Factsheets on UNEP-administered global Multilateral Environmental Agreements

March 2022

UNEP Law Division

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*Note: Number of parties to each convention is as of March 2022.

I. Introduction

Multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) are one of the key instruments of international environmental governance and international environmental law. They are separate treaties to which States, regional economic integration organizations and, in some instances, and international organizations have become a Party. They intend to promote international cooperation on a specific set of environmental issues, such as the protection of the ozone layer and biodiversity and sustainable management of hazardous chemicals and waste. The United Nations Secretary-General usually serves as the depositary for each treaty.

Each of the MEAs provide for their own independent governance structures, decision-making bodies and procedures, such as conferences or meetings of the parties (COPs/MOPs), and operate in accordance with their provisions and the decisions of their governing bodies. The policy and financial decisions of the governing bodies of MEAs guide their implementation and related programmes of work and provide policy direction to the secretariats on all substantive issues. Funds for the implementation of the agreements are provided by the Parties to the respective conventions.

When the governing bodies of MEAs decide to request the UNEP Executive Director to provide their secretariats, they accept that the MEAs' secretariats will become subject to the administrative and financial regulations and rules of the United Nations as applied to UNEP and as supplemented by the MEAs' own rules. When the UNEP Executive Director has been entrusted with providing the secretariat for an MEA, the Executive Director also requires the approval of the governing body of UNEP, namely the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), to establish appropriate arrangements for carrying out the required secretariat functions.

UNEP-administered MEAs

UNEP has been designated by the COPs of 15 MEAs, eight global and seven regional, to provide secretariat functions to those conventions. This host relationship established with UNEP has included UNEP providing cost-effective administrative and financial support for each secretariat to carry out its responsibilities. The location, functions and organizational structure of each secretariat are either specified in the respective convention or determined by decisions of the COPs.

While the convention secretariats are accountable to their own COPs/MOPs for programme delivery, the chief executive officers of those conventions administered by UNEP – often called Executive Secretary – are accountable to the Executive Director. They operate with sufficient autonomy to discharge the functions that the various COPs/MOPs have vested in the Executive Director.

The 15 UNEP-administered MEAs include:

Global MEAs

1. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
2. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

3. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
4. Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
5. Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
6. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
7. Minamata Convention on Mercury
8. Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer

Regional Seas Conventions

9. Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention)
10. Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention)
11. Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)
12. Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean (Nairobi Convention)
13. Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention)

Other Regional Conventions

14. Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa
15. Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention)

In addition to providing secretariat functions, UNEP, while recognizing and respecting the autonomy of the MEAs, promotes coherent and synergized cooperation across all MEAs to multiply impact and deliver enhanced results across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNEP is engaging the MEAs through several strategic workstreams, including in the implementation of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy and the Programme of Work and budget as well as in the formulation of UNEP-wide environmental responses to COVID-19. Efforts are also underway to increase the visibility of the UNEP-administered MEAs in the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and engaging the MEAs more systematically in UNEA preparations. Besides providing support to the COPs and other meetings of the governing bodies of the MEAs, UNEP supports implementation of MEAs through projects at regional and country levels.

Cooperation with non-UNEP administered MEAs

In addition to the 15 UNEP-administered MEAs, UNEP works closely with many other MEAs, notably the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention on Wetlands). UNEP also contributes, as requested, to the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions[1], convened by

[1] Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG)

the CBD secretariat, and to the Rio Conventions Pavilion, a platform for raising awareness and sharing information about the latest scientific findings and policy practices linking biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land management among CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD. The UN Environment Management Group, chaired by the UNEP Executive Director, has eight MEA Secretariats[2] as its members and provides yet another platform for promoting cooperation and coordinating action across sectors.

The present global MEAs Factsheets compilation is one of the joint products of the MEAs Focal Points Network, coordinated by the Law Division. The Network serves as a technical-level platform between UNEP and the UNEP-administered MEAs secretariats to share information and promote programmatic cooperation between its members.

1. Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention)
2. CBD
3. CITES
4. CMS
5. Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
6. International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)
7. International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
8. International Whaling Commission (IWC)

[2] https://unemg.org/about-emg/emg-members/

1. BRS
2. CBD
3. CITES
4. CMS
5. Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
6. UNCCD
7. UNFCCC
8. Vienna Convention

II. At a Glance

Name of UNEP-administered MEAs	Entry into force	Parties	Secretariat location	Executive Secretary
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	29 December 1993	196	Montreal, Canada	Elizabeth Mrema
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	1 July 1975	184	Geneva, Switzerland	Ivonne Higuero
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)	1 November 1983	133	Bonn, Germany	Amy Fraenkel
Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal	5 May 1992	189	Geneva, Switzerland	Rolph Payet
Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade	24 February 2004	165	Geneva, Switzerland	
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	17 May 2004	185	Geneva, Switzerland	
Minamata Convention on Mercury	16 August 2017	137	Geneva, Switzerland	Monika Stankiewicz
Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer	22 September 1988	198	Nairobi	Meg Seki

III. Global Multilateral Environmental Agreements

1. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Protocols

1.1 Convention on Biological Diversity

CBD is an intergovernmental treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous people and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Convention has two Protocols:

- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; and
- Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted as a supplementary agreement under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

Governance structure

- The governing body of the CBD is the Conference of the Parties (COP), which currently meets every two years, or as needed, to review progress in the implementation of the Convention, adopt programmes of work and provide policy guidance. The COP guides the work of the subsidiary bodies and refers matters to them to address (see below). States not Party to the Convention, the UN and its agencies, as well as any other bodies or agencies, governmental or non-governmental, qualified in the fields of biodiversity, may participate in the meetings of the COP as observers.
- At the commencement of the first session of each ordinary meeting a President and ten Vice-Presidents, one of whom acts as Rapporteur, are elected from among the representatives of the Parties. COP President and ten Vice-Presidents, two from each of the UN regional groups, serve as the Bureau of the COP during the intersessional period to the end of the next meeting of the COP. The Bureau of the COP also serves as the Bureau for the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols, as well as for matters related to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Groups.

Subsidiary Bodies

The COP is assisted by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), which is responsible for providing recommendations to the COP on scientific,

technical, and technological aspects of the implementation of the Convention. SBSTTA elects its own Chair and Bureau members, two from each of the UN regional groups, for a total of 10 members. The SBSTTA currently meets twice during each intersessional period between the meetings of the COP (effectively, every year). Non-Party governments, the scientific community, and other relevant organizations with expertise in relevant fields may participate as observers in the SBSTTA meetings.

The Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) reviews progress in implementing the Convention and identifies strategic actions to enhance implementation, including how to strengthen the means of implementation, and makes recommendations to the COP accordingly. It also addresses issues associated with the operations of the Convention and the Protocols. The Chair of SBI is elected by the COP. The Bureau of the COP serves as the Bureau of SBI. The SBI currently meets once during each intersessional period between the meetings of the COP (effectively, every two years). States not Party to the Convention and qualified organizations may participate in the meetings of the SBI as observers.

The COP may also establish ad hoc open-ended intersessional working groups, for a limited mandate and period of time, to deal with specific issues as they arise and to make recommendations to the COP on these issues. Those currently established are the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and related Provisions of the Convention that addresses issues related to the protection of traditional knowledge, and the Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The COP may also establish ad hoc technical expert groups or call on the Secretariat to organize liaison groups, workshops and other meetings.

Participants in such meetings are usually experts nominated by governments, as well as representatives of international organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities and other bodies. The purpose of these bodies and their meetings varies: Expert groups may provide scientific assessments or assist in the development of policy, for example, while workshops may be used for training or capacity building. Informal Advisory Committees have been established to advise the Executive Secretary on certain matters such as the clearing house mechanism and communications on an ongoing basis. Informal advisory groups have been established to address strategic objectives, such as mainstreaming and synergies. Liaison groups advise the Secretariat for cooperation with other conventions and organizations.

Financial mechanism

Article 21 of the Convention establishes a financial mechanism for the provision of financial resources to developing country Parties for the purposes of the Convention. The COP has designated the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the institutional structure to carry out the operations of the financial mechanism. The financial mechanism functions under the authority and guidance of and is accountable to the COP for the purposes of the Convention. GEF prepares and submits a report for each ordinary meeting of the COP.

The Secretariat of the Convention and the Secretariat of GEF communicate and cooperate with each other and consult on a regular basis to facilitate the effectiveness of the financial mechanism in assisting developing country Parties implement the Convention. Representatives of GEF attend meetings of the Convention and its Protocols and representatives of the Convention attend meetings of GEF.

