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environment & tourism

Department:
Environmental Affairs and Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref. Basel Strategic Plan 1
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Attention: Nelson Sabogal Fax: 00 41 22 797 3454

COMMENTS ON THE REVIEW OF THE CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN

Your letter dated 17 December 2008 refers.

We thank you for the invitation to comment on the review of the Strategic Plan.
Please find below our comments:

The following need to be taken into account in the review of the current Strategic Plan.

General comment

The scope of the review of the strategic plan will have to be agreed upfront. It must be clear whether the review will focus on the implementation of the Convention (which would require decisions or resolutions) or that the review will also consider the adequacy of the Convention (which would require amendments to the Convention).

Specific Comments

1. The Basel Convention Regional Centres (BCRC's) are key to the implementation of the Convention. Thus, the review of the Strategic plan should provide for creative ways of

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- ensuring *predictable* financial & technical support for the BCRC's. This should include *inter alia* further clarification and unpacking of the role of the Secretariat in assisting the BCRC's.
2. In light of the comment in (1) above, provision must be made in the Convention budget to enable the Secretariat to:
 - a. Explore BCRC fund raising strategies and opportunities
 - b. Provide overall guidance to all BCRC's at a technical & strategic level.
 3. The review must examine whether the capacity of parties with respect to environmentally sound management of waste has improved. In this regard, better ways of making sure that the capacity is increased must be explored.
 4. The extent to which the current Strategic Plan is ensuring or securing participation of developing countries in the COPs as well as Working Groups must be borne in mind in the review. This matter relates to both the financial support as well as the technical capability of parties (including BCRC's) to be able to engage meaningfully in the negotiations.
 5. It will be crucial to consider the strategic importance of supporting and making links with regional initiatives e.g (NEPAD's Environmental Initiative) and come up with practical ways of securing this support.
 6. The balance between reducing transboundary movement of waste and practically giving effect to the waste hierarchy must also be examined.
 7. When considering the cooperation and co-ordination between the Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm conventions, the review of the Basel Strategic Plan needs to examine how this cooperation can be streamlined and guidance provided in order for this to find expression in national policies where appropriate. Furthermore, the review must explore means for BCRC's to service the objectives of the other Conventions, particularly the Stockholm Convention.
 8. Agreement on the indicators which will apply in respect of any review of the strategic Plan and its activities will be important.

As per decision IX/3, please be advised that the contact person for liaison with the Secretariat with respect to the review of the Strategic Plan is:

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We look forward to the planned interactions relating to the review of the Strategic Plan.

Yours faithfully



Joanne Yawitch

Date: 9/02/09

Deputy Director General: Environmental Quality

Departmental of Environmental Affairs & Tourism