



**United Nations
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**Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants**

First meeting

Punta del Este, Uruguay, 2–6 May 2005

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the Parties

**Relevant activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and
Research**

Note by the Secretariat

The annex to the present note contains information provided by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The annex has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/POPS/COP.1/1.

Annex

INFORMATION FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION (Punta del Este, Uruguay, 2 - 6 May 2005)

Relevant Activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Introduction

1. UNITAR, through its Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme, as a Participating Organization of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), and in close cooperation with the Implementing Agencies of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), has been actively assisting developing countries and countries in economic transition in a number of areas directly related to implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.
2. This information document reports on activities of UNITAR's Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme in a number of key areas of work, including:
 - Skills-building in 32 countries (including 25 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), with plans to assist 15 additional LDCs in the near future) for action plan development as part of Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan development;
 - Delivery of international aspects of capacity building and expert assistance for National Implementation Plan development in 4 countries;
 - Training to assist with National Profile development as part of National Implementation Plan development in 25 GEF-supported countries;
 - Support for Non-Governmental Organisations through participation in a GEF project on capacity building with UNEP, UNIDO and the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN);
 - Participation in other GEF projects related to implementation of the Stockholm Convention;
 - Training on risk management decision making, as part of considering options for management of individual POPs;
 - Continuing participation of UNITAR in the IOMC Coordinating Group on Persistent Organic Pollutants; and
 - Possible future UNITAR assistance (upon request) to countries and GEF Implementing Agencies for the execution of projects aimed at Convention implementation.
3. UNITAR's training and capacity building programmes in chemicals and waste management, including its Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme, support developing countries and countries in economic transition in their efforts to address the sound management of chemicals. In the design and implementation of its programmes, UNITAR emphasises the following guiding principles in order to promote sustainable outcomes in participating countries:
 - a **country-driven process** through which partner countries assess and identify their needs and link related activities to national environmental and development objectives;
 - a **multi-stakeholder approach**, involving representatives from various government ministries as well as concerned parties outside of government; and
 - an **integrated approach** which addresses all stages of the chemical life cycle and emphasises the multi-disciplinary nature of chemicals and waste management.
4. The programmes are closely linked to Chapter 19 of Agenda 21, recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and related recommendations of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), and are implemented through partnerships with Participating Organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management

of Chemicals (IOMC). UNITAR is also a member of the Steering Committee for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), and is an active participant in the SAICM process.

Skills-Building on Action Plan Development as part of Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan Development

5. The development of sound and well coordinated action plans – which outline the specific goals and objectives to be achieved, related activities to be undertaken, associated responsibilities of the participants, time frames, financial and human resource needs, and evaluation details – is an important tool for making systematic progress in specific areas of chemicals management at the national level. UNITAR has developed a detailed skills-building methodology aimed at assisting countries to strengthen their human resource capacities in the area of strategic and project planning for priority topics of chemicals management.
6. This generic action plan methodology can be applied to any priority topic of sound chemicals management, including, *inter alia*, action on individual chemicals; infrastructure development; development of legislation; and implementation of international agreements, including the Stockholm Convention.
7. Based on this methodology, and in cooperation with UNDP, GEF and its other Implementing Agencies, UNITAR is providing national-level training, and technical and financial support to Least Developed Countries that have a GEF POPs enabling activity to develop/strengthen skills to undertake project planning, including action plans. UNITAR is currently executing for the Implementing Agency UNDP/GEF a Medium-Sized Project entitled *Action Plan Training/Skills Building for 25 Least Developed Countries to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention*. This project is funded by the GEF, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation. The project builds upon the experience gained and lessons learned through projects in some 15 countries to-date to assist in developing a wide variety of action plans on priority topics of sound chemicals management.¹
8. Countries participating in this project include: Initially, the following five “frontrunner” countries have received training and gave detailed feedback to UNITAR on the guidance methodology and training approach: Cambodia, Yemen, Tanzania, The Gambia, and Ethiopia. Twenty additional LDCs are being chosen for participation in this project in March, 2005.
9. In addition, with support from the Government of Switzerland, Agency for Environment, Lands and Forests (BUWAL), UNITAR, as part of a related project entitled *Capacity Building for Action Plan Development to Implement the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*, provides action plan training and support to 7 (non-LDC) developing countries and countries in economic transition. These countries include: Cote D’Ivoire, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (to be confirmed), Ghana, Mongolia, Ukraine (to be confirmed), and two additional countries that have yet to be determined.
10. Demand from LDCs for the GEF medium-sized project described in paragraph 7, above, has great exceeded “supply” – as of February 2005 over 35 LDCs have formally applied for the 25-LDC project. Given this demand, and in anticipation of possible additional requests for assistance from LDCs that meet project requirements, UNITAR is developing, in close cooperation with UNDP, other GEF Implementing Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat, a second medium-sized project to assist 15 additional LDCs with action plan skills-building.

