



Distr.: General  
17 April 2008

Original: English

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**Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention  
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of  
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal  
Ninth meeting  
Bali, 23–27 June 2008  
Item 7 (b) of the provisional agenda\***

**Implementation of the decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties  
at its eighth meeting: Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres**

## **Review of the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. By decision VIII/4, the Conference of the Parties requested the Open-ended Working Group to initiate a review of the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres and invited Parties to submit their views on the objectives and scope of the review. The Conference of the Parties also requested the Secretariat to prepare a report for the Open-ended Working Group at its sixth session on the review of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres and, in the light of the discussion at that meeting, to prepare a report on the same topic for the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting.
2. By decision OEWG-VI/2, the Open-ended Working Group requested the Secretariat to prepare a report on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres in accordance with the terms of reference and detailed requirements set out in annexes I and II of that decision and to publish the above-mentioned report on the website of the Basel Convention by 15 December 2007 for consideration by Parties, signatories and the regional and coordinating centres. In addition, Parties, signatories and the regional and coordinating centres were invited to submit comments on the report by 31 January 2008.

#### **II. Implementation**

3. The Secretariat sent a letter on 27 February 2007 to all Parties requesting their views on the objectives and scope of the review of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres. A report containing the submissions received by the Secretariat in response to that letter was prepared for the Open-ended Working Group at its sixth session and is set out in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG/6/INF/2.

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\* UNEP/CHW.9/1.

4. The Secretariat informed and sought the guidance of the Expanded Bureau of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties at its first and second meetings, held in Geneva on 17 and 18 April 2007 and on 26 and 27 February 2008 respectively, on how the agenda item on the review of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres should be organized at the sixth session of the Open-ended Working Group and at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
5. The Secretariat prepared a draft report on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres in accordance with decision OEWG-VI/2, which it published on its website on 15 December 2007 for consideration by Parties, signatories and the regional and coordinating centres. The report, which is also set out in document UNEP/CHW.9/INF/6, represents a first step in the review process, which has been limited in terms of time and resources.
6. On 17 December 2007 the Secretariat invited Parties, signatories and regional and coordinating centres to comment on the draft report by 31 January 2008. A compilation of the comments received is set out in document UNEP/CHW.9/INF/7.
7. A summary of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report on the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres is set out in annex I, while annex II contains a catalogue of actions proposed in the draft report.

### III. Proposed action

8. The Conference of the Parties may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recalling* paragraph 2 of article 14 of the Convention,

*Considering* the conclusions and recommendations of the report by the Secretariat on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres,<sup>1</sup>

*Also considering* the recommendation of the Ad hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions with regard to the coordinated use of regional offices and centres,<sup>2</sup>

*Noting* with appreciation the precedent set by the Global Environment Facility in deciding to designate a Basel Convention regional centre an executing agency for activities funded by the Facility,

*Mindful* that several Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres have applied to serve as Stockholm Convention regional or subregional centres for capacity-building and transfer of environmentally sound technology,

*Also mindful of* the need to enhance and strengthen the combined effectiveness and capacity of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres and the Secretariat,

1. *Concludes*, in consideration of the conclusions and recommendations of the report, the following:

- (a) That it is necessary to ensure the performance of the core functions of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres identified in appendices I and II to decision VI/3 of the Conference of the Parties;

- (b) That the Secretariat plays an important role in guiding the development of projects implemented by the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres;

- (c) That it is necessary to ensure adequate training for the centres' staff and to encourage the exchange of information between the various centres;

- (d) That the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres play an important role in implementing activities under the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, as well as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

2. *Requests* the Secretariat, subject to availability of funds, to prepare the following documents to be submitted to the Open-ended Working Group at its next session with a view to

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1 UNEP/CHW.9/INF/6.

2 UNEP/CHW.9/14.

developing further the conclusions and recommendations set out in the report by the Secretariat on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres:

- (a) A draft workplan for the strengthening of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres in accordance with the catalogue of actions set out in annex II to the present decision;
  - (b) A detailed list of the necessary elements for the performance of the core functions based on appendices I and II to decision VI/3;
  - (c) A strategy for the financial sustainability of the centres as described in the recommendations of annex I to the present decision;
  - (d) A set of indicators to measure performance and impediments in relation to the functions and impacts of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres;
3. *Mandates* the Open-ended Working Group to finalize the workplan for strengthening the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres, based on the draft to be prepared by the Secretariat pursuant to paragraph 2 (a) above, and to submit the final workplan to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting for consideration and adoption;
  4. *Invites* Parties and signatories to provide financial support for the continuation of the review process and for the strengthening of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres in order to enable the centres to operate in accordance with their core functions and regional roles;
  5. *Invites* host countries to continue to provide financial and in-kind support towards the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres;
  6. *Requests* the Secretariat to report to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting on developments in the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres.

## **Annex I**

### **Summary of the conclusions and recommendations of the report on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres**

#### **Conclusions and recommendations**

##### **Conclusions**

I – The Basel Convention regional centres and the Basel Convention coordinating centres have been operating for ten years with limited human and financial resources. The centres benefit from considerable political support for the implementation of the Basel Convention.

II – The Basel Convention Technical Cooperation Trust Fund was developed to provide the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres with adequate resources but have never been properly funded.

III – Most Basel Convention regional and coordinating centre host countries have concluded framework agreements with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention. The nature of the cooperation between the centres and the Secretariat has yet to be clarified by the Conference of the Parties.

