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**Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
Tenth meeting**

Cartagena, Colombia, 17–21 October 2011
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Enhancing cooperation and coordination among the
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

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Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

Addendum

Joint managerial functions

Note by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. Decisions BC.Ex-1/1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, RC.Ex-1/1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and SC.Ex-1/1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the “omnibus decisions”) are substantially identical decisions on the subject of enhancing cooperation and coordination between the three conventions, which were adopted by the conferences of the parties to the three conventions, respectively, at their simultaneous extraordinary meetings in February 2010.

2. In section II of the omnibus decisions, on joint managerial functions, the conferences of the parties, among other things:

(a) Decided to establish a joint head function of the Basel Convention Secretariat, the Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat which would be subject to review to determine if the function should continue;

(b) Requested the Executive Director of UNEP, after consulting with the bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, to proceed immediately with the recruitment of a joint head to serve for a period of two years, noting that the continuation of the joint head would be subject to review in the context of the review arrangements set out in section VI of the omnibus decisions;

* UNEP/CHW.10/1.

(c) Invited parties and others in a position to do so to provide on a voluntary basis additional resources to support the post of the joint head until a decision was taken on the future of the post or by the end of 2013, whichever was earlier;

(d) Requested the Executive Director of UNEP, in consultation with the Director-General of FAO, to develop a proposal for modification of the organization of the Basel Convention Secretariat, Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the UNEP part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat, including the possible continuation of the joint head, that was cost-neutral in respect of the adopted operating budgets of the three conventions;

(e) Invited parties to consider the proposal referred to in the preceding subparagraph for possible adoption by the conferences of the parties as soon as possible, but not later than 2013, taking into account the effectiveness of the joint head in:

- (i) Ensuring full respect for the legal autonomy of the three conventions;
- (ii) Contributing to the overarching goal of the three conventions to protect human health and the environment for the promotion of sustainable development;
- (iii) Proving equal commitment to the implementation of the three conventions, including advocacy for mobilization of substantially increased funding from all sources for national implementation;
- (iv) Demonstrating increased efficiency and effectiveness in cooperation and coordination among the three secretariats;
- (v) Reducing administrative burdens and maximizing the effective and efficient use of resources.

3. Paragraph 5 of section III of the omnibus decisions, on joint services, requests the Executive Director of UNEP, in consultation with the Director-General of FAO and the joint head of the Basel Convention Secretariat, the Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the UNEP part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat:

To develop a proposal for the modification of the organization of the three secretariats for the biennium 2012–2013, for consideration by the conferences of the Parties at their ordinary meetings in 2011, that is cost-neutral in respect of the adopted operating budgets of the three conventions for 2010–2011, is consistent with the proposal to be made on whether to continue the function of joint head of the Basel Convention Secretariat, the Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat referred to in paragraph 6 of section II of the present decision, saves costs on support services and moves resources towards assistance for the implementation of the three Conventions;

4. Further information on joint services is provided in document UNEP/CHW.10/27/Add.3.

I. Executive Secretary

5. In response to the requests referred to paragraphs 2 (a) and (b) above, the position of Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions was created by the Executive Director of UNEP. Following a competitive recruitment process, the Secretary-General selected Mr. James Willis (United States of America) for the position. Mr. Willis took up the position on 18 April 2011.

6. In line with the omnibus decisions, the Executive Director of UNEP consulted the bureaux of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in relation to the recruitment of the joint head by inviting the presidents of the three bureaux to serve as members of the interview panel. The Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention bureaux were represented by their respective presidents and the Basel Convention Bureau by a vice-president. In line with the established procedures and processes for the recruitment of personnel at the D-2 level, the interview panel submitted, through the Executive Director of UNEP, the names of three candidates for consideration and selection by the Secretary-General.

7. In response to the invitation referred to in paragraph 2 (c) above, \$577,000 in extrabudgetary resources has been raised to support the joint head function to date.

II. Proposal for the modification of the organization of the secretariats

8. In response to the requests referred to in paragraphs 2 (d) and 3 above, the Executive Director of UNEP has initiated consultations with the Director-General of FAO and the new Executive Secretary.

