



BASEL CONVENTION

the world environmental agreement on wastes

BASEL CONVENTION *bulletin*

September 2004

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EDITORIAL

Creation of Institute for Waste Issues in Africa

Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto

The first step towards the creation of a new African Intergovernmental Organisation dealing with waste issues – the Africa Institute for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and Other Wastes – was made through the signing of an Agreement at UNEP's Governing Council in Jeju, Korea, in April. I pay tribute to all the English-speaking African countries concerned, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, for this achievement and for the progress made in this area, which follows efforts made worldwide in the regional implementation of the Basel Convention.

The signing of the Agreement represents the formal intention of those countries to set up and join the Africa Institute for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and Other Wastes. The Institute will be legally established upon ratification of the Agreement by five states and will be hosted by the Republic of South Africa.

The Institute will help its members service the Basel and Bamako Conventions as well as other related Multilateral Environmental Agreements. It will perform the functions of the Basel Convention Regional Center for English-speaking Africa once an Agreement has been signed with the Basel Convention Secretariat.

The core functions of the Regional Center are to develop training programmes in the field of the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes and to work on the transfer of environmentally sound technology and the minimization of the generation of hazardous and other wastes.

The Tanzanian Environment Minister, Mr. Arcadio Ntagazwa, chairman of UNEP's Governing Council, and the Deputy Minister for



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Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary, Basel Convention

Environmental Affairs and Tourism for South Africa, Mrs. Rejoice Mabudafhasi, were present at the signing.

Going further...

The Sixth Conference of the Parties mandated the Secretariat to sign an Agreement with the Institute to establish the BCRC, the first of its kind. The Secretariat is also heavily engaged in addressing further mandates given by COP6, namely to pursue negotiations aimed at signing Agreements on the legal establishment of the Basel Convention Regional Center for French-speaking Africa countries (Senegal), of a Center for Arab States (Egypt) and for a Coordinating Center for Africa (Nigeria). We are hoping that this first success will



help stakeholders in the pursuit of arrangements for the establishment of these other Centers.

Continental support

Training and capacity building issues in the transport and environmentally sound management of waste are high on Africa's agenda. In June 2003, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) referred to the process of the legal establishment and capacity building of the Basel Convention Regional Centers in Africa as an important activity of the Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). At AMCEN's 10th session in June 2004 in Sirte, Libya, Decision 5 of the Conference Decisions called for support in strengthening the capacity of the Basel Convention Regional Centers in Africa as key regional instruments for the implementation of NEPAD's environment initiative. We welcome this acknowledgment and commitment and are eager to maximize our efforts to help Africa meet the challenge of waste.

Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto is
Executive Secretary of the
Basel Convention Secretariat

"The signing (of the Agreement) is a great opportunity to fulfill the capacity building mandate, within the larger context of environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes and other wastes, as provided for in the Basel Convention, other related Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the NEPAD environmental initiatives".

– Mrs. Rejoice Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister for
Environmental Affairs and Tourism for South Africa



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Bamako Convention

The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes within Africa was adopted in Bamako, Mali, in 1991, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity. The Bamako Convention aims to protect human health and the environment from dangers posed by hazardous wastes by reducing their generation to a minimum in terms of quantity and/or hazard potential. All Parties are obliged to prohibit the import of all hazardous wastes, for any reason, into Africa from non-Contracting Parties. Also, the dumping of radioactive wastes, industrial wastes, sewage and sewage sludge is prohibited. The Bamako Convention places duty on the Parties to monitor their respective waterways to ensure that no dumping occurs.

Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention

25-29 October 2004, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

The seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (COP7) will take place at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, from 25 to 29 October 2004.

The Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention takes place every other year and is the governing body of the Basel Convention. It is composed of all governments that have ratified or acceded to the Basel Convention (currently 163 Parties).

The theme of COP7 is "Partnership to Meet the Global Waste Challenge" which was adopted by the Open-ended Working Group at its third session in April 2004.

The theme based on partnerships was chosen because, despite significant achievements since the adoption of the Basel Convention in 1989, the overall generation of hazardous waste continues to grow in a large number of countries. Consequently, the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes is an increasing challenge, which calls for an

integrated approach on hazardous and municipal wastes. The COP7 will place significant emphasis on the development of partnerships with international organisations, governments, industry and civil society in order to find ways to best support Parties in their implementation of the Basel Convention to meet the global challenge of waste.

An important aspect of this process is the mobilization of adequate resources as a support base for the practical implementation of solutions. The COP7 will thus also discuss the support for Parties in resource mobilization across a wide spectrum of funding sources.

