



Sub-Regional workshop on enhancing national cooperation and coordination for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Bamako conventions and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the ECOWAS region

**Dakar, Senegal
14-16 December 2016**

Background

The decisions on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by the three Conferences of the Parties (Basel COP9 decision IX/10, Rotterdam COP4 decision RC-4/11, Stockholm COP4 decision SC-4/34) recognized that the overarching goal of all three conventions is the protection of human health and the environment for the promotion of sustainable development and that the objective of enhanced coordination and cooperation among the three conventions is to contribute to the achievement of that goal.

The Bamako Convention a regional instrument adopted by African countries in response to Article 11 of the Basel Convention encourages parties to enter into bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements on hazardous wastes to help achieve the objectives of the Basel Convention. The first COP of the Bamako Convention adopted a decision requesting the Secretariat of the Bamako Convention to avoid duplication and promote synergies to establish and strengthen organic and programmatic cooperation with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. COP 1 emphasized that, by using a coordinated approach for their implementation in the Africa Region, the Bamako and Basel conventions will mutually strengthen, complement and reinforce each other and will foster the achievement of their convergent objectives. Also the first joint meeting of the National Authorities of Basel and Bamako conventions recognized the Bamako Convention as the vehicle to complement and strengthen the implementation of the Basel Convention at the regional level and vice versa.

Synergies at national level among the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Bamako conventions should contribute and enhance a common national approach and understanding on chemicals and waste- related issues so that strategies are streamlined and therefore provide parties with the necessary elements for the coordinated implementation of the conventions.

In this way, the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the UNEP's Economy Division -Chemicals and Waste Branch- and Law Division including the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, together with many others partners coordinated their efforts to ensure that the chemicals and wastes management issues were integrated into relevant SDGs and associated targets.

To effectively implement the comprehensive and integrated nature of the SDGs as they relate to chemicals and wastes, the global community needs to move beyond minimizing the adverse effects

of toxic chemicals and stockpiles to human health and ecosystems. A circular and life-cycle approach for Sustainable Consumption and Production, and a proactive framework to address related environment and health issues, coupled with measures to advance a green economy and sustainable chemistry at all levels is needed to support the effective implementation of the SDGs. Equally important, we need to promote mainstreaming of chemicals and hazardous waste management into national environment, public health, social and economic policies and legislations.

Lead is a cumulative toxicant particularly hazardous to young children and pregnant women. No safe level of lead exposure has been established. Improper recycling of used lead-acid batteries is a major route of lead exposure in Africa, especially for children. The estimated reduced cognitive potentials (loss of IQ points) due to preventable childhood lead exposure equals to 98.2 million points which translates to \$134.7 billion of economic loss, or 4.03% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Africa.

The second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in May 2016 adopted the resolution 2/7 - Sound management of chemicals and waste which, inter-alia, ... *requests the Executive Director, subject to the availability of resources, to assist countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in their efforts to strengthen and enhance national, sub-regional and regional implementation of environmentally sound management of waste, notably by ...providing capacity-building, with a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement regulatory frameworks and programmes for the recycling of waste lead-acid batteries, including the role of the private sector therein.*

In response to this resolution, the UN Environment will undertake capacity building activities in developing countries including in Africa to strengthen institutional capacity to address issues related to the health and environmental impact from waste lead-acid battery recycling, in particular through activities in the informal sector in developing countries, and the lack of adequate infrastructure needed to recycle the rapidly growing number of waste lead-acid batteries in an environmentally sound manner in certain developing countries. The UN Environment will also seek to address the need to further reduce releases, emissions and exposures, and to increase workers' safety and protection, including through its work in promoting air quality. This will be done in session 2 on the sound management of used lead acid batteries (ULAB) which will be taken placed during the first day of the workshop.

Workshop objective

- Facilitating the establishment of or strengthening the existent national structures and mechanisms and enhancing the information exchange for the implementation of the SDGs in the chemical and wastes related international legal instruments namely, Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Bamako conventions among others.
- Raising awareness on environmental and health impact of improper used lead-acid batteries (ULAB) recycling, strengthening the knowledge on technologies for sound recycling of ULAB, and discussing elements of a regional strategy for sound ULAB recycling in Africa.

Partners:

Potential partners in the implementation of this workshop include:

- UNEP Chemicals and Wastes Branch including GEF Projects implementing agency;
- UNEP Law Division;
- United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR); *GEF Projects implementing agency*
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); *GEF Projects implementing agency*
- Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM);
- Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW);
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): *GEF Projects implementing agency*

Outcomes

- Identified concrete steps for enhancing inter-ministerial and overall national coordination and information flows on SDGs in chemicals and wastes under the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Bamako conventions;
- Shared information and experiences on existing inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms at the national level as well as identify the areas where further coordination might be required;
- Better understanding on how to map SDGs targets and indicators in some of the chemical and wastes conventions like Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Bamako in the region as well as the national priorities identified by Parties to fulfill their obligation under each convention.
- Awareness on environmental, health and socio-economic impact of improper used lead-acid batteries (ULAB) recycling will be raised;
- Strengthening participant's knowledge on technologies for sound recycling of ULAB;
- Discussed elements of a regional strategy for sound ULAB recycling in Africa.

Target Audience

Official contact points including Basel and Bamako Convention's Focal Points, Rotterdam Convention's Designated National Authorities and Stockholm Convention's Official Contact Points from the ECOWAS countries: (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo). (NB: the number of countries may be reduced subject to availability of funds)

Intergovernmental organizations and NGOs are welcome to participate in the meeting and share any information regarding activities being carried out in the ECOWAS region that show the synergy approach, or promote sound management lead-acid batteries.

Timing and Venue

The workshop will take place in Dakar, Senegal from 14-16 December 2016. It is organized by UN Environment Africa Office, Law Division, Chemicals and Waste Branch and the Bamako Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions secretariat.

Workshop language: English and French