Implementation

Article 6 of the Convention establishes an obligation for national biodiversity planning. The national strategy reflects how the country intends to fulfil the objectives of the Convention in light of specific national circumstances, and the related action plans will constitute the sequence of steps to be taken to meet these goals. To date, 191 of 196 (97%) Parties have developed at least one National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Among these, 157 NBSAPs were revised to take into account the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Furthermore, Article 6(b) requires that Parties integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies and Article 10(a) requires that Parties, as far as possible and as appropriate, integrate consideration of the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making.

Article 26 of the Convention calls for Parties to present, through their national reports, information on measures which have been taken for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the Convention. Following decision XIII/27, 92 Parties have so far submitted their sixth National Reports.

Since its first meeting in 1994, the COP has recognized the importance of the Convention's relationship with the processes of the UN responsible for sustainable development, biodiversity-related conventions, other international agreements, institutions and processes of relevance, and has adopted decisions on cooperation at each of its meetings. A core function of the Convention's Secretariat is to coordinate with other relevant international bodies. To strengthen relationships and provide frameworks for cooperation, the Secretariat has signed memoranda of cooperation with numerous entities. The Secretariat has also established liaison groups with the secretariats of the Rio Conventions (Joint Liaison Group) and those of biodiversity-related conventions (Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions), as well as for thematic areas, such as the Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species and others.
The Clearing-House Mechanism seeks to support the Convention's thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work by promoting cooperation, exchanging information and developing a network of partners.

Currently active mechanisms established through voluntary contributions of the host governments of meetings of the COP as a legacy of their COP presidencies include the Japan Biodiversity Fund, established through the support of the Government of Japan as COP 10 Presidency, and the BioBridge initiative, Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative and Sustainable Ocean Initiative, established through the support of the Government of the Republic of Korea as the Presidency of COP 12.

Post-2020 global biodiversity framework

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets has provided a framework for the implementation of the Convention from 2011 to 2020, and for actions by all stakeholders, organizations and other conventions related to biodiversity. The Aichi Targets and their 2020 deadline are reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

An important stream of work being conducted under the Convention currently is the preparation of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The negotiations to prepare the framework, for consideration and adoption by the COP at its 15th

meeting, are being undertaken by a dedicated open-ended intersessional working group under the leadership of its co-chairs and the oversight of the Bureau of the COP. Regional and thematic consultation workshops have been contributing to this work and the subsidiary bodies, SBSTTA and SBI, have been tasked to contribute advice, for example in relation to its monitoring framework and indicators, and mechanisms to support its implementation.

Significant elements of ongoing work that relate to the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework include the preparation of its resource mobilization component, as well as the preparation of a long-term strategic framework for capacity-building beyond 2020 and a long-term strategic approach for mainstreaming biodiversity for consideration by the COP at its 15th meeting.

Also linked to the negotiation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is a science- and policy-based process on digital sequence information on genetic resources established by decision 14/20, with an extended Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group. The COP requested the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to consider the outcomes of the extended Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group and to make recommendations to the COP on how to address digital sequence information on genetic resources in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Updates on the implementation of the process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework are provided on a dedicated web portal of the CBD website.

Box 1: Significant achievements and impacts of the Convention on Biological Diversity

In 27 years, CBD has made major impacts on the state of biodiversity worldwide. The Convention is one of the most widely ratified international treaties on environmental issues, with 196 Parties. Through its three objectives and strategic plans such as the 2010 Biodiversity Target and Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the Convention and its Protocols contributed to: generating shared interest and commitment for biodiversity-related issues at the global, regional, national and subnational levels; increasing protected areas globally; identifying ecologically or biodiversity significant marine areas; building the capacity of stakeholders to implement the objectives of the Convention and its Protocols particularly in developing countries; engaging indigenous peoples and local communities and civil society in its processes and implementation; sharing information and technology; and mobilizing resources in developed and developing countries, to name a few.

The Convention requires Parties to prepare national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national reports, on the basis of which the COP can assess progress made in implementation and, update strategic plans. A periodic report on biological diversity, the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO), provides a summary of the status of biological diversity and an analysis of the steps being taken by the global community to ensure that biodiversity is conserved and used sustainably, and that benefits arising from the use of genetic resources are shared equitably. Five editions of the report have been prepared, the latest edition launched in September 2020.

The 2019 global assessment report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, prepared by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), also

explores the effectiveness of responses and implementation measures, including the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The post-2020 global biodiversity framework, to be considered by the COP at its fifteenth meeting to be held in Kunming, China, later in 2021, will take into account assessments of progress in achieving the current goals and Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

1.2 Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted on 29 January 2000 as a supplementary agreement to CBD on the basis of a draft protocol developed by the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on Biosafety established by the COP at its second meeting. The Protocol is an international treaty governing the movements of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology from one country to another. The Cartagena Protocol entered into force on 11 September 2003 and has 173 Parties.

The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted on 15 October 2010 at the fifth meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. As a supplementary agreement to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, it aims to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by providing international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress relating to LMOs. The Supplementary Protocol entered into force on 5 March 2018 and has 48 Parties.

Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol. Parties to the Convention that are not Parties to the Protocol may participate as observers in the proceedings of any meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP) to the Protocol but decisions under the Protocol are taken only by those that are Parties to it. When the COP serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, any member of the Bureau of the COP representing a Party to the Convention but, at that time, not a Party to the Protocol, shall be substituted by a member to be elected by and from among the Parties to the Protocol.

COP-MOP to the Cartagena Protocol currently meets every two years concurrently with the regular meetings of the COP to CBD. It addresses matters related to the review of policy and implementation of the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress.

Financial mechanism

The financial mechanism established in Article 21 of the Convention, through the institutional structure entrusted with its operation, serves also as the financial mechanism for the Cartagena Protocol.

Implementation

Article 19 of the Cartagena Protocol requires each Party to designate a national focal point and one or more competent national authorities responsible for performing the administrative functions required by the Protocol.

Since the adoption of the Protocol, and on the basis of its Article 22 on capacity-building, a number of decisions have been taken and mechanisms established to facilitate the strengthening of the capacities of Parties, including a capacity-building action plan for the period 2011-2020 and a coordination mechanism to facilitate cooperation and exchange of information. And, in support of Article 23 on public awareness and participation, measures and initiatives have been taken and decisions adopted to promote and facilitate public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms, including the establishment of a Portal on Public Awareness, Education and Participation.

Article 33 of the Biosafety Protocol requires Parties to monitor implementation of their obligations under the Protocol and to report to COP-MOP on measures taken to implement the Protocol. In its decision BS-I/9, COP-MOP adopted a reporting format and requested Parties to submit reports every four years. 108 Parties have so far submitted their fourth national report.

In accordance with Article 34 of the Protocol, COP-MOP adopted procedures and mechanisms on compliance and established a Compliance Committee to promote compliance, to address cases of non-compliance, and to provide advice or assistance.

Biosafety Clearing House

The Biosafety Clearing House is an information exchange mechanism that provides open and easy access to key information about LMOs, in accordance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

Strategic plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020

In decision BS-V/16, COP-MOP adopted the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety covering the period 2011 to 2020 to guide the implementation of the Protocol. In decision CP-9/7, COP-MOP decided to develop an Implementation Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety as a follow-up to the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020 and agreed on a process for its development, in which it assigned a key role for the Liaison Group on the Cartagena Protocol. Decision CP-9/7 also stressed the importance of including biosafety in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Since the ninth meeting of COP-MOP, and in line with the same decision, biosafety experts, stakeholders, and the Liaison Group on the Cartagena Protocol contributed to the development of the relevant elements of the biosafety component in the framework.

1.3 Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization

The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization was adopted on 29 October 2020 at the 10th meeting of CBD COP, on the basis of the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing established by the COP at its fifth meeting. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and has 130 Parties.

Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol. Parties to the Convention that are not Parties to the Protocol may participate as observers in the proceedings of any meeting of COP-MOP to the Protocol but decisions under the Protocol are taken only by those that are Parties to it. When the COP serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, any member of the Bureau of the COP representing a Party to the Convention but, at that time, not a Party to the Protocol, shall be substituted by a member to be elected by and from among the Parties to the Protocol.

COP-MOP to the Nagoya Protocol currently meets every two years concurrently with the regular meetings of CBD COP. It addresses matters related to the review of policy and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

Financial mechanism

The financial mechanism established in Article 21 of the Convention, through the institutional structure entrusted with its operation, serves also as the financial mechanism for the Nagoya Protocol.

Implementation

Article 13 of the Nagoya Protocol requires each Party to the Protocol to designate a national focal point and one or more competent national authorities on access and benefit-sharing.

Article 21 of the Protocol provides that each Party shall take measures to raise the awareness of the importance of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and related access and benefit-sharing issues. In support of Article 21, and in line with COP-MOP decisions, an awareness-raising strategy, and a toolkit on communication, education and public awareness have been developed.