¹ The GEF project summary can be downloaded at www.gefonline.org/projectDetails.cfm?projID=2328. Guidance revised for this project is being used in 25 LDCs and 7 Swiss-supported developing countries and countries in economic transition, and can be found at www.unitar.org/cwm/publications/pops.htm

11. UNITAR, in cooperation with UNEP, has also developed an interactive tool entitled *Decision Trees to assist the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention*, which provides guidance for project coordinators, ministries, and other interested stakeholders to better understand obligations for Parties under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The user can navigate through different branches of the decision trees and identify various actions to be taken in relation to particular areas of POPs management. In addition, the tool provides background information on certain obligations as stated in the Convention. The Decision Trees are being tested as a tool for action plan development by all participants in UNITAR's action plan training.
12. Countries that are interested in receiving action plan skills-building support from UNITAR can formally request it by sending a letter to UNITAR at the address in paragraph 30, below, and/or completing an action plan project application form, available on the Internet at: www.unitar.org/cwm/pops

Delivery of International Aspects of Capacity Building and Expert Assistance for National Implementation Plan Development in Direct Partnership with Countries and GEF Implementing Agencies

13. In addition to the services listed to support NIP activities presented above, UNITAR acts to assist countries and their GEF Implementing Agencies (such as UNDP, UNEP and UNIDO) with the execution of international aspects of National Implementation Plan support, including:
 - Provision of expert inventory development training;
 - Support for NIP officials to participate in selected international-level capacity building training activities;
 - Training to assist with national awareness-raising activities;
 - Assistance related to the formalisation of the NIP coordinating mechanism;
 - Training to assist with priority- and objective-setting; and
 - Training for the development of a financial resource mobilisation strategy.
14. UNITAR currently assists Comoros (UNDP) and Pakistan (UNDP) with extensive provision of international technical assistance for NIP development, and, to a lesser degree, Mozambique (UNEP) and Togo (UNIDO). Support for the above activities in Togo is provided by the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL). UNITAR is also currently involved in informal discussions with UNIDO and the Peoples Republic of China to assist with NIP development activities.
15. Countries that are interested in UNITAR assistance for NIP execution, please contact your GEF Implementing Agency, and UNITAR (see paragraphs 30 and 31, below).

Training for National Chemicals Management Profile Development as part of Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan Development

16. National Chemicals Management Profiles provide a comprehensive picture and analysis of chemicals-related activities and infrastructure at the national level. All ministries concerned with chemicals management, as well as relevant industry and public interest groups, are involved in National Profile preparation. The National Profile preparation process usually catalyses the initiation of a national coordinating mechanism involving both ministries and interested and affected parties. To-date, over 100 countries, including several OECD Member States, have completed or are preparing a National Profile following the IFCS-endorsed training methodology

outlined in the UNITAR/IOMC National Profile Guidance Document.² Information gathered for the National Profile constitutes a critical first step by providing a baseline of infrastructure-related information that can serve as the foundation for the planning required for actions under the Stockholm Convention. To that end, UNEP/World Bank guidance on National Implementation Plan development (UNEP/POPs/INC.7/INF.20), and GEF initial guidelines for Stockholm Convention enabling activities (GEF/C.17/4) both recommend development and/or updating of the National Chemicals Management Profile as an early activity in the NIP development process.

17. To-date, in cooperation with UNEP in its role as a GEF Implementing Agency, and, in Togo, with support from the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL), UNITAR is providing direct technical assistance to some 25 countries as they develop or update their National Chemicals Management Profiles for the purposes of the Stockholm Convention. These countries include: Armenia, Barbados, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Chile, Comoros, Ecuador, Guinea, Haiti, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Micronesia, Mozambique, Oman, Papua New Guinea, St. Lucia, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Yemen, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.
18. In cooperation with UNEP, and as part of the ongoing GEF-UNEP 12-country project on National Implementation Plans under the Stockholm Convention, UNITAR has prepared a companion guidance methodology entitled *Preparing/Updating a National Profile as Part of a Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan*. This guidance methodology, which is in working draft form, is available in English, French and Spanish for use by all interested countries. It is meant to be used in conjunction with the primary UNITAR National Profile Guidance Document. This document is also available as UNEP/POPs/ INC.7/INF.26. Revision of this guidance, based on experiences/lessons learned in these 25 countries, will commence in late-2005.
19. Countries that are interested in UNITAR training for National Profile development as part of their Stockholm Convention NIP, please contact your GEF Implementing Agency and UNITAR (see paragraphs 30 and 31, below).

