

Omnibus decision on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention as decision BC.Ex-2/1, by the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention as decision RC.Ex-2/1 and by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention as decision SC.Ex-2/1

The Conference of the Parties,

Mindful of the legal autonomy of each of 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,

Recognizing the broad scope of the three conventions,

Welcoming the continued commitment of all parties to ensuring the implementation of the full breadth of the three conventions,

Reaffirming that actions taken to enhance coordination and cooperation should be aimed at strengthening the implementation of the three conventions at the national, regional and global levels, promoting coherent policy guidance, enhancing efficiency in the provision of support to parties, reducing the administrative burden and maximizing the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels,

Taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of developing countries, particularly small island developing States and least developed countries, and of countries with economies in transition,

Mindful of the various principles recognized within the three conventions, including pertinent provisions of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and reiterating decisions BC.Ex-1/1, RC.Ex-1/1 and SC.Ex-1/1,

Noting that the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions are simultaneously adopting the present decision, on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, as decisions BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1 and SC.Ex-2/1, respectively,

1. *Adopts* the present decision;

I

Review arrangements

2. *Takes note* of the conclusions and recommendations set out in the report prepared by the Secretariat¹ and in the report prepared by the evaluation offices of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations² on the review of the synergies arrangements;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary and invites parties, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other stakeholders to implement the recommendations set out in annex I to the present decision;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to provide a succinct report to the conferences of the parties at their 2015 meetings on the implementation of the present decision;

5. *Decides* to undertake a further review of the synergies arrangements, which should be based on an independent assessment of the implementation and impact of the joint activities and joint

¹ UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/6.

² UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/5.

managerial functions, including joint services, at all levels, and presented as a report for consideration by the conferences of the parties at their meetings in 2017;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and in consultation with parties, to prepare options for the review referred to in the preceding paragraph and its methodology, including draft terms of reference, for consideration by the conferences of the parties at their meetings in 2015;

II

Organization of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

7. *Takes note* of the interim reorganization of the secretariats of the Basel Convention and the Stockholm Convention and the United Nations Environment Programme part of the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention pursuant to the December 2011 proposal of the Executive Secretary, which was effected in February 2012;³

8. *Notes* that the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, following consultation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary, has reviewed the interim organization of the secretariats and approved the Executive Secretary's proposal for the implementation of the matrix-based management approach and organization of the secretariats;

9. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to confirm to the conferences of the parties detailed information on the projected cost savings identified since the implementation of the new matrix-based management approach and organization of the secretariats;

10. *Notes* that the part of the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,⁴ which was not included in the matrix-based management approach and organization, contributes to all the operational areas set out in that approach and organization and requests that the Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions review the proposals set out in the note by the Secretariat on the organization and operation of the part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to enhance synergies arrangements;

11. *Endorses* the matrix-based management approach and organization of the secretariats of the Basel Convention and the Stockholm Convention and the United Nations Environment Programme part of the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention, as approved by the Executive Director and reproduced in annex II to the present decision;

12. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to implement the endorsed matrix-based management approach and organization of the secretariats in a manner consistent with the budget and staffing decisions adopted by the conferences of the parties in 2013;

13. *Invites* the Executive Director, in consultation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary, to undertake a review of the matrix-based management approach and organization to ensure that the operation of the secretariats is efficient and effective, to advise the conferences of the parties of any follow-up action necessary at their meetings in 2017 and to make any such changes as are deemed necessary in advance of the next meetings of the conferences of the parties following the 2017 meetings;

III

Joint activities

14. *Takes note* of the information provided in the note by the Secretariat on joint activities⁵ and its related information documents;⁶

³ UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/7 and UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/8.

⁴ UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/9.

⁵ UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/2/Add.4.

⁶ UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/10 and UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/EXCOPS.2/INF/12.

15. *Also takes note* of the initial and important progress made through joint activities in enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, enabling improved cost efficiencies and reduced administrative burden;

16. *Stresses* the need for further efforts to be made in the implementation of the objectives of the synergies arrangements to promote coherent policy guidance and to strengthen the implementation of the three conventions at the national, regional and global levels;

17. *Requests* the secretariats:

(a) To prepare a report on the implementation of joint activities, to recommend areas for further development or adjustment of those activities and to identify, including through engagement with parties, possible future joint activities for consideration by the conferences of the parties at their meetings in 2015;

(b) To continue to present joint activities as an integral part of the proposed programmes of work and budgets of the three conventions;

18. *Invites* parties and others in a position to do so to continue to support joint activities of the three conventions;

IV

Enhanced cooperation and coordination between technical bodies of the three conventions