9. Because the new Executive Secretary was appointed very recently, it has not been possible to prepare a fully developed proposal for the modification of the structure and organization of the secretariats in time for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth meeting. Instead, the present note provides views for consideration by the Conference of the Parties on the initial steps to be taken in the restructuring of the three secretariats. These first steps will underpin and provide a good basis for the further elaboration and implementation of a new organizational structure for the three secretariats. The following views are presented for consideration:

(a) Currently, the secretariats share a common Joint Convention Services (JCS) unit and each convention has separate technical secretariat staff. This structure appears to provide the greatest potential benefit in terms of ensuring the legal autonomy of each convention. There is a certain degree of redundancy in the structure, however, in that each secretariat provides similar services to the parties, but with different approaches and staff. For example, each secretariat facilitates technical assistance, provides technical support for meetings of the conferences of the parties and their subsidiary bodies, and develops technical support materials and modalities. There are, therefore, potential synergies to be gained by moving towards a structure in which secretariat staff and activities are grouped by common work areas, a structure frequently referred to as a matrix. Any new structure should ensure that the delivery of services to parties takes place in an efficient and coordinated manner while respecting the legal autonomy of the three conventions; it should also readily accommodate new challenges and emerging issues in the most effective and efficient manner;

(b) During an interim period, it is recommended that the structure of the secretariats include an Executive Secretary (D-2), assisted by senior staff members at the D-1 and P-5 levels in the management of the secretariats and in overseeing four units – the JCS Unit, the Basel Unit, the Stockholm Unit and the Rotterdam Unit (UNEP portion);

(c) It is suggested that this interim period run from the present date until the conferences of the parties take decisions on the structure of the secretariats, in 2013. Alternatively, should the parties determine that it is imperative to take a decision sooner, proposals for organizing the secretariats could be elaborated successively during the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions in 2011, with a view to taking a decision at simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the three conferences of the parties held back-to-back with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, which will be held from 17 to 21 October 2011;

(d) To allow the Executive Secretary to implement any measures necessary during the interim period to achieve greater efficiencies and synergies in addition to the provisions of paragraph 4 of decision RC-4/12, it is recommended that the Executive Secretary have full flexibility on staffing decisions and organization within an overall budget level established by the conferences of the parties. That is, the Executive Secretary should have the authority during any agreed interim period to implement any staffing changes or reorganization deemed necessary to improve efficiency or synergies, subject to final approval by the conferences of the parties. It is recommended that the Executive Secretary keep the three bureaux informed of any interim changes as they are being implemented;

(e) The Executive Secretary proposes a structure for the JCS Unit as shown in the organization chart in the annex to the present note. Depending on any final organizational structure for the joint secretariat agreed by the conferences of the parties, if a matrix structure is the preferred approach it may be more appropriate for the legal team to be part of any technical unit that provides support to parties;

(f) Because of the considerable challenges inherent in endeavouring to agree to synergies and co-financing arrangements at three different meetings of the conferences of the parties taking place at three different points in time, the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider whether to hold combined meetings in 2013. At such combined meetings the conferences of the parties could act sequentially, with each taking those decisions that are specific to its convention, and where maintaining the legal autonomy of each convention is critical. The final two or three days could then be reserved for simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties, during which they would take decisions on matters such as synergies, budgets and any other item where a joint

decision would best serve the parties, for example, on technical assistance, regional centres and joint activities. Such an approach would also lead to cost efficiencies in meeting management and could improve the cost-effectiveness of participant travel.

Possible action by the Conference of the Parties

10. The Conference of the Parties may wish to include in its decision on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions the following operative paragraphs with any amendments:

II. Joint management functions

1. *Welcomes* the establishment of the position of Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention and the United Nations Environment Programme part of the Rotterdam Convention and the successful completion of the recruitment process for this position;

2. *Approves* the proposal of the Executive Secretary for the interim organization of the secretariat consisting of the Joint Convention Services unit and three technical units to support the operations of the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention and the UNEP part of the Rotterdam Convention;

3. *Approves* the proposal for the modification of the organization of the joint services of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions set out in the annex to the note by the secretariat;¹

4. *Authorizes* the Executive Secretary, during the interim period, to determine staffing levels, numbers and organization in a flexible manner, provided that he remains within the ceiling established by decision RC-5/[] on financing and budget for the biennium 2012–2013;

5. *Reiterates* its request to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Executive Secretary, to develop for consideration by the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2013 a full proposal for the modification of the organization of the Basel Convention Secretariat, the Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat, including the possible continuation of the joint head of the three secretariats, that is cost-neutral in respect of the adopted operating budgets of the three conventions;

[6. *Agrees* to hold the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention in 2013 in coordination with the sixth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the sixth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Stockholm Convention subject to the adoption of a decision to the same effect by the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.]

¹

UNEP/CHW.10/27/Add.2.

Annex**Proposal for the modification of the organization of the joint services
of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**