



## ***Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme***

*United Nations Institute for Training and Research  
(UNITAR)*

The UNITAR approach to chemicals management embodies the philosophy that, in the medium- to long-term, countries need to develop basic chemicals management infrastructure, in order to realise both chemicals-related priorities at the national level, and international commitments such as those made under various conventions and agreements.

The overall goal of UNITAR's Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme is to provide support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of POPs into the environment. The Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme, which is located within and draws upon methodologies developed through UNITAR's Chemicals and Waste Management Programme, aims to assist countries to strengthen the fundamentals of chemicals management in a number of areas; to provide technical assistance in specialised areas of POPs management; and to encourage integrated approaches involving all relevant ministries and stakeholders.

UNITAR delivers POPs-related assistance to countries in close cooperation with IOMC Participating Organizations, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and countries with technical expertise and financial resources dedicated to addressing challenges posed by POPs. UNITAR also executes projects (in whole or in part) on behalf of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Implementing Agencies; and co-executes enabling activities at the national level in direct partnership with governments.

UNITAR recognises and appreciates the financial contributions of GEF, the Government of Switzerland, UNDP, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to Persistent Organic Pollutants Programme activities.

The POPs programme offers guidance and support in the following programme areas.

## ***Training for National Profile Development as part of Stockholm Convention NIP Development***

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### **Overview**

A National Profile is a comprehensive assessment of the national infrastructure, relating to the legal, institutional, administrative and technical aspects of chemicals management, along with an understanding of the nature and extent of chemicals availability and use in the country. This is an important prerequisite for building national capacity in a systematic way.

Through its National Profile Support Programme, UNITAR's Chemicals and Waste Management Programme provides guidance, training and technical support in this area.

### **How do National Profiles relate to the Stockholm Convention and POPS?**

GEF has recommended that countries that are developing a National Implementation Plan (NIP) for the Stockholm Convention consider developing or updating a comprehensive National Profile as an early activity. In the context of a NIP, developing or updating a National Profile would include an additional POPs-specific focus.

To-date, UNITAR has assisted some 25 countries with National Profile development as a first step in the development of their National Implementation Plan for the Convention.

UNITAR works with UNEP, UNDP, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in delivery of services to countries, and has jointly developed guidance and training materials with UNEP.

## **Assistance**

Countries that would like to develop or update a National Profile as part of the development of their NIP should contact UNITAR at the address below and their NIP GEF Implementing Agency.

## **Guidance**

Companion Guidance entitled "Developing/Updating a National Profile as Part of a Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan" has been developed by UNITAR/UNEP/IOMC, and is currently in use in over 25 countries. The document is designed to be read side-by-side with the original UNITAR/IOMC National Profile Guidance Document.

## **Policy Recommendations**

In May 2001, GEF was selected as the interim financial mechanism for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. At the May 2001 meeting of the GEF Council, countries approved a set of initial guidelines for "enabling activities" for the Stockholm Convention.<sup>1</sup> These guidelines recommend the "preparation of a National Profile (or core sections thereof as they related more specifically to POPs)" and call for a "National Profile (or core sections thereof)" as a key output of the process to prepare a Stockholm Convention NIP. Moreover, the document suggests, "Countries which have not prepared a National Profile are encouraged to do so (using UNITAR/IOMC guidance). Focus should be on those sections of National Profile which are of particular relevance to POPs".

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<sup>1</sup> Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. GEF/C.17/4.

## ***Skills Building on Action Plan Development as part of Stockholm Convention NIP Development***

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### **Overview**

UNITAR, in cooperation with UNDP, GEF and its other Implementing Agencies is now providing national-level training, technical and financial support to assist 25 least developed countries in developing action plans for the implementation of priority topics under the Convention through the project *Action Plan Training/Skills Building for 25 Least Developed Countries to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention*.

The UNITAR/UNDP Project is funded by GEF, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The project builds upon the experience gained and lessons learned through projects in some 12 countries to-date to assist in developing a wide variety of action plans on priority topics of sound chemicals management.

Support has also been received from the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL) to support action plan skills building in 7 additional developing countries and countries in economic transition.

A GEF medium-sized project to address action plan skills building in 15 additional least developed countries has also been submitted.

### **What are Action Plans?**

The purpose of an action plan is to provide a clear basis or "blueprint" for the implementation of activities aimed at addressing an identified priority issue. This type of planning tool is particularly useful when an initiative might involve a range of groups and individuals who may not be accustomed to working together and who represent divergent interests and perspectives.

A well-prepared action plan outlines the specific goal and objectives to be achieved, related activities to be undertaken, associated responsibilities of the participants, time frames, and resource and evaluation details. It is important that an action plan is not seen, however, as a snapshot of a particular situation or a one-time event. Rather, the action plan can be modified as necessary as part of an iterative process.

UNITAR's skills building approach is designed to assist with strengthening capacities and capabilities for the development of both strategies and action plans, not only where required as Convention obligations, but also in other instances where a country identifies the need to take a systematic planning approach in accordance with its own situation.