Article 22 provides that Parties shall cooperate in the capacity-building to effectively implement the Protocol in developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, while Article 29 requires Parties to monitor implementation of their obligations under the Protocol, at intervals, and in the format to be determined by COP-MOP.

In accordance with Article 30 of the Protocol, at its first meeting, COP-MOP adopted compliance procedures and mechanisms and established a Compliance Committee to support compliance with the treaty and facilitate or assist the Parties to implement their obligations.

ABS Clearing House

The ABS Clearing House is an information exchange mechanism to enhance legal certainty and transparency on procedures for access and benefit-sharing and for monitoring the utilization of genetic resources along the value chain, including through the internationally recognized certificate of compliance, in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol.

- *Contact: secretariat@cbd.int*

2. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement between governments which was adopted on 3 March 1973. It aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species. Given the cross-border nature of trade in wild animals and plants, the effort to regulate it requires international cooperation to safeguard certain species from over-exploitation. CITES was conceived in the spirit of such cooperation.

- Adopted on 3 March 1973 and entered into force on 1 July 1975.
- 183 parties to the Convention.
- Secretariat located in Geneva, Switzerland, headed by Secretary-General, Ivonne Higuero.

Today, CITES regulates international trade in specimens of roughly 5,800 species of animals and 30,000 species of plants. International trade in these animals and plants, including their parts and derivatives, is managed by national government authorities. Government regulations implementing the Convention involve a system of permits and certificates for export, re-export, import, and introduction from the sea. The species of animals and plants are listed in the three CITES Appendices, where they are grouped according to how threatened they are by international trade.

Box 2:

Annually, international wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars and include hundreds of millions of plant and animal specimens. The trade is diverse, ranging from live animals and plants to a vast array of wildlife products derived from them, including food products, leather goods, wooden musical instruments, timber, tourist curios, and medicines.

Appendices I, II and III to the Convention are lists of species which are given different levels or types of protection against over-exploitation:

- Appendix I includes species that are threatened with extinction, for which trade must be subject to strict regulation and only authorized in exceptional circumstances.
- Appendix II includes species that are not necessarily threatened with extinction but may become so unless trade is closely controlled.
- Appendix III contains species that are included at the request of a Party that already regulates trade in the species and needs the cooperation of other countries to prevent unsustainable or illegal exploitation.

Governance structure

- The Parties to CITES are collectively referred to as the Conference of the Parties (CoPs). Every three years, CoP meets to review the implementation of the Convention. These meetings last for about two weeks and are usually hosted by one of the Parties. They provide the occasion for the Parties to review progress in the conservation of CITES-listed

species and consider (and, where appropriate, adopt) proposals to amend the lists of species in Appendices I and II.

- The Standing Committee provides policy guidance to the CITES Secretariat concerning the implementation of the Convention and oversees the management of the Secretariat's budget.
- The Animals and Plants Committees were established to fill gaps in biological and other specialized knowledge regarding species of animals and plants that are (or might become) subject to CITES trade controls. Their role is to provide technical support to decision-making about these species.
- The CITES Secretariat is administered by UNEP and is located in Geneva, Switzerland. It plays a coordinating, advisory and servicing role in the working of the Convention. In particular, it arranges meetings of CoP and provides assistance in the fields of legislation, enforcement, science and training.

Financial mechanism

The core administrative costs of the Secretariat, CoPs and its subsidiary bodies are financed from the CITES Trust Fund. This Trust Fund is replenished from contributions from the Parties to the Convention based on the UN scale of assessment, adjusted to take account of the fact that not all members of the UN are Parties to the Convention.

CITES-listed species

Roughly 5,800 species of animals and 30,000 species of plants are protected by CITES against over-exploitation through international trade. They include some whole groups, such as primates, cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), sea turtles, parrots, corals, cacti and orchids. But in some cases, only a subspecies or geographically separate population of a species (for example the population of just one country) is listed.

CoP has agreed on a set of biological and trade criteria to help determine whether a species should be included in Appendices I or II. At each regular meeting of CoP, Parties submit proposals based on those criteria to amend these two Appendices. Those amendment proposals are discussed and if there is no consensus, there are submitted to a vote with two-thirds majority required for proposals to pass.

Compliance

CITES is known as a Convention with effective compliance processes. In the context of CITES, "compliance" means to act in accordance with and in fulfilment of the Convention requirements – legal as well as scientific. Parties are bound by the Convention and must have an administrative and regulatory system in place to ensure that the Convention achieves its objectives of conservation and sustainable use.

