 May 2013)  
= Information from the Presidency and the Commission

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Delegations will find attached an information note on the above, submitted jointly by the Presidency and the Commission, to be dealt with under "other business" at the meeting of the Council (Environment) on 18 June 2013.

**Outcome of the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference to the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention, the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Simultaneous Extraordinary Meetings of the Parties to the three Conventions.**

**(Geneva, 28 April – 10 May 2013)**

**- Information from the Presidency and the Commission -**

Introduction and Overview

1. As a result of the efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination amongst the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the three Conferences of the Parties were held together with the second simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COPs) to the three Conventions. The historic meeting, which was attended by nearly two thousand participants from 170 countries, adopted 50 separate decisions aimed at strengthening protection against hazardous chemicals and wastes.
2. The three legally autonomous Conventions had convened the joint meeting of the COPs to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the Conventions, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of their activities on the ground. Each of the Convention's COPs then continued individually over the two-week period to deal with its own specific topics of the global chemicals and waste agenda before returning in a joint session at the end of the second week to finalise their respective outcomes.

3. The first joint meeting also included a high-level segment on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May dedicated to the theme of strengthening synergies between the Conventions at the national, regional and global levels. The high-level segment, comprising 80 Ministers or Ministerial equivalents, were joined by the Swiss Government, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the CEO and Chairperson of Global Environment Facility (GEF). The global agency leaders pledged to deepen cooperation and coordination as part of a broader effort to raise the profile of chemicals and waste issues, promote green growth and alleviate poverty.
  
4. At its conclusion, the joint meeting agreed the “Geneva Statement on the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste”. The Geneva Statement welcomed the Rio+20 outcome document and the work to enhance cooperation and coordination between the three Conventions undertaken to date. It also welcomed the UNEP-led consultative process on financing options for chemicals and waste, noting that the three elements of the integrated approach – mainstreaming, industry involvement and external financing - are all equally important and mutually reinforcing.

#### Individual Conventions

5. Stockholm Convention: The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants currently regulates 22 substances that are persistent, travel long distances, bioaccumulate in organisms and are toxic. The Convention was adopted in 2001 and entered into force in 2004. It currently has 179 Parties.
  
6. The 6th meeting of the COP to the Stockholm Convention agreed to list the flame retardant chemical hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD) to Annex A to the Convention with specific exemptions for expanded polystyrene and extruded polystyrene in buildings.

7. Efforts to adopt a compliance mechanism, however, did not succeed due to continuing disagreement on some key issues, notably whether the Committee should be entitled to assess cases of possible non-compliance without request by a Party, and on the range of measures that a future compliance committee could recommend to the COP. The COP did however agree to arrangements for evaluating the effectiveness of the Convention in line with Article 16.
8. Decisions were reached on reporting obligations and national implementation plans. A decision will be taken at COP7 on the need for certain exemptions for Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (PFOS). Decisions on measures to reduce or eliminate releases from intentional production and use, as well as the Dioxin Toolkit and Best Available Techniques and Best Environment Practices were also reached. The preparation of a roadmap for the development of alternatives to DDT to be presented at COP7 was endorsed. The COP also strengthened the cooperation with the Basel Convention vis-a-vis the work to be carried out on POPs wastes.
9. Basel Convention: The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal regulates the export/import of hazardous waste and waste containing hazardous chemicals. The Convention was adopted in 1989 and entered into force in 1992. It currently has 180 Parties.
10. The 11th meeting of the COP to the Basel Convention took decisions to strengthen compliance within the Convention. The Parties adopted a framework for the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes and other wastes and decided to take forward a priority programme of work to facilitate/encourage the implementation of the framework. The Parties further agreed, over the next two years, to aim to finalise technical guidelines on transboundary movements of electronic and electrical wastes (e-waste). Other COP decisions included the addition of entries to Annex IX of the Convention (non-hazardous waste), the adoption of a work programme for the elaboration of technical guidelines on waste POPs and mercury and the conclusion of a legal analysis of the application of the Convention to waste generated on board ships. The Parties also decided on terms of reference for the newly established Environmental Network for Optimising Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE), which aims to prevent and combat illegal traffic in hazardous and other wastes through better implementation and enforcement of national law.

