



Online meeting with the Advisory Committee of the PCB Elimination Network (PEN)

14 October 2016, 11:00 – 13:00 (Geneva time, GMT +02:00)

In preparation for the seventh PEN Advisory Committee meeting

Notes by: Elsemieke de Boer (Elsemieke.DEBOER@unitar.org)

Participants: Claudia Cabal (Holder of PCB), Anna Ortiz (Costa Rica), Hugues Levasseur (Industry), Mihaela Paun (Romania), Yuan Chen (On behalf of Jinhui Li, China), Kei Ohno-Woodall (BRS Secretariat), Jorge Ocaña (UNITAR), Ester Hermosilla (UNITAR), Elsemieke de Boer (UNITAR), Jacqueline Alvarez (UNEP).

Agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda
2. Decisions of and developments from the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) and looking at COP 8
3. New documents: ‘Consolidated Assessment of Efforts Made towards the Elimination of PCB’, ‘PCB Inventory Guidance’ and ‘PCB Maintenance’
4. Discuss progress on PCB in Open Applications and GEF proposal
5. Discuss progress on Awareness Raising Materials
6. Opportunity to share information and comments (including taking stock of work plan)
7. Upcoming activities:

- (a) **Two webinars: “PCB – A forgotten legacy?”** (25 October and 1 November, 13:00 Geneva time, GMT +02:00)
 - (b) **Seventh Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the PEN** (tentative dates 2-3 December 2016 - Paraguay)
 - (c) **COP 8**, April/May 2017 (documents and side event?)
8. Closure of the online meeting.

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

By Jacqueline Alvarez

Opening remarks were provided and they included the objectives of the online meeting and perspectives on future activities of the PEN.

2. Decision of and Developments from the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) and looking at COP 8

By Kei Ohno-Woodall

SC COP-7: decision SC-7/3 on PCB

- Took note of the preliminary assessment of efforts made towards the elimination of PCB
- Took note of the report on the activities of the PEN
- Encouraged Parties to intensify efforts to meet the 2025/2028 goals
- Requested the Secretariat to consolidate the information in the preliminary assessment, national reports and others and submit the consolidated report to the effectiveness evaluation committee by 31 Jan 2016

Report on effectiveness evaluation:

1. **Conclusion:** The Stockholm Convention, through the development of NIPs, as well as the many GEF-funded projects, had a beneficial impact on raising awareness of PCB, building national capacity and in eliminating PCB-containing liquids and equipment, but progress toward PCB elimination is slow. **Recommendation:** There is a need, in particular for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to strengthen their national or regional capacities for the elimination or irreversible transformation of PCB congeners and formulations.
2. **Conclusion:** While some progress has been made towards the elimination of PCB, the majority of Parties are currently not on track to achieve the ESM of PCB by 2025/2028 and the number

of tonnes to be disposed of globally remains daunting. A strong argument can be made that the scope of the challenge of achieving the elimination of use of PCB by 2025 and the ESM of PCB by 2028 has been severely underestimated at least in part due to poor reporting.

Recommendation: Parties should urgently define rigorous plans for the ESM of PCB throughout its life cycle, including its elimination and destruction, and explore the optimal and most cost-effective solutions given the specific domestic background and circumstances of each individual country.

3. **Conclusion:** Most national inventories of PCB are preliminary in scope and provide a fragmented picture. Even for closed applications, comprehensive data are often lacking. Currently no mechanism is available under the Convention to review progress in implementation of the PCB provisions. **Recommendation:** PCB inventories need to be undertaken in a systematic manner, in accordance with the existing guidance, and cover all types of equipment, sectors and geographical areas. Each Party should ensure that their national reports contain comprehensive, clear, reliable and well-structured data on the amounts of PCB already eliminated and most importantly the amounts still to be eliminated. It may be useful to establish a mechanism under the Convention to review progress in PCB elimination.
4. **Conclusion:** The costs of eliminating the large amounts of PCB which remain are significant. Despite the current level of financing to this issue, substantial additional funding will be necessary to eliminate and destroy the amounts of PCB in use or stored if the objective of the Convention is to be met. **Recommendation:** GEF projects should be designed to strengthen human and infrastructure capacities for PCB elimination and destruction which will last beyond the duration of the project. Initiatives to manage PCB in an environmentally sound manner should also be designed to develop sustainable infrastructure, processes and techniques that can be used for the transportation, storage and destruction of other hazardous wastes, particularly POPs wastes.

COP 8: 24 April until 5 May, Geneva. The schedule of the week will be decided during the joint bureaux meeting in November 2016. PCB is agenda item 5(a)(iii).