When Parties fail to effectively fulfill the Convention requirements, they may become subject to one or more compliance measures, including trade suspensions. The costs of non-compliance can be high for the survival of entire species populations.

Box 3:

Research by CITES Parties and partners has shown time and again that the enforcement of a global framework for regulated trade, coupled with government efforts to empower communities in range and transit countries, has bolstered the conservation of species of the sea, land, and air. Whether it is the profitable but controlled harvesting of saltwater crocodiles by Aboriginal groups in Australia's Northern Territories, sustainable tapping of aloe plants in South Africa's Eastern Cape, or a preferential quota system for indigenous Brazilians reliant on fishing for the freshwater pirarucu fish, cooperative efforts to implement the CITES framework for the conservation of wildlife have frequently yielded benefits for both animal and plant species and the people who depend on them.

- *Contact: info@cites.org*

3. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals – often shortened to Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and also known as the Bonn Convention – is the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats, and migration routes. CMS acts as a framework Convention and has given rise to seven legally binding treaties (called Agreements) and 19 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) at bilateral, regional, and global levels, dealing with a specific species or group of related species. A list of the Agreements and MOU is provided in the Annex. Additionally, several regional and taxonomic action plans have been developed.

- Negotiations concluded in 1979. The Convention was adopted on 23 June 1979 and entered into force in 1 November 1983.
- CMS has 132 Parties and there are a further 31 countries that are Parties or Signatories to other instruments concluded under the Convention.
- The Secretariat is located in the UN Campus, Bonn, Germany, since 1983. Headed by Executive Secretary, Amy Fraenkel, it organizes and services meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention, promotes and supports the development and implementation of Agreements, MOU, and action plans, and facilitates the exchange of information among the Parties and partners.
- There is also an office based in Abu Dhabi that oversees implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range (Dugong MOU) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU).

Box 4:

Migratory species threatened with extinction are listed on Appendix I of the Convention and are expected to be strictly protected. Parties that are the Range States of a migratory species listed in Appendix I shall prohibit the taking of these animals and shall endeavour to conserve or restore the places where they live, mitigate obstacles to migration and control other factors that might endanger them. Besides establishing obligations for each State joining the Convention, CMS promotes concerted action among the Range States of many of these species. Migratory species that need or would significantly benefit from international co-operation are listed in Appendix II of the Convention. For these species, the Convention encourages the Range States to conclude global or regional agreements.

Governance structure

- The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the principal decision-making body of the Convention. It normally meets every three years, most recently in Gandhinagar, India (COP13, February 2020). India, as Host of COP, has assumed COP Presidency for the coming triennium.

- Between the sessions of COP, the Standing Committee is responsible for carrying out interim activities on behalf of COP. The Standing Committee is made up of regional representatives (three from Europe, three from Africa, two from Asia, two from South and Central America, and the Caribbean and one from Oceania), the Host Government, (Germany) and the Hosts of the previous and forthcoming meetings of COPs. India serves as Chair in the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14, planned to take place in 2023.
- The Scientific Council is the main advisory body of the Convention. It is composed of members appointed by individual Contracting Parties (Party-appointed Councillors) and members appointed by COP (COP-appointed Councillors). The Council exercises its functions mainly through a subset of its membership, the Sessional Committee. The Committee is made up of 15 regional representatives (three for each of the same five regions identified for the Standing Committee) chosen from the Party-appointed Councillors, plus nine COP-appointed Councillors with particular thematic or taxonomic expertise.

Financial mechanism

The Convention's core operations are primarily funded through assessed contributions from the Parties based on the triennial budget adopted by COP. Also, the Secretariat seeks voluntary contributions for activities from a range of different donors. Through the *Migratory Species Champion Programme*, the Secretariat engages and recognizes long-term support for key initiatives.

Latest Amendments to the Appendices

Appendices I and II can be amended at any meeting of COP. Amendments consist of migratory species or their populations being added to or removed from the Appendices. At COP13, eight species were added to Appendix I and four to Appendix II (with two being added to both). As of July 2020, there are 180 species in Appendix I and 268 species and 70 higher taxa included in Appendix II (118 species appear on both).

Implementation and Compliance

Article VI.3 of the Convention requires Parties to report through the Secretariat to COP on the measures that they are taking to implement the provisions of the Convention regarding the listed species for which they are Range States.