A full conference agenda as well as logistical information and meeting documents are available on the Basel Convention Secretariat website at: www.basel.int. Alternatively, you may contact the Secretariat by email: sbc@unep.ch, tel. +41 (0) 22 917 82 18, or fax +41 (0) 22 797 34 54

The Basel Convention Secretariat and the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Join Forces

On 26 May 2004, the Director-General of the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mr Rogelio Pfirter, and the Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention, Mrs Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in The Hague on working-level cooperation between the two Secretariats.

Through the MoU, both Secretariats have agreed to cooperate on matters of common interest relating to the enhanced national implementation of both Conventions to share expertise and avoid duplication of efforts, and to explore synergies between their international cooperation projects and capacity building



activities. Both sides will review the implementation of the MoU periodically and agreed that a broader agreement between the two Organisations might be considered at a later stage should it be deemed useful.

Mrs Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, the Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention Secretariat said: "Both Secretariats will build and strengthen their relations through this collaborative effort and we are thrilled by the role the thirteen Basel Convention Regional Centers around the world will play in the furtherance of expertise and cooperation at the regional level."

Speaking at the signing ceremony, OPCW Director-General Mr Rogelio Pfirter

emphasised that the signing of "the MoU is an important initiative through which both Secretariats can effectively cooperate to achieve the goals of each Convention."

The Chemical Weapons Convention aims to eliminate chemical weapons and to prevent their re-emergence, to implement a credible non-proliferation regime, to provide international assistance and protection in the event of the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons, and to promote international cooperation in the peaceful use of chemistry.

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Basel Convention and Cartagena Convention to Protect Caribbean Marine Environment

The Basel Convention Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region 1983 (the Cartagena Convention) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 1 July 2003 for the joint protection of the marine environment in the wider Caribbean.

The main area of cooperation is the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes in order to prevent coastal and marine pollution. Both entities will share expertise to build their mutual capacities, raise awareness on hazardous waste and marine pollution and support each other in technical and legal training.

The protection of the Caribbean environment is the subject of the 1983 Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region and its three protocols.

Many of the joint activities will be carried out using the Basel Convention Regional Centres as platforms in Argentina, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay. These activities will focus, among others, on the exchange of information, on the assistance in the development of national legislation and regulatory

measures, on the harmonisation of reporting requirements and tools under the Basel Convention and the relevant Protocols of the Cartagena Convention, in particular the Land Based Sources Protocol and the development of partnerships with industry, local authorities and municipalities, non-governmental organizations and other interested entities.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Nelson Andrade Colmenares, Coordinator of the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention, and by Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention Secretariat.

"The Memorandum of Understanding we signed today will greatly help the implementation of both Conventions. We are very encouraged by this partnership," said Ms. Kuwabara-Yamamoto.

Mr. Andrade said "This MoU will serve as the framework to do very concrete activities for the sustainable development of the Wider Caribbean region".

For more information, please contact:

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Become a Partner!

Whether you are a corporation, non-governmental organisation, foundation or government agency, partnering with the Basel Convention is simple. The Secretariat will work with you to create a tailored programme to meet your needs. There are many benefits to forming a partnership with the Basel Convention, including:

- Access to the expert capacity of the Secretariat, over 160 Parties to the Basel Convention and 13 Basel Conventions Regional Centers around the globe;
- Opportunities to leverage your funds or resources with those of other Partners.

Forging a partnership with the Basel Convention is a smart investment in a better world.

To discuss your interest in partnering with the Basel Convention, contact Milton Catelin on +41 22 917 82 27 or by email: Milton.Catelin@unep.ch

POPs on the agenda

Workshop on the Preparation of a Regional Approach for the Environmentally Sound Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) as Wastes in Selected Central and Eastern European Countries, Bratislava, Slovakia, 26-28 May 2004.

Representatives of eleven countries of the Eastern European and Caucasus Region met from 26 to 28 May 2004 in Bratislava, Slovakia, to discuss obstacles, changes and the possible outline of a regional approach for the environmentally sound management (ESM) of toxic wastes. The workshop was also attended by representatives of FAO, the World Bank, UNDP, UNIDO, UNEP Chemicals. The workshop was one of the projects implemented under the 10-year Strategic Plan of the Basel Convention, financed by the Basel Convention Trust Fund.

Subject for discussion were toxic wastes and obsolete stockpiles, which contain or consist of persistent organic pollutants (POPs). Obsolete stockpiles constitute one of the most urgent environmental prob-

lems in the region, calling for immediate action to prevent adverse effects against human health and the environment and to minimize any further release of toxic chemicals into the environment.