IV – The Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres have received insufficient guidance on governance, institutional structure, management and programming, which may compromise their long-term sustainability and their performance of their core functions according to decision VI/3 of the Conference of the Parties.

##### **Recommendations regarding the long-term sustainability of the centres**

I – Centres should be structured, organized and staffed in such a way as to be able to develop fundable projects and follow up on their implementation.

II – The Secretariat should be in a position to guide and assist centres and have the capacity for developing and running large-scale projects integrating centres' work.

III – There is a need to increase contributions to the Basel Convention Technical Cooperation Trust Fund for supporting project activities.

##### **Recommendations regarding the financial sustainability of the centres**

I – The Technical Cooperation Trust Fund should be developed further to improve and to readjust the Trust Fund mechanism to bring it into line with the centres' regional functions.

II – A contingency fund should be created to assist centres having difficulties in meeting their programme or financial obligations.

III – Individual financial plans for each Basel Convention regional and coordinating centre should be developed, which will require resources for administrative and financial staff, the improvement of the fund-raising ability and the auditing of each centre.

## Annex II

### Catalogue of actions

(Extract from the report on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres)

### Catalogue of actions

The following proposals highlight where action would be required to improve and optimize the centres' operation in the short, medium and long term. They are not listed in priority order nor are they all-inclusive. They represent those actions regarded as useful and workable in driving the centres towards sustainability. The proposals, if acceptable, would require consideration at the strategic level, as it would be neither feasible nor advisable to attempt to implement them all at the same time. Some actions would be required immediately, whereas other actions would need to wait until preliminary measures are taken. There is a cost involved in implementing these proposals and it is therefore important to evaluate the resources required.

#### A. At the individual centre level

Several combined measures could be considered, especially those intended to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

##### *Organizational effectiveness*

Centres would need to review the following areas in order to determine where there is a need for improvement to be able to deliver effectively and efficiently:

- Governance;
- Management practices;
- Human resources (recruitment of skilled, motivated and talented staff);
- Financial resources (required to pay staff, purchase goods and conduct all organizational affairs);
- Service delivery (cost-effective high-quality programmes);
- Networking (optimizing interactions);
- Resource mobilization;
- Financial reporting, accounting and monitoring;
- Communication;
- Partnerships.

##### *Organizational development continuum*

Once the organizational structure is in place and functioning, each centre will need to undertake a step-by-step process to pursue its individual development and reach a mature organizational structure. Thus, each centre would need:

- To establish a financial base for functioning;
- To consolidate the structure for governance, management practices, human and financial resources and service delivery;
- To build on track records to expand in strategic areas to be recognized as leaders in those areas;
- To diversify the resource base to aim at sustainability;
- To prepare regional improvement strategies for rationalizing activities.

##### *Strategic approach*

Centres could, once they have reached a sufficient level of organizational structure, develop a strategic approach for their future work, which could involve:

- Constituting a technical capability in selected domains to provide technical assistance on waste topics, laying particular emphasis on waste and chemical-related issues;
- Conducting regular self-assessment of centres' organizational capacity to deliver and rectify any deficiencies;
- Bringing multiple partners together around well-defined issues with a view to optimizing solutions;
- Evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the organizational structure to meet expected outcomes, to be able to address emerging issues and respond to requirements by funding partners;
- Developing an efficiency agenda;
- Promoting front-line activities.

## **B. At the regional network level**

Measures to be taken include:

- Organizing the regional network and the interlinkages between centres, between regions and between centres and the Secretariat;
- Building a common vision and organizational values to be shared by the institutions forming part of the network, including a code of conduct;
- Designing a participatory approach planning to the regional network by individual centre.

## **C. At the strategic development level**

### *Indicators*

Develop indicators based on criteria to be agreed by Parties to measure, among other things:

- The development stages of the regional network;
- The capacity of the network to bring added-value in promoting environmentally sound management (impact on policy; awareness of decision-makers; etc.); regional benefits;
- The delivery capacity of individual centres to assist in the implementation of and compliance with the Basel Convention (i.e., institutional and organizational set-up and functioning; governance; programme design and implementation and resource mobilization);
- The capacity of centres to provide services to the Stockholm Convention and chemical-related instruments, programmes or initiatives.

### *Financial strategy*

- Design and develop a financial strategy, using as appropriate elements described in section IV of the report on the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres, as a supplement to existing mechanisms and present it to the Conference of Parties at its tenth meeting.

### *Institutional and organizational models*

- Review individual centre institutional and organizational models in the light of the tasks to be performed by the centre.
- Consult centres about the usefulness and need for intra-regional coordination and the appropriateness in responding to new demands for inter-regional cooperation.
- Review how each centre can develop its consulting work through in-built capacity, outsourcing or both.
- Integrate centres' work into the Convention Partnership Programme.
- Initiate a process to ensure appropriate integration of centres' involvement into activities carried out to promote international cooperation.
- Clarify the role and functions of the Secretariat in regard of the centres to optimize working relations and specific responsibilities.

*Strategic input*

- Develop a training plan to be used as a framework by centres.
  - Establish databases on environmentally sound technologies or processes for waste management, recycling and minimization at the regional level.
  - Develop a single common information system for all centres.
  - Promote the corporate image of the network.
  - Develop inter-regional cooperative links.
  - Develop a baseline regional strategy to service the Stockholm Convention.
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