19. *Takes note* of the information provided in the paper by the chairs of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee of the Stockholm Convention and the Chemical Review Committee of the Rotterdam Convention on the potential for enhanced cooperation and coordination between the two committees;

20. *Welcomes* the identification of the options for information exchange and improved communication and recommends that the implementation of joint activities between the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee and the Chemical Review Committee be accelerated;

21. *Requests* the alignment of the working arrangements of the Chemical Review Committee with those of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee to allow for mutual information sharing and, within available resources, effective participation of experts and observers at committee meetings;

22. *Requests* the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee and the Chemical Review Committee to discuss and identify further steps to enhance the cooperation and coordination between these two technical bodies, where practical and in accordance with their autonomous mandates and terms of reference, and to develop guidance to assist parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the Chemical Review Committee in their work when a chemical under consideration is a persistent organic pollutant listed under the Stockholm Convention;

23. *Encourages* the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee to involve experts from the Basel Convention when discussing waste-related issues;

V

Wider cooperation

24. *Welcomes* paragraphs 89 and 213–223 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, relating to the sound management of chemicals and waste, including the reaffirmation of the aim to achieve by 2020 the sound management of chemicals throughout their lifecycle and of hazardous wastes, and the call for further enhancing coordination and cooperation with other relevant actors at all levels;

25. *Requests* the secretariats to further enhance cooperation and coordination with the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management to contribute to meeting the 2020 goal on the sound management of chemicals throughout their lifecycle and of hazardous wastes and to report on progress in doing so to the conferences of the parties in 2015, recognizing the different legal statuses of the instruments;

26. *Welcomes* the invitation by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, at its twenty-seventh meeting, to the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam

and Stockholm conventions to use the opportunity of their extraordinary meetings from 28 April to 10 May 2013 to consider steps that would facilitate possible future cooperation and coordination with the Minamata Convention on Mercury and to forward any outcome of that consideration to the conference of plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention;

27. *Expresses* its interest and signals its readiness to cooperate and coordinate with the Minamata Convention on Mercury;

28. *Invites* the conference of plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention to consider cooperation and coordination in areas of mutual interest to the four conventions;

29. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to inform the conference of plenipotentiaries of the Minamata Convention of the present decision;

VI

Transparency and accountability

30. *Welcomes* the progress made by the Executive Secretary in improving the transparency and accountability of the secretariats;

31. *Takes note* of the Executive Secretary's intention to continue to post the following reports on the website of the Convention:

- (a) Report on financial status by activity and budget code (annual);
- (b) Secretariat workplan (annual) and associated progress reports (quarterly);
- (c) Report on signed projects and legal instruments (semi-annual);
- (d) Inventory report on non-expendable equipment (semi-annual);
- (e) Report of the Executive Secretary on synergies, possible cost savings and efficiencies (quarterly);
- (f) Status of funds (quarterly);
- (g) Report on approved staffing (quarterly);
- (h) Report on approved human resource actions (quarterly);
- (i) Report on approved and undertaken travel (quarterly);
- (j) Report on approved consultancy contracts (quarterly);
- (k) Standard operating procedures (updated regularly);
- (l) Status of voluntary contributions received, including concept notes for activities that still require funding (updated regularly);

32. *Takes note* of the Executive Secretary's intention to include the following new reports:

- (a) An integrated workplan and schedule for all tasks required by decisions of the conferences of the parties (biennial);
- (b) Report on the gender balance of the Secretariat and actions taken to improve it at all levels (semi-annual);
- (c) Report on the regional balance of the Secretariat and actions taken to improve it at all levels (semi-annual);
- (d) Report on actions taken by the Secretariat to improve its environmental and economic sustainability (semi-annual);
- (e) Report on duties delegated to the Executive Secretary by the Executive Director, together with any re-delegations (updated regularly);

33. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to ensure that the reports listed in the preceding paragraphs are linked to biennial and annual work plans and are, as far as possible, consolidated;

VII

Facilitating financial resources for chemicals and wastes

34. *Welcomes* decision 27/12, section VIII, on the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-seventh session, in February 2013;

35. *Joins* the Governing Council in welcoming an integrated approach to addressing the financing of the sound management of chemicals and wastes, which underscores that the three components of an integrated approach, mainstreaming, industry involvement and dedicated external finance, are mutually reinforcing and are all important for the financing of the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

36. *Agrees* that an integrated approach supplements and seeks to address the increased need for adequate, predictable, accessible and sustainable financial solutions for the chemicals and wastes cluster at the national, regional and international levels;

37. *Invites* all countries, and urges in particular developed countries, within their capabilities, to further strengthen the element of dedicated external finance so as to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their efforts to implement the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