## **Guidance**

Guidance and training materials on action plan development are available for use by all countries and will be widely distributed as part of the above projects.

“Decision Trees to Assist with the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention” – an interactive tool to identify country obligations under the Convention – has been developed in partnership with UNEP, and is being tested in countries.

## **Assistance**

Interested countries are requested to contact UNITAR to indicate their interest in participating in these projects as soon as possible.

In addition to these projects, skills building services on action plan development are also available to other countries, should a country undertaking NIP development request it as a budgeted activity. For further information countries can contact UNITAR and their NIP GEF Implementing Agency.

## ***NIP Development in Direct Partnership with Countries***

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### **Overview**

UNITAR is assisting four countries to-date and their GEF Implementing Agencies (such as UNDP, UNEP and UNIDO) with the execution of international aspects of NIP 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
- Training for the development of a financial resource mobilisation strategy

### **UNITAR Assisting with Development of Stockholm Convention NIP for the Union of the Comoros**

In April 2005 UNITAR signed an agreement with UNDP (the GEF Implementing Agency) and the Government of Comoros to assist the Ministry of Development with the development of Comoros' NIP for the Stockholm Convention. The expected duration of the project is 18 months.

### **UNITAR Assisting with UNDP/GEF Project, Preparation of the NIP for Pakistan under the Stockholm Convention**

UNITAR is presently assisting Pakistan in key areas of its NIP Enabling Activity. Activities to assist Pakistan include: skills-building on many aspects of NIP development, inventory compilation, and capacity gap assessment in order to create a solid foundation for further development of the NIP according to the needs of the Pakistan Government and Stockholm Convention.

## **Cooperation with Other Countries**

UNITAR is also currently assisting Mozambique (GEF Implementing Agency: UNEP) with certain aspects of NIP development, and is in discussions with the Peoples' Republic of China (GEF Implementing Agency: UNIDO) to possibly assist with capacity building and training related to the development of its NIP.

## **Assistance**

For more information on how to access UNITAR assistance in this area, as part of your GEF-supported NIP, please contact your GEF Implementing Agency and/or UNITAR.

## ***Training on Risk Management Decision Making as part of Considering Options for Management of Individual POPs***

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### **Overview**

UNITAR provides guidance and training for countries who wish to undertake a systematic process for risk management decision making as they assess their obligations under the Stockholm Convention. UNITAR is currently in discussions with countries about the details of providing such training and guidance, and welcomes any requests from countries for assistance of this type.

### **Guidance**

Guidance on this topic – *Developing a Risk Management Plan for Priority Chemicals. Guidance Document, Working Draft (2001)* – has been tested by UNITAR's Chemicals and Waste Management Programme in a number of countries. In the context of the Stockholm Convention, The Gambia and Mozambique have received direct training assistance from UNITAR on this topic.

## **Assistance**

For more information on how to access assistance in this area, please contact UNITAR.

### ***Assistance to Countries to Develop Projects Aimed at Convention Implementation***

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UNITAR is currently assisting Ghana in the development of up to three implementation projects through GEF, with co-finance support anticipated from bilateral donors.

### ***Support for NGOs through participation in a GEF Project on Capacity Building with UNEP, UNIDO and IPEN***

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Supporting activities for the GEF medium-sized project *Fostering Active and Effective Civil Society Participation in Preparations for Implementation of the Stockholm Convention*

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

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UNITAR participates as a partner organisation in the GEF full-sized project *Africa Stockpiles Programme*. In addition, UNITAR is involved in discussions with UNEP to act as an executing agency for two GEF projects currently under development:

- *Capacity Building by Exchange of Lessons Learned on POPs Enabling Activities through Regional Networks*
- *Building National Legislative, Institutional and Other Regulatory Frameworks Pursuant to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*



## ***Participation in the IOMC Coordinating Group on POPs***

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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

## ***Future Directions***

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UNITAR's POPs programme will continue to work with countries according to their needs in the area of POPs management. Specific plans include:

- Providing assistance upon request, in close cooperation with GEF Implementing Agencies, for the execution of further projects aimed at Convention implementation
- Approval process under way to assist Bhutan with strengthening chemicals management for the Stockholm Convention with Canada POPs Fund support in partnership with UNEP
- Opportunities to strengthen the fundamentals of chemicals management in the context of the Stockholm Convention, such as: implementation in countries of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and development of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in countries

Other plans include:

- Expansion of action plan training to all developing countries and countries with economies in transition that request it
- Further joint projects with other GEF Implementing Agencies

- Working with governments to strengthen NGO capacities and capabilities
- Development of other tools that can assist countries (such as an online resource library and interactive learning tools)

### ***Support to UNITAR's POPs Programme***

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Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL/BUWAL), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In the near future, assistance from the Canada POPs Fund to assist Bhutan is also anticipated.