Support for Non-Governmental Organisations through participation in a GEF Project on Capacity Building with UNEP, UNIDO and the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN)

20. With financial support (provided as project matching funds) from the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape, and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, UNITAR is supporting activities for the GEF medium-sized project *Fostering Active and Effective Civil Society Participation in Preparations for Implementation of the Stockholm Convention*. The Implementing Agency for this project is UNEP, and UNIDO acts as the project executing agency.
21. UNITAR is providing direct financial support to a network of decentralised NGO “hubs” in different regions, and technical assistance that will be determined through an informal assessment of NGO needs that may correspond with existing UNITAR services.
22. UNITAR also participates on the Steering Committee for this project.

Participation in other GEF Projects related to Implementation of the Stockholm Convention

23. UNITAR also participates as a partner organisation in the GEF Full Size Project *Africa Stockpiles Programme*. In addition, UNITAR is involved in discussions with UNEP to act as an executing agency for two projects currently at the Concept stage: the first is a GEF PDF-B project entitled *Capacity Building by Exchange of Lessons Learned on POPs Enabling Activities through*

² This document, which is available in English, French, Spanish, Russian and German, can be downloaded from UNITAR’s website at www.unitar.org/cwm/publications/pops.htm

Regional Networks. The second project, *Building National Legislative, Institutional and Other Regulatory Frameworks Pursuant to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*, is planned as a medium-sized project.

Training on Risk Management Decision Making, as part of considering Options for Management of Individual POPs

24. Activities conducted under this programme promote the development of skills and procedures at the country level relevant to action plan development and implementing risk management decision making processes for priority chemicals. The programme is implemented through country-based projects during which partner countries choose a priority chemical and develop a risk reduction/elimination strategy for the identified chemical through a process involving all affected and interested parties. In the context of the Stockholm Convention, it is recommended that countries undertaking NIP development develop POPs management options.
25. Taking into account experiences gained in a number of pilot countries, a UNITAR guidance document entitled *Developing a Risk Management Plan for a Priority Chemical* is now available from UNITAR (in English only).³ This document, which has been adapted for use in training in The Gambia and Mozambique in the context of the Stockholm Convention, can assist countries in developing management options for both POPs that are included in the Stockholm Convention at present, and other chemicals that may be considered for nomination as possible POPs in the future.
26. Countries that are interested in UNITAR training in the field of risk management decision making related to the Stockholm Convention, please contact your GEF Implementing Agency and UNITAR (see paragraphs 30 and 31, below).

Execution of Projects aimed at Convention Implementation

27. In the near future, as NIPs in countries that are Parties to the Convention near completion, assistance will be provided upon request, in close cooperation with GEF Implementing Agencies, for the execution of projects aimed at Convention implementation.

Participation in the IOMC Coordinating Group on POPs

28. UNITAR continues to Chair, on an interim basis, the IOMC Coordinating Group on POPs. The mandate of this group is to promote coherence among participating organisations and governments to address POPs and their obligations under the Stockholm Convention. The last meeting of the group was held in Washington, DC, USA, on 17 May 2004. The Summary Record from this meeting is available on the IOMC Internet homepage at: www.who.int/iomc/groups/pop/en. The next planned meeting of the group is proposed for 06 June 2005 in Washington DC. The past meeting, and planned next meetings are held jointly with the GEF POPs Task Force.

UNITAR's Chemicals and Waste Management Programme – Assisting Countries in related areas of Chemicals Management Capacity Building

29. UNITAR's Chemicals and Waste Management Programme also delivers a wider variety of capacity building programmes and services for countries, in addition to the activities of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme. For example, UNITAR assists countries with, *inter*

³ See www.unitar.org/cwm/publications/other.htm

alia, implementation of the Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS); Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers development (PRTR); issues related to environmental governance.

How Countries can access UNITAR Services

30. Countries can access UNITAR services related to the Stockholm Convention, or with regard to chemicals management in general, by sending a formal letter requesting UNITAR assistance, with the exact services required specified, to:

Training and Capacity Building Programmes in Chemicals and Waste Management
UNITAR
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland

Attention: POPs Programme Coordinator

Fax number: +41 22 917 80 47

Email: pops@unitar.org

31. UNITAR also recommends that any such requests also be sent to each country's GEF Implementing Agency, with a copy to UNITAR at the above address.
32. UNITAR also has reserved a booth for COP-1, which features information on activities and services. Delegates are welcome to contact a UNITAR representative at the booth.

For Further Information

33. Further information on UNITAR activities, programmes and services related to the Stockholm Convention: www.unitar.org/cwm/pops
34. Further information on UNITAR activities, programmes and services related to chemicals management in general: www.unitar.org/cwm

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