COP 8 draft decision: **a)** Takes note of the consolidated assessment and the report on the activities of the PEN, **b)** Invites UNEP C&W to report on the PEN activities at COP-9, **c)** Decides to undertake a review of progress towards elimination of PCB in accordance with paragraph (h) of part II of Annex A, **d)** Recognizes the need for (or encourages Parties to) urgently define and implement rigorous plans for the ESM of PCB...to meet 2025/2028 goals, **e)** Requests the Secretariat to continue to participate in PEN and assist Parties in addressing the need recognized including by developing guidance and roadmap for the implementation.

Technology theme for the COP 8 fair: This is an important theme for PCB as well and it would therefore be a good opportunity.

Effectiveness Evaluation: The UNEP Chemicals and Waste Branch will provide support to review the progress report.

Kei Ohno-Woodall: Ms. Ohno-Woodall also mentioned the idea of small working groups. The secretariat will ask the PEN to participate.

Chen Yuan: Ms. Yuan asked if PCB GEF funds could be used for North Korea. Ms. Yuan further explained that the Tsinghua University recently had two interns from North Korea. The interns have written a proposal on Elimination of PCB in North Korea and North Korea has requested their support.

Ms. Ohno-Woodall (answer to Ms. Yuan): Yes, that would be possible because North Korea is a party to the Stockholm Convention.

Ms. Alvarez (answer to Ms. Yuan): There is a window under the GEF. It should be discussed if it is feasible under GEF 7 (might not be possible under the current GEF 6 – to be discussed with GEF). Ms. Alvarez recommended Ms. Yuan to get in touch with the GEF IA, and highlighted that UNEP Chemicals and Waste Branch could assist in this. Ms. Alvarez added that since North Korea is still producing PCB, the GEF is likely to be interested in this proposal.

The energy component: Ms. Alvarez introduced another topic, the energy component. She explained that when countries consider substituting equipment (e.g. transformers), ministries should consider lower energy consumption equipment. This could be an interesting option for elimination of PCB in the long-term. She suggested that this would maybe also be an interesting topic to discuss during the seventh PEN Meeting in December. She continued mentioning that energy effectiveness has been very useful for mercury, for example. Therefore, it would not be something new for the Ministries of Energy.

Hugues Levasseur (answer to Ms. Alvarez): Mr. Levasseur explained that it should be taken into account that the cost of substituting equipment is very high and this might not be an economically feasible way forward.

Mihaela Paun: Ms. Paun posed a question regarding the PCB technical assistance budget of the Stockholm Convention for the next biennium.

Kei Ohno-Woodall (answer to Ms. Paun): The funds are not specifically allocated to PCB, but there is special funding for the report on progress on elimination. The technical assistance budget could be an option.

Jacqueline Alvarez: Ms. Alvarez discussed the vacancies within the Advisory Committee of the PEN.

There are currently three vacancies:

- Two for Western Europe and Other Groups
- One for Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO)

Party-nominated Members			Other Stakeholders
Region	Country	Name	
Africa	Nigeria	Stella Uchenna Mojekwu	NGO: Jindrich Petrlík - International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN)
	Rwanda	Aloys Kamatari	Technical Professional: Urs Wagner - Environmental Technology Limited (ETI)
Asia and Pacific	China	Jinhui Li	Industry: Hugues Levasseur - Trédi/Séché Environnement
	Iran	Sanaz Jafarzadeh	Holder of PCB: Claudia Cabal - Administración Nacional de Usinas y Transmisiones Eléctricas (UTE)
Eastern European Group	Moldova	Ion Barbarasa	IGO: TBD
	Romania	Mihaela Claudia Paun	MEA: Kei Ohno-Woodall - BRS Secretariat
GRULAC	Costa Rica	Anna Ortiz	
	Jamaica	Tara Dasgupta	
WEOG	TBD		
	TBD		

3. New documents: ‘Consolidated Assessment of Efforts Made towards the Elimination of PCB’, ‘PCB Inventory Guidance’ and ‘PCB Maintenance’

Only highlights were mentioned for this agenda item. The document was already known by the AC members and no significant difference in the conclusions and recommendation.

Anna Ortiz from Costa Rica indicated that from the report certain activities could be important to consider for inclusion in the AC work plan. She mentioned as well that she has already identified some and that she will be taking the lead on discussions during the face to face meeting in Paraguay.

4. Discuss progress on PCB in Open Applications and GEF proposal

By Jacqueline Alvarez and Jorge Ocaña

Jorge Ocaña: UNITAR and UNEP have been working together on a proposal on Open Applications which should be ready in January 2017. PCB in Open Applications is an important topic, also in comparison to PCB in transformers.

Jacqueline Alvarez: The proposal goes beyond just addressing PCB, also other POPs, such as PCN, will be targeted. The proposal is also based on many elements that were discussed during the 6th PEN meeting. The initial draft should be ready by December.