38. *Notes* with appreciation the invitation made by the Governing Council to the Global Environment Facility to revise, in the context of its sixth replenishment process, its focal area structure and strategy in order to address the chemicals and waste cluster and invites donors to increase their financial contributions during the sixth replenishment, taking into account the increasing need for the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

39. *Takes note* of the country-led meeting to further develop terms of reference for the special programme described in paragraphs 13–15 of section VIII of decision 27/12, emphasizing that institutional strengthening at a national level requires attention;

40. *Invites* parties to implement actions to further mainstream the sound management of chemicals and wastes into national development plans, domestic budgets and relevant sector policies;

41. *Also invites* parties to implement actions to further encourage industry involvement in the integrated approach, including the development of legislation on the responsibilities of industry and national administration, the provision of incentives for sound chemicals and waste management, extended producer responsibility and the promotion of measures by industry to internalize costs as per the polluter pays principle, and urges industry in developed countries, and in other countries in a position to do so, to facilitate experience-sharing on best environmental practices;

42. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to ensure that the secretariats' activities and support to parties under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions take as reference such an integrated approach, to report on progress in implementing the three mutually reinforcing components of the approach, mainstreaming, industry involvement and dedicated external finance, and to highlight challenges in mobilizing financial resources within these components, for consideration and possible recommendations by the conferences of the parties at their next meetings;

43. *Underlines* that implementation at the regional level, including through regional centres, could be strengthened by mobilizing further financial resources through an integrated approach.

Annex I to decision BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1, SC.Ex-2/1

Recommendations on follow-up to the review of the synergies arrangements

1. General recommendations

(a) A cooperative and coordinated approach among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and, as appropriate, to related instruments should be applied when addressing the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes at all levels in order to strengthen implementation, enhance policy coherence, maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of resources and avoid unnecessary duplication;

(b) Priority should be given to the implementation of those joint activities within the synergies work programme that strengthen the effectiveness of the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;

(c) Synergies should be enhanced at the national and regional levels, with particular attention to reinforcing cooperation, coordination and rationalization of Stockholm Convention and Basel Convention regional centres, regional offices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other relevant centres and institutions.

2. Recommendations to parties

In their consideration of paragraph 2 of section I, "Review arrangements", parties are invited to implement, at their discretion, the following recommendations:

(a) To promote the sound management of chemicals and wastes as a contribution to sustainable development;

(b) To further develop and streamline their cooperation and coordination mechanisms at the national level to improve the management of chemicals and wastes with the aim of reinforcing actions to meet the objectives of the conventions, including efficient and timely sharing of information between relevant competent authorities;

(c) To continue to support synergies arrangements of the three conventions, including through voluntary contributions;

(d) To enhance cooperation with civil society with a view to mainstreaming and raising awareness regarding the importance of synergistic actions promoting the chemicals and wastes agenda;

(e) To enhance cooperation with the private sector across the chemicals and waste management sectors, encouraging industry involvement in synergistic activities;

(f) To enhance coordination and cooperation through joint deliberations, where appropriate, to assist decision-making by the conferences of the parties;

(g) To acknowledge that providing assistance to facilitate improved efficiency and implementation of the conventions at the national and regional levels is one of the primary objectives for the use of resources saved in the budgets of the conventions through synergies arrangements;

(h) To continue to work with the secretariats, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General of FAO on the implementation and reviews of the matrix-based management approach and organization and the synergies arrangements;

(i) To continue to enhance coordination and cooperation among the existing chemicals and waste conventions and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and to explore options for deepening and broadening the coordination and cooperation process.

3. Recommendations to the Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary is invited to implement the following recommendations:

(a) To continue to promote the active participation of parties and other stakeholders and increase their ownership of the process;

(b) To continue to support the further development, deepening and broadening of cooperation and coordination;

(c) To make proposals, on the basis of experience at the current meetings and comments from parties to the bureaux, on how to organize the meetings of the conferences of the parties to be held in 2015. The members of the Bureaux should consult widely on this;

(d) To provide the conferences of the parties with clear and detailed information on the impact of the synergies process on implementation, on the organizational and staffing structure of the secretariats and on financial efficiency gains of the operation for their consideration.

4. Recommendation to the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other institutions and stakeholders

The United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other institutions and stakeholders are invited to implement the following recommendations:

(a) To continue to support the further development, deepening and broadening of the cooperation and coordination.

Annex II to decision BC.Ex-2/1, RC.Ex-2/1, SC.Ex-2/1

Matrix-based management approach and organization of the secretariats of the Basel Convention and the Stockholm Convention and of the UNEP part of the secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention

