

Concept Note  
**Workshop on Environmentally Sound Management  
of Used Lead Acid Batteries**  
**24-25 February 2016, Guatemala City, Guatemala**

**1. Background and Context**

Lead is a cumulative toxicant particularly hazardous to young children and pregnant women. Currently more than 80% of the global demand of lead is for batteries. Many reports exist which provide examples of health and environmental damages from inappropriate recycling of used lead acid batteries (ULAB) in developing countries. Therefore, international action is needed to achieve environmentally sound management of ULAB to reduce the risks of lead globally.

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has been engaged in action to address the environmental and health risks posed by lead, focusing to date on the phasing out lead in fuels and paints. For example, UNEP, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), supports the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paints (Lead Paint Alliance), a global partnership aiming at phasing out the use of lead in paint by 2020. UNEP stands ready to support international action to promote environmentally sound management of lead acid batteries. As part of this effort a successful sub-regional workshop was held in Osaka, Japan on November 26-27, 2015, at UNEP-International Environmental Technologies Centre (UNEP-IETC). Later on a national workshop was organized on January 18, 2016, in Jakarta, by UNEP and the Indonesian Ministry of the Environment, which resulted in a positive commitment from the Indonesian Ministry of Environment to promote ESM of ULAB working using a benchmark tool developed by the International Lead Management Centre (ILMC) and developing a pilot project in coordination with local industry.

Central America has a rich experience on ESM of ULAB, as it developed and implemented through the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central America and Mexico (BCRC-CAM) a regional strategy for ESM of ULAB during 2002-2008, which continued positive impacts up to present. This allowed the development of a model ESM ULAB recycling facility in Guatemala, Acumuladores Iberia (AI), which was verified to comply 100% with Basel Technical Guidelines, in 2009 by Brian Wilson, acting as consultant of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, and in 2011, by Carlos Fernando Coronado Castillo, member of the Central American Green Lead Working Group and staff of the Guatemalan

Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, and since January 2016, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources within the Guatemalan Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. Moreover, by applying a cleaner production framework and ISO14001, AI obtained almost zero waste, while at the same time achieving a 98% fall in the use of chemicals. These increases in efficiency resulted in 75% reduction in the cost of ULAB recycling.

In another key developments, the Council of Ministers of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD) at its XLIX Meeting in Roatan, Honduras, on June 2012, issued a decision instructing its Executive Secretariat to continue covering electronic waste and to carry out analysis proposed by BCRC-CAM, after the latter made two presentations about challenges and opportunities for the Environmentally Sound Management of ULAB and e-waste. As a result of the above BCRC-CAM in coordination with the Executive Secretariat of CCAD, developed during 2013-2014 a proposed Strategy for ESM of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Used Lead Acid Batteries, backed by regional workshops in San Salvador (2013) and San José (2014), and consultation meetings in Honduras and the Dominican Republic. The formulation of this proposed strategy was possible thanks to the support from the Organization of American States (OAS) and financial backing from the United States State Department. This proposed strategy was presented to the CCAD Council of Ministers in Punta Cana, the Dominican Republic, in June 2014.

## **2. Goal and Objectives of the Workshop (February 24 and 25, 2016)**

The overall goal of the workshop is to advance international analysis, commitment and action to address the challenges associated with the management and recycling of ULAB to Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean, which could then be expanded into South America.

Specific objectives of the workshop are the following:

- Review the current situation on the international movement, management and recycling of ULAB, and associated environmental and health risks in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.
- Exchange information on the government policies and stakeholder actions to address these risks.
- Review the impact of the previous strategy on ESM of ULAB for Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean and Venezuela.

- Comment on a proposed revised strategy on ESM of ULAB for Central America and Mexico.
- Identify potential future UNEP activities towards the environmentally sound management of ULAB.
- Finalize a draft report on proposed UNEP action to promote sound management of ULAB, which will be presented to different fora, including: i) UNEP Lead and Cadmium Website; ii) the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in March in Cartagena, Colombia; and iii) the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA), to be held in Nairobi on May 2016.

### **3. Participants**

The workshop will bring together a small number of global experts, with a focus on participants from Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean and South America sub-region. Participants include:

- Experts on global trade and management of ULAB
- Government officials and policy experts from Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama), Mexico, the Dominican Republic and BCRC-South America.
- Experts on Cleaner Production from Guatemala and Colombia
- ULAB recyclers from Guatemala, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

### **4. Methods**

The Workshop will be highly interactive in nature and is organized around a series of presentations experts have prepared in advance, followed by focused discussions convened by UNEP. It is estimated that we will have no more than 30 participants. Due to the small number of participants, the discussion will be in a plenary round-table format. The draft report will be prepared by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central America and Mexico (BCRC/CAM). The review will also include Skype conversation with experts and stakeholders who cannot attend in person.