11. Rotterdam Convention: The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade currently regulates information about the export/import of hazardous chemicals listed in Annex III of the Convention. The Convention was adopted in 1998 and entered into force in 2004. It currently has 152 Parties. Unlike the Stockholm Convention, the Rotterdam Convention does not ban or restrict trade in chemicals or pesticide formulations, but serves to strengthen the protection of human health and the environment by expanding the exchange of critical safety information between exporting and importing Parties.
12. The 6<sup>th</sup> COP to the Rotterdam Convention decided to add four hazardous chemicals, azinphos-methyl, commercial pentabromodiphenyl ether, commercial octabromodiphenyl ether and PFOS, to Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention. This brings the total number of chemicals listed in Annex III to 47, 33 of which are pesticides (including 4 severely hazardous pesticide formulations) and 14 of which are industrial chemicals. Those chemicals will in future have to be traded amongst Parties in accordance with the prior informed consent procedure under the Convention.
13. To the disappointment of the vast majority of Parties, the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention was for the fourth consecutive time, unable to reach consensus on the listing of chrysotile asbestos. The listing was blocked by Russia, Ukraine, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Vietnam and Zimbabwe on the basis of reasons that are not relevant under the Convention.
14. The vast majority of Parties was equally disappointed that the COP to the Rotterdam Convention was not able to reach consensus on the listing of certain severely hazardous pesticide formulations containing paraquat, although the COP agreed that the criteria for listing were met. This listing was blocked by India, Iran and Guatemala. Both chrysotile asbestos and the severely hazardous pesticide formulation containing paraquat will be on the agenda at COP7 in order to decide on their listing.

15. Efforts to adopt a compliance mechanism did not succeed, this was due to differences between Parties notably, as for the Stockholm Convention, on whether the Committee should be entitled to start assessing information on possible non-compliance without request by a Party.

#### Horizontal/Synergies Issues

16. The joint meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions reviewed the impact of the arrangements put in place by governments in 2011 to strengthen synergies among the Conventions.
17. While there were some concerns that the focus to date has been on the reorganisation of the Secretariat, the omnibus decision extended the mandate for synergies work for the coming biennium and beyond, with a commitment to a comprehensive review of the arrangements and their impact on implementation of the Conventions in 2017. There was agreement on the need for the synergies programme to focus on joint activities which support national and regional implementation of the Conventions, supported by a strong Secretariat.
18. The omnibus decision also provided for enhanced cooperation and coordination outside of the existing arrangements including with Minamata (without specifying a joint secretariat), SAICM, and between the technical bodies of the Conventions.
19. The Parties endorsed the organisation of the Secretariat, and adopted a programme of work and budget for individual and for joint activities of the three Conventions in 2014-2015. The challenge of growing arrears in assessed contributions presented a particular problem in agreeing the budget for the next biennium, including in providing additional support to activities at regional and national levels from cost efficiencies derived from synergies activities elsewhere.

20. The joint meeting also hosted a three-day Regional Fair from 1 to 3 May 2013 dedicated to the theme 'Synergies through regional delivery'. It was attended by 20 Stockholm Convention and Basel Convention Regional Centres and two Regional Offices of UNEP. The Regional Fair provided the venue for the signing of bi-regional and intra-regional cooperation agreements between centres in Latin America and Caribbean, and Central and Eastern European regions in the areas of technical assistance, awareness-raising and outreach.
21. Review of Stockholm and Basel Regional Centres: The Stockholm and Basel COPs decided to evaluate all of the Regional Centres at the next COPs based on a common evaluation methodology.
22. Financing of chemicals and waste: The ExCOP also responded to the recent decision 27/12 of the UNEP Governing Council on the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes. The ExCOP welcomed an integrated approach to financing comprising mainstreaming, industry involvement and dedicated external finance and requested the Executive Secretary to ensure that the Secretariats' activities take as reference such an approach. The Executive Secretary is also asked to report on progress in implementing the integrated approach, including any challenges in mobilising financial resources, at the next COPs. The ExCOP also took note of the upcoming country-led meeting to further develop terms of reference for the proposed special programme on institutional strengthening (UNEP GC 27/12 paragraphs 55, 56 & 57) emphasising that institutional strengthening at a national level requires attention.
23. Finally, there was agreement that the next COPs for the three Conventions would be held back-to-back in 2015, with scope for joint sessions on issues of shared interest among the Conventions. There will not be another High Level Segment or Extraordinary Simultaneous Meeting. There was also a commitment to regional consultations to ensure that the organisation of the forthcoming COPs is fit for purpose.