Jorge Ocaña: Mr. Ocaña stressed that capacity development is a very important element. He also pointed out that there is no guidance available and that therefore a guidance on preliminary inventories should be developed.

Mr. Ocaña mentioned the following four gaps:

1. Global Analysis and assessment
2. Inventories
3. Legal framework
4. Awareness Raising

Anna Ortiz: Ms. Ortiz asked if it is similar to the GEF proposal of two years ago to which Urs and Mihaela contributed as well.

Jacqueline Alvarez (answer to Ms. Ortiz): Ms. Alvarez explained that it is the same continuing activity. Ms. Alvarez added to this that the proposal could lead to increased future work of parties on Open Applications.

5. Progress on PCB in Open Applications and GEF proposal

By Elsemieke de Boer

Elsemieke de Boer: UNEP Chemicals and Waste Branch is implementing an awareness-raising campaign to push PCB back on the international agenda and to make it a key topic for the upcoming COP-8. The slogan ‘PCB – The Forgotten Legacy’ will be used. UNEP has engaged UNITAR, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, to develop the awareness raising materials.

Video on PCB: The video on PCB is coming along and we are finalizing the script. The video should be simple, clear, well-structured, visually attractive and catch people’s attention. It will have a catchy opening, introduce PCB, explain why we should care, introduce the Stockholm Convention, progress made so far and outline how we are going to achieve the 2025 and 2028 goals. The video will mostly be animated, will have a voice over and subtitles and we would like to use some very short interviews.

The upcoming PEN meeting might be a moment to conduct some short interviews with the PEN members and discuss progress on the video.

PCB portfolio-brochure (with separate factsheets): So far, the following topics have been considered:

- PCB Inventories
- Identification and Environmentally Sound Management of Open Applications Containing PCB
- Environmentally Sound Management and Disposal of PCB
- Case Study: Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Project
- Case Study: PCB Accident in Paraguay (2015)
- Progress and challenges - A preliminary assessment of efforts made toward the elimination of PCB

The draft portfolio-brochure should be ready before the seventh PEN meeting, in order to be discussed during the meeting.

New website: The UNEP website as well as the PCB and PEN pages are being updated.

Webinars: The upcoming webinars are another opportunity to raise awareness. Participation in the webinars is open to representatives of the Stockholm and Basel Conventions Focal Points as well as to the members of the Advisory Committee of the PEN and other stakeholders.

Your input is very important. We would be very happy to receive any ideas you may have on topics, materials such as photos, PCB stories or ideas on awareness raising approaches.

Anna Ortiz: Ms. Ortiz mentioned that perhaps some topics can be refined. Maintenance for example is a big topic.

6+7. Upcoming activities and opportunity to share information and comments (work plan)

By Jacqueline Alvarez

For the webinars, the following was decided:

- Anna Ortiz and Yuan Chen will help presenting during the webinar of 25 October 2016, Anna Ortiz will address maintenance (scope to be shared to be further discussed) and Yuan Chen will provide some information on the North Korea situation
- It was decided to postpone the webinar of 27 October to 1 November. Mihaela Paun, Claudia Cabal and Kei Ohno offered their help for this webinar. The themes to be presented will have to be discussed. A proposal from UNEP Chemicals and Waste Branch will be developed and shared with presenters.

Jacqueline Alvarez: The seventh PEN meeting is expected to be held in Paraguay from Friday 2 December to Saturday 3 December. We are looking into visiting the site of the accident in 2015, but there might be some difficulties regarding time and safety. Among others, the work plan, awareness raising and updates by everyone will be discussed.

Anna Ortiz: Ms. Ortiz will aimed to finish the executive summary in December 2016.

Claudia Cabal: Ms. Cabal mentioned that she is working on a story on PCB accidents in Paraguay.

Yuan Chen: Ms. Chen will aims to prepare a story about North Korea in December.

Jacqueline Alvarez: Ms. Alvarez asked Ms. Ohno-Woodall about a deadline for organizing the side event for COP 8. Ms. Ohno-Woodall assured there should not be any problem. Ms. Alvarez suggested an interactive approach and stressed that a good approach to attract attention is very important, as side events usually have competition among themselves.

Kei Ohno-Woodall: The joint bureau meetings will take place soon in November.

Jacqueline Alvarez: Ms. Alvarez mentioned that the COP documents will be ready soon.

Anna Ortiz: Ms. Ortiz mentioned that the ‘Consolidated Assessment of Efforts Made towards the Elimination of PCB’ has some weaknesses. She has marked elements in yellow.

Jacqueline Alvarez (answer to Anna Ortiz): Ms. Alvarez asked if Ms. Ortiz could take the lead in this. Ms. Ortiz accepted this.

8. Closure of the online meeting.

By Jacqueline Alvarez

The online meeting discussion was very useful and many items identified, further involvement of PEN AC members is of extreme importance to carry on.