### **5. Programme**

The workshop consists of four sessions. During Session I a workshop document on the current situation of ULAB is presented and discussed. Session II will review and discuss the challenges and policies of countries, based on presentations by participants. The third session (Session III) will discuss possible future UNEP activities based on the experiences

presented by participants. The final session will summarize the discussion and include a workshop evaluation.

## **6. Partners**

This workshop is organized through cooperation among the following partners:

- **UNEP** contributes through its Chemicals and Waste Branch (CWB), its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Economy and Trade Branch (ETB) and provides perspectives on the management of environmental and health risks of lead and the international trade of ULAB and their recycling respectively.
- **Basel Convention Regional Center for Central America and Mexico** prepares the draft workshop document and finalizes a report on ULAB management of Central and South America, and the Dominican Republic, with the help of experts, including a proposed Sub-regional ESM Strategy for Central America, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic and a possible follow up extension to South America.
- **Global Environmental Centre Foundation** makes practical arrangements for the Workshop.

## **7. Evaluation**

At the end of the workshop, a workshop evaluation will be conducted to assess the extent the workshop achieved its objectives, to identify lessons learned, and to obtain feedback that will help the organizers in designing future events.

## **8. Logistics**

The workshop will start on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> of February, 2016 at 8:00 am, at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Guatemala City and will close the following day before noon, after a field visit to the Acumuladores Iberia ULAB Recycling Plant. This field visit will depart from the Holiday Inn at 7:30 am, arriving at the ULAB Recycling Plant at 8:00 am and returning at 9:30 am to the Holiday Inn Hotel.

The logistics of the workshop are handled by BCRC-CAM, with collaboration from the Global Environment Centre (GEC).

## Programme

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February: Workshop

8:00-8:30	Registration
8:30-8:45	Welcome and introduction of participants
<b>SESSION I</b>	
8:45-9:15	<b>Introduction on the background and objectives of the Workshop</b> <i>Chemicals and Waste Branch and Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNEP</i>
9:15-9:45	<b>Trade of ULAB and environmental/health impact, including information on illegal operations</b> <i>Mr. Brian Wilson, International Lead Management Centre</i>
9:45-10:00	<b>Coffee break</b>
10:00-10:30	<b>The Regional Strategy on ESM of ULAB and its implementation in Central America and the Dominican Republic during 2002 to present</b> <i>Mr. Miguel Araujo, BCRC-CAM</i>
10:30-11:00	<b>The Basel Convention Technical Guidelines on Environmentally Sound Management and Recycling of ULAB and its corresponding Manual</b> <i>Mr. Miguel Araujo, BCRC-CAM</i>
11:00-11:30	<b>The Benchmark Tool on ESM of ULAB</b> <i>Mr. Brian Wilson, ILMC</i>
11:30-12:00	<b>The Green Lead Award</b> <i>Mr. Miguel Araujo, BCRC-CAM</i>
12:00-13:30	Lunch
<b>SESSION II</b>	
13:30-14:00	<b>The benefits and challenges of Acumuladores Iberia ULAB recycling model of ESM+Cleaner Production</b> <i>Mr. Luis Marroquin, Plant Manager Acumuladores Iberia ULAB Recycling Facility</i>
14:00- 15:30	<b>National Perspectives on ULAB Management</b>
15:30-15:45	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>SESSION III</b>	
15:45-16:15	<b>Proposed Revised Strategy on ESM of ULAB</b> <i>Mr. Miguel Araujo, BCRC-CAM</i>
16:15-16:30	<b>Proposed new UNEP activities on ULAB in Latin America</b>
16:30-16:45	Conclusions of the day

**Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016: Workshop (continuation)**

<b>Field visit: Understanding the win-win opportunities and challenges of ESM + Cleaner Production on ULAB recycling: The case of Acumuladores Iberia ULAB Recycling.</b>	
<i>Objective: Develop shared understanding of low cost practical alternatives of ULAB management and recycling</i>	
a) Visit by Workshop participants	
07:30	<b>Departure of workshop participants from Holiday Inn Hotel</b>
8:00	Arrival to Acumuladores Iberia ULAB Recycling Facility
8:00-9:30	<b>Guided Field Visit to Acumuladores Iberia ULAB recycling facility</b> <i>Mr. Luis Marroquin, Plant Manager Acumuladores Iberia ULAB Recycling Facility</i>
9:30	<b>Return to Holiday Inn</b>
<b>SESSION IV</b>	
10:00-11:30	<b>Discussion with feedback from the field visit</b>
11:30-12:00	<b>Conclusions and Closing of the Workshop</b>