POPs are characterized by their ability to resist degradation, to bioaccumulate and to travel long distances. All types of POPs waste, their transboundary movement and ESM are covered and regulated under the regime of the Basel Convention due to their toxic characteristics.

The workshop produced a series of recommendations on a regional approach for the ESM of POPs, for the development of national and regional strategies for the elimination of POPs waste, based on harmonized inventories, and on the under-

taking of investigations on the type of technologies suitable for the environmentally sound transport, storage and destruction of POPs waste. The Basel Convention Secretariat is preparing follow-up projects on the ESM of POPs waste in the CEE region in cooperation with Parties, UNIDO, the Ecotoxicological Centre in Bratislava, the BCRC Bratislava, and others.

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Workshop on the Strengthening of Cooperation between the Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes Conventions

Prague, Czech Republic, 15-17 March 2004

The Prague workshop was attended by representatives from Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia. Other participants to the workshop were the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) and the Basel Convention Regional Center based in Bratislava.

The objective of the workshop was to identify and discuss common issues between Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes Conventions and to strengthen the co-operation among stakeholders involved in the process of implementation and enforcement in the participating countries. A series of recommendations was made on the implementation status of the concerned Multilateral Environmental Agreements in the participating countries, on the transboundary movements of relevant waste streams (PCBs, POPs, ODS, etc.) in the region and on the prevention, detection and monitoring of illegal traffic of these waste streams. Further discussed were the



Presentation at Prague Workshop

environmentally sound management of these waste streams, the situation regarding technical capacity, available technology and guidelines on the disposal of these waste streams. Emphasis was placed, among other aspects, on the need to conduct extensive training on the MEAs concerned, on strengthening capacity building and information sharing.

For more information please contact Mr. Nelson Sabogal, Senior Programme Officer or Mr. Andreas Arlt, Associate Programme Officer, Capacity Building and Training Unit, contact:

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Common purpose

The 1989 **Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal** sets out a three-point strategy for minimizing the generation of wastes, treating wastes as closely as possible to where they were generated, and minimizing international movements of hazardous wastes. Based on the principles of "environmentally sound management", the Convention currently addresses 27 specific categories of waste and 18 waste streams (such as clinical wastes). It also supports governments by producing a series of Technical Guidelines that detail best practices for managing specific kinds of wastes.

The 1998 **Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade** promotes cooperation between exporting and importing countries on managing hazardous chemicals. The key to the Convention is Prior Informed Consent (PIC), a procedure aimed especially at helping developing countries, many of which can find it difficult to monitor and control imports. If a member country decides not to accept imports of a particular chemical or pesticide covered by the treaty, other countries agree not to export this product to that country. Five industrial chemicals and 22 pesticides were included in the Convention's initial PIC list; many more are likely to be added in the coming years.

The 2000 **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)** targets 12 major POPs for reduction and eventual elimination. This initial list includes PCBs, dioxins and furans, and DDT and other pesticides. The Convention also sets up a system for tackling additional chemicals that may be identified in the future as unacceptably hazardous. It recognizes that a special effort may sometimes be needed to phase out certain chemicals for certain uses and seeks to ensure that this effort is made. It also channels resources into cleaning up the existing stockpiles and dumps of POPs that litter the world's landscape. Since our last newsletter of April 2004, the Stockholm Convention entered into force on 17 May 2004.

Source: *A guide to cooperation on the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions*



New Booklet on Coordinated National Implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

In 2002–2004, UNEP organized a series of regional and sub-regional workshops to discuss how to improve synergies at the national level amongst the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. The workshops were held in Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo); Eastern and Central Europe and the Caucasus (Riga); western Africa (Cotonou); southern and eastern Africa (Pretoria); and the Middle East and northern Africa (Damascus).

The Convention focal points who participated in the five regional workshops agreed that many of the tools, skills and human resources required for each of the three Conventions very similar. So too are the obstacles the Conventions face and the strategies needed to overcome them. Fortunately, there are many opportunities for

working together. Collaborating at the national level is vital for reducing costs, boosting effectiveness and eliminating the risk of gaps or overlaps.

The new booklet (see above) is a synthesis of the discussions and the proposals agreed at these workshops. It consists of eight simple checklists of common-sense measures that the Convention focal points and their colleagues can consider when reviewing their efforts to strengthen collaboration. More details on the presentations and reports of the five workshops can be viewed at www.environmenthouse.ch.

