

Online meeting of the Bureau of the fifteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-15)

Thursday, 5 March 2026 (2.30 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.) (CET)

Participants: Ms. Nneka Nicholas (Antigua and Barbuda) (Co-Chair, Legal); Ms. Océane Dayer (Switzerland) (Vice-Chair, Technical); Ms. Nancy Allimadi (Uganda) (Rapporteur).

I. Welcome and introductions

1. The co-chair opened the meeting, welcomed all Bureau members and invited participants to introduce themselves. The Bureau members and representatives of the Secretariat introduced themselves.
2. The co-chair recalled that the Secretariat would prepare a short note of the meeting for circulation to Bureau members.
3. The Bureau agreed that the objectives of the meeting were to receive an update from the Secretariat on preparations for OEWG-15, review the main agenda items, consider the draft tentative schedule and address any Bureau matters requiring early guidance.

II. Information on meeting organisation

4. Introducing the agenda item, the co-chair recalled that the fifteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-15) would be held from 23 to 26 June 2026 at the Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG), Geneva, Switzerland, with pre-meetings, including a Bureau meeting, to be held on 22 June 2026.
5. The co-chair further recalled that OEWG-15 would be held back to back with meetings of the compliance committees of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.
6. The Secretariat provided an update on planning arrangements and logistics for the meeting, including key dates relating to the availability of meeting documents and registration. The Secretariat noted that meeting documents were expected to be available from 23 April 2026. Registration was open through the BRS portal, with Parties to be officially nominated by 5 March 2026 and observers by 8 May 2026.
7. The Secretariat further informed the Bureau that applications for side events would open shortly and remain open until 30 April 2026. Information would be provided in the information note attached to the OEWG-15 confirmation letters.

III. Overview of agenda items

8. Introducing the agenda item, the co-chair recalled that OEWG-15 would have a substantial and technically complex agenda. The co-chair highlighted the main clusters of agenda items to be considered by the Working Group, namely:
 - a. Strategic matters, including improving the functioning of the prior informed consent procedure;
 - b. Technical matters, including technical guidelines on persistent organic pollutants wastes, e-waste, waste lead-acid and other batteries, tyres and mercury, as well as matters relating to national reporting, plastic waste, textile waste, electronic approaches and nanomaterials;
 - c. Legal matters, including matters aimed at providing further legal clarity; and

d. International cooperation and coordination, including the Basel Convention Partnership Programme, cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized System codes, and cooperation with the International Maritime Organization on ship recycling.

9. The co-chair noted that, given the density of the technical agenda, careful structuring of in-session work, including contact group time, would be essential.

IV. Tentative schedule and in-session arrangements

10. The co-chair introduced the draft tentative schedule for OEWG-15, which had been circulated in advance, and invited the Secretariat to present its key elements. The Secretariat explained that the draft tentative schedule had been prepared taking into account the clustering of agenda items, the expected workload, the balance between plenary and contact group time and interpretation requirements, on the basis of the agenda items before the Bureau at the time of the meeting. The Secretariat further noted that, should an application for amendment of Annexes VIII and IX be received in accordance with the Convention's procedures, the schedule would be revised accordingly.

11. The co-chair recalled that the purpose of the discussion was to seek the Bureau's agreement on the tentative schedule so that it could be issued formally and provide clarity to delegations well in advance of the meeting.

12. As presented, the draft tentative schedule foresaw initial plenary discussions during the first part of the week, the establishment of contact groups for detailed negotiations and time on the final day for the adoption of outcomes and the report of the meeting.

13. The co-chair noted in particular that the draft schedule envisaged the establishment of three contact groups to address strategic, technical and legal matters.

14. During the discussion, a Bureau member emphasized the importance of ensuring that adequate time would be available to tackle technical matters. In response, the Secretariat indicated that the contact group on technical matters would likely run throughout the meeting whenever plenary was not in session. It was further confirmed that the contact groups would be conducted in English and that no more than two contact groups would be held in parallel.

15. The Bureau agreed to the tentative schedule for OEWG-15, as presented.

V. Any other matters

16. Under this agenda item, the co-chair proposed that, in addition to the in-person Bureau meeting on 22 June 2026 and short daily coordination meetings during OEWG-15, one additional online meeting could be convened prior to June, if so requested by the Bureau.

17. Under this item, a Bureau member asked how the absence of a Bureau member from the Eastern European regional group should be addressed. In response, the Secretariat advised that there was no process under the Convention to elect this Bureau member during the intersessional period. The Secretariat further noted that the bureaux of the conferences of the Parties would meet in May and July 2026 and consider how to facilitate the process for nominating candidates for election during the next meetings of the conferences of the Parties in 2028.

VI. Closing

18. In closing the meeting, the co-chair thanked Bureau members for their constructive engagement. The co-chair noted that the Bureau had taken note of Secretariat preparations, reviewed the main clusters of agenda items and agreed on the tentative schedule for OEWG-15.

19. The co-chair informed participants that the Secretariat would circulate a summary note of the meeting in due course and then closed the meeting.