### ***Contact Information***

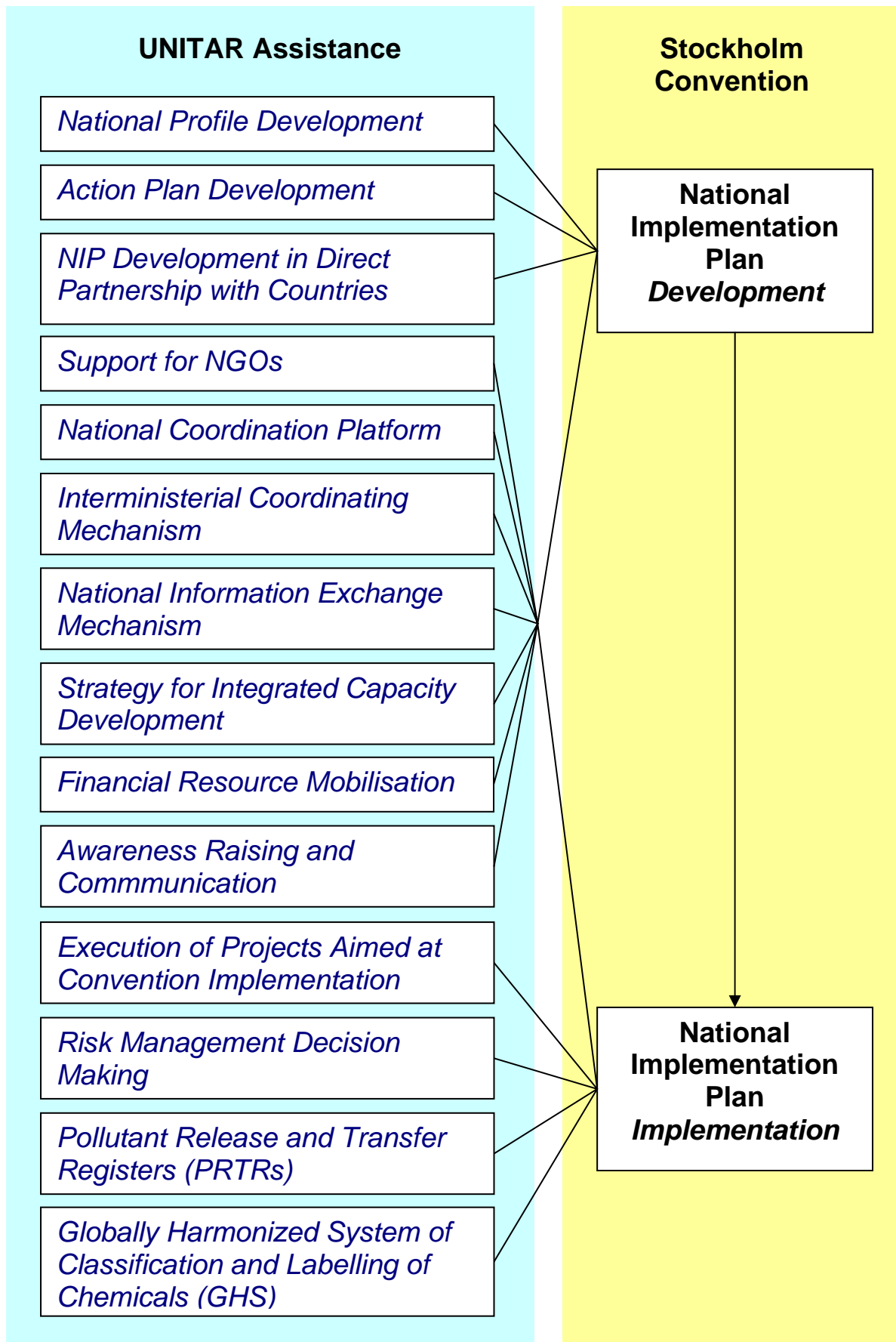
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\* All documents listed in this brochure can be found at the UNITAR website.

# UNITAR Assistance Relevant to the Stockholm Convention





The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was established in 1965 as an autonomous body within the United Nations with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations through appropriate training and research. UNITAR is governed by a Board of Trustees and is headed by an Executive Director. The Institute is supported by voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and other non-governmental sources.

Since 1 July 1993, pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 47/227, UNITAR Headquarters have been transferred to Geneva. UNITAR has the following functions:

- To ensure liaison with organizations and agencies of the United Nations and with permanent missions accredited in Geneva, New York and other cities hosting United Nations Institutions and to establish and strengthen cooperation with faculties and academic institutions.
- To conduct training programmes in multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation for diplomats accredited in Geneva and the national officials, involved in work related to United Nations activities.
- To carry out a wide range of training programmes in the field of social and economic development which include:
  - a. Training Programme in Multilateral Diplomacy, Negotiations and Conflict Resolution;
  - b. Environmental and Natural Resource Management Training Programmes;
  - c. Training Programme on Debt and Financial Management with special emphasis on the Legal Aspects;
  - d. Training Programme on Disaster Control;
  - e. Training Programme on Peace-Keeping, Peace-Making, and Peace-Building.

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