For more information, please contact Michael Williams, Information Officer, UNEP Information Unit for Conventions, email: michael.williams@unep.ch, tel. +41 (0)22 917 82 42/82 44/81 96

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e2e

Global Partnership on Computing and the Environment Preparatory Meeting

4 June 2004, New York, USA

Under the umbrella of the Basel Convention's Partnership Programme, a preparatory meeting on a Global Partnership on Computing and the Environment took place in New York early June.

The objective of the meeting was to open multilateral discussions with computing companies, industry associations, the UN family and civil society in a new Global Partnership on Computing and the Environment. The overarching aim of the Partnership is to minimize the adverse effects of the computing industry on human health and the environment, with a particular emphasis on minimizing the waste generated by the industry, ensuring the environmentally sound management of end-of-life computers.

The meeting was attended by representatives from Dell, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Sony, China, EU, France, Mexico, Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland, Japan, USA, and by the Basel Action Network (BAN), Digital Partnership, Electronic Industries Alliance (EIA), International Precious Metals Institute (IPMI), Noranda, Umicore, United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, UN Global Compact Office, and the UN University (UNU).

After extensive exchanges, the participants commenced the task of drafting a work programme to be developed by the Secretariat with the aim of starting practical work in 2005.



For more information, please contact Mr Milton Catelin, Senior Programme Officer, Partnerships and Public Affairs Unit. Email Milton.Catelin@unep.ch; tel. +41 (0) 22 917 82 27.

Regional Workshops on

Liability and Compensation

Two Regional Workshops Aimed at Promoting the Ratification of the Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation for Damage resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal have recently been held.

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 22–25 June 2004

The workshop was attended by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

San Salvador, El Salvador, 28 June – 1 July 2004

The workshop was attended by participants of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama.

Both workshops were attended and supported by Mr Jörg Bally, Senior Adviser of the Legal Affairs Division of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape and the Basel Convention Secretariat.

The structure of the workshops consisted of presentations on the Protocol and presentations made by the participants based on three questionnaires sent in advance. The participants were mainly lawyers in charge of ratification of international instruments for their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs or Ministries in charge of Basel Convention matters.

The presentations were met with interest and constructive discussions. In both cases, the participants asked for substantial further training and capacity building activities from the Basel Convention Secretariat around the implementation of the Protocol and called for ways to look into related insurance coverage issues.

Both sessions welcomed the "Draft Instruction Manual for the Implementation of the Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation" and participants made recommendations on it to be discussed at COP7 of the Basel Convention.

For more information, please contact Ms. Donata Rugarabamu, Senior Legal Officer, Legal Services and Compliance Unit, email: Donata.Rugarabamu@unep.ch tel. +41 (0) 22 917 81 31



Managing PCBs

Launch of the Regional Project on the Preparation of National Inventories and National Plans for the Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) of PCB and PCB Contaminated Equipment in Central America in the context of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions

San Salvador, El Salvador, 7-9 July 2004

The above-mentioned project was launched through a regional workshop organised by Universidad Centroamericana on behalf of the Basel Convention Regional Center for Training and Technology Transfer in Central America and Mexico. Representatives from Governments in the region, from SBC, UNEP Chemicals, UNDP and experts from the USA, Mexico, The Netherlands as well as private companies from the region, among others, participated the meeting.

The workshop included a comprehensive briefing of national authorities about the project and the tasks of the institutions involved. The session provided first practical training for participants on the identification of PCB containing equipment, PCB analysis, collection and management of data about PCB contained equipment (transformers, capacitors) and PCB contaminated sites.

For more information, please contact Mr Andreas Arlt, Associate Programme Officer, Capacity Building and Training Unit, email Andreas.Arlt@unep.ch tel. +41 (0) 22 917 83 64 or Mr Vincent Jugault, Programme Officer, Capacity Building and Training Unit, email:

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Demonstration at El Salvador workshop, electronic probe for PCB analysis

Andreas Arlt/SBC

Latest SBC Publications

Workshop Reports on Used Lead-acid Batteries in Latin America and the Caribbean 2002 in English and Spanish

Training Manual for the Preparation of a National Environmentally Sound Management Plan for PCBs and PCB-Contaminated Equipment in the Context of the Basel Convention in Spanish

Country Fact Sheets (April 2004) in English

National Reporting Compilation Part II (2001) in English

For all matters linked to SBC publications, please contact Nicole Dawe, Information Officer, email: Nicole.Dawe@unep.ch, tel. +41 (0) 22 917 82 20



Staff news

Ms Kate Ross, Special Assistant, finished her contract and left the Basel Convention Secretariat. She was replaced by Ms Nicole Willers, Secretary. Ms Willers will be giving secretariat and administrative support to Ms. Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, Executive Secretary and other staff members. Ms Willers previously worked for the Department of Conservation and Land Management in Western Australia. Her work involved the recovery of threatened flora species. She holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours from Monash University, Australia.