COP12 adopted Resolution 12.9 establishing a Review Mechanism and National Legislation Programme. The Review Mechanism aims to ensure long-term compliance with Articles III.4 (protection of Appendix I species), Article III.5 (prohibition of taking of Appendix I species), Article III.7 (reporting of exceptions to the prohibition of taking of Appendix I species), and Article VI.2 (Parties informing the Secretariat of which listed species they are a Range State). This process operates by reviewing specific implementation matters of Parties through a supportive, problem-solving, non-adversarial, and facilitative approach and aims to create a constructive system that encourages Parties to identify and address the challenges they face in protecting migratory species.

To support the strengthening of Convention implementation, the National Legislation Programme has been established to provide analysis and assistance to Parties in complying with the CMS, inter alia, by supporting the development or improvement of relevant national legislation.

- *Contact: cms.secretariat@cms.int*

Annex: Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding and Special Species Initiatives

The CMS Family comprises the parent Convention (CMS), seven legally binding Agreements and 19 non-binding Memoranda of Understanding. In addition, there are four Special Species Initiatives.

Agreements

1. Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (1 November 1999)
2. Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (16 January 1994)
3. Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (29 March 1994)
4. Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Seas, Mediterranean and Contiguous Atlantic Area (1 June 2001)
5. Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea (1 October 1991)
6. Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (1 February 2004)
7. Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats (1 June2008)

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)

1. MOU concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (1 July 1993)
2. MOU concerning Conservation Measures for the Slender-billed Curlew (10 September 1994)
3. MOU concerning Conservation Measures for Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa (1 July 1999)
4. MOU on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (1 June 2001)
5. MOU on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (1 September 2001)
6. MOU concerning Conservation and Restoration of the Bukhara Deer (16 May 2002)
7. MOU concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (30 April 2003)
8. MOU concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant (22 November 2005)
9. MOU concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (23 November 2005)
10. MOU for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region (15 September 2006)
11. MOU between the Argentine Republic and the Republic of Chile on the Conservation of the Ruddy-headed Goose (21 November 2006)
12. MOU on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Bird Species and their Habitats (26 August 2007)
13. MOU concerning Conservation Measures for the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal (18 October 2007)
14. MOU on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range (31 October 2007)
15. MOU concerning the Conservation of the Manatee and Small Cetaceans of Western Africa and Macaronesia (3 October 2008)
16. MOU on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (1 November 2008)
17. MOU on the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos and their Habitats (4 December 2008)
18. MOU on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (1 March 2010)
19. MOU between the Argentine Republic and the Republic of Chile on the Conservation of the Southern Huemul (4 December 2010)

Special Species Initiatives

1. African Carnivores Initiative
2. Central Asian Flyway
3. Central Asian Mammals Initiative
4. Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna

3.1 Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is an independent legally binding treaty with its own budget and governance mechanisms dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the African-Eurasian flyway.

AEWA is part of the 'CMS Family' having been negotiated as an Article IV Agreement under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. The close relationship between AEWA and CMS is evidenced in the provisions of the Agreement text, notably Article III 2 (a)[3], requiring Parties to accord the same strict protection to endangered migratory waterbirds as provided for by CMS and Article VIII 8 (e)[4], which requires the Meeting of Parties to AEWA to adopt a report to be communicated to COP to CMS.

AEWA covers 255 bird species ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle, including many species of divers, grebes, pelicans, cormorants, herons, storks, rails, ibises, spoonbills, flamingos, ducks, swans, geese, cranes, waders, gulls, terns, tropicbirds, auks, frigate birds as well as the South African Penguin.

- The final act of the negotiations was signed in The Hague in 1995 and the Treaty was opened for signature on 15 August 1996. AEWA entered into force on 1 November 1999 shortly before the first session of the Meeting of the Parties.
- AEWA has 81 Parties, 43 from Eurasia (including the European Union) and 38 from Africa.
- The Secretariat is located in the UN Campus, Bonn, Germany, and is headed by Executive Secretary, Jacques Trouvilliez.

Box 5:

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats across Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, Greenland, and the Canadian Archipelago.

The Action Plan (Annex 3 to the Agreement) specifies actions, which the Parties shall undertake in relation to priority species and issues, under the following headings: (a) species conservation; (b) habitat conservation; (c) management of human activities; (d) research and monitoring; (e) education and information; and (f) implementation.