Ms Willers can be contacted via email at Nicole.Willers@unep.ch or by telephone on +41 (0) 22 917 81 73

The Partnership and Public Affairs Unit is currently enjoying the supported of a summer intern, **Mr Eric Hargous**. Mr. Hargous is preparing for a career in education, and previously worked as an IT developer for financial institutions. Mr. Hargous brings his experience to developing inventory database management programmes and a mass-mailing tool. Mr. Hargous studies at the Open University and is preparing a degree in Environment and Geography. He previously studied History in the South of France (Aix en Provence).

Mr. Tarcisio Hardman Reis recently started an internship in the Basel

Convention Secretariat where he will be assisting Ms. Donata Rugarabamu, Senior Legal Officer, for six months. Mr. Reis, a Brazilian national, is a student in International Law at the University of Nanterre. He also studied at the Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales, in France and at the University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Previously an intern at the Vaccines and Biology Department of the World Health Organization, Mr. Reis started his professional life in a Brazilian law firm in Rio de Janeiro where he worked on

contracts and business law.

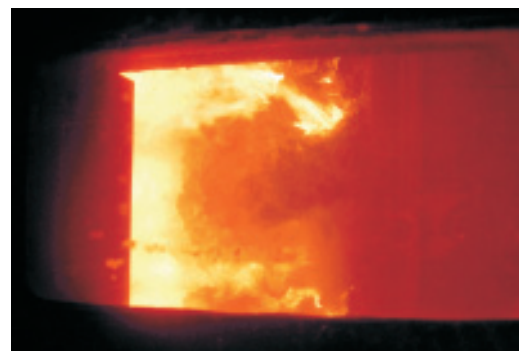
Mr. Patrick Micheli has recently started his internship in the Basel Convention Secretariat. He will work with Mr Nelson Sabogal, Senior Programme Officer, in the Capacity Building and Training Unit for the next six months. Mr. Micheli, a Swiss national, graduated in Political Science from the University of Geneva, and is studying Globalisation, Social Regulation and Sustainable Development at post-graduate level at the same University.

SBC Outing to Local Waste Management Plant

A ten-minute drive away from the Basel Convention Secretariat building is one of the largest and oldest waste management plants of Switzerland, "Les Cheneviers". A small delegation of the Basel Convention Secretariat went on a neighbourly visit and were given an interesting tour of the plant on a hot summer afternoon in July. "Les Cheneviers" treated around 320'000 tons of municipal waste and 22'000 tons of toxic waste in 2003.

The plant also comprises a laboratory for the analysis of incoming toxic wastes. Overall waste management at "les Cheneviers" produced 170'000 MWh in electric energy in 2003 which is used for communities nearby.

For more information, please consult www.mieuxvivresig.ch



Waste incinerator (Photo: SBC)

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Workshops and Meetings 2004

30 Aug.- 2 Sept.	Addis Ababa	Workshop to promote the ratification of the protocol on liability and compensation for the English-speaking African countries
6-8 Sept.	Buenos Aires	Technical Meeting of National Authorities on Practical Aspects of the Transfers Regime in Terms of the Current Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention - Customs
8-9 Sept.	Rome	Seventh Consultation on Prevention and Disposal of Obsolete and Banned Pesticide Stocks
13-17 Sept.	Tahiti Nui	Fifteenth SPREP Meeting
16-19 Sept.	Buenos Aires	Regional Awareness Raising Workshop on Mercury Pollution
18-19 Sept.	Geneva	11th Session of the INC of PIC (to be held as a Conference of Plenipotentiaries)
20-24 Sept.	Geneva	1st Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention (PIC)
28 Sept.- 2 Oct.	Montego Bay, Jamaica	11th Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for CEP and 8th meeting of the COP for Protection and Development of the Marine Environment, 28 Sept.-2 Oct.
25-29 Oct.	Geneva	7th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention
15-19 Nov.	London	26th Consultative Meeting on Prevention of Marine Pollution, IMO
22-26 Nov.	Prague	Sixteenth Meeting of Montreal Protocol
1-3 Dec.	Indonesia	Third open-ended governmental working group for technology support and capacity building