AEWA focuses on the African-Eurasian flyway, building on the 'flyway concept', which became widely used in the last century. The 'flyway concept' and 'approach' help shed light on the problems encountered by migratory birds throughout their life cycles and identify countries that should cooperate to protect and sustainably manage shared waterbird populations.

[3] Article III 2 (a): [To this end, the Parties shall:] accord the same strict protection for endangered migratory waterbird species in the Agreement Area as is provided for under Article III, paragraphs 4 and 5, of the Convention.

[4] Article VI 8 (e): [At each of its ordinary sessions, the Meeting of the Parties shall:] adopt a report for communication to the Parties to this Agreement and to the Conference of the Parties of the Convention.

Governance structure

- The Meeting of the Parties (MOP) convenes every three years, most recently in Durban, South Africa (MOP7, 4 to 8 December 2018).
- Between sessions of MOP, the Standing Committee oversees the implementation of the Agreement. The Standing Committee is made up of regional representatives, the Host Government of the next MOP (currently Hungary), and the Depositary Government (the Netherlands). The United Kingdom currently serves as the Chair of the Standing Committee.
- The Technical Committee provides scientific and technical advice and information to MOP and, through the AEWA Secretariat, to the Parties. It also makes recommendations to MOP concerning the Action Plan, implementation of the Agreement, and further research to be carried out.

Financial mechanism

The Agreement's core operations are primarily funded through assessed contributions from the Parties based on the triennial budget adopted by MOP. In addition, the Secretariat seeks voluntary contributions for activities from donors and projects, for example, the *European Goose Management Platform*.

Latest Amendments to the Agreement

Under Article IV, paragraph 2, of the Agreement, the Action Plan (Annex 3 to the Agreement) is reviewed at each session of MOP. Proposals to amend the Annexes submitted to the 7th Session of MOP (Durban, South Africa, 4 to 8 December 2018) involved the addition of the European Shag (*Phalacrocorax Aristotelis*) to the waterbird species to which the Agreement applies and amendments and additions to some of the definitions contained in the Action Plan.

Compliance

Under Article V of the Agreement, Parties prepare for each ordinary session of MOP a report on their implementation of the Agreement with particular reference to the conservation measures they have undertaken.

The Implementation Review Process (IRP) was established by the Parties to the Agreement at their 4th meeting from 14 to 19 September 2008 through Resolution 4.6, which provides for the AEWA Standing Committee to oversee the process. The IRP is intended to examine with the Party concerned those issue(s) having – or potentially having – adverse effects on either migratory waterbirds or their sites and habitats as a result of human activities.

Box 6: World Migratory Bird Day

Launched by AEWA in 2006 in response to news headlines wrongly blaming wild birds for the spread of avian flu, World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) has now become an established feature of the conservation calendar. CMS became a joint partner in 2007, and the campaign became fully global through an agreement signed in 2017 with Environment for the Americas, a not-for-profit organization. Recent themes for WMBD have been plastic pollution ('Be the solution to plastic pollution' in 2019) and connectivity ('Birds connect our world' in 2020).

- *Contact:* aewa.secretariat@unep-aewa.org

3.2 Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats

The Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats, also known as the Gorilla Agreement, is one of the seven agreements developed under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The Agreement, concluded as an Article IV (3) Agreement under CMS, aims to facilitate Parties in taking coordinated measures to maintain gorillas at a favourable conservation status or to restore them to such a status. The Agreement covers all four gorilla sub-species.

- Entry into force on 1 June 2008
- Number of Parties: 7 Parties (Central African Republic, Congo (Republic of the), Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda)
- The CMS Secretariat located in Bonn, Germany, headed by Amy Fraenkel, provides the Interim Secretariat to the Gorilla Agreement.

Box 7: Gorillas

There are two gorilla species in the world, and each species has two sub-species, making a total of four sub-species: Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*); Western Lowland Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*); Eastern Lowland Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei graueri*); and Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*). All sub-species are listed as either Endangered or Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List. Gorillas are found only in 10 countries in Africa: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo (Republic of the), Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda.

Governance structure

- The Agreement has two main bodies: The Meeting of the Parties (MOP), the decision-making body, and the Technical Committee, responsible for providing advice to the decision-making body and the Secretariat on scientific matters and priorities for research and conservation.
- During the intersessional period, the Chairperson represents MOP until a new Chairperson is elected at the following session.
- The CMS Secretariat provides the Interim Secretariat to the Gorilla Agreement.
- At MOP3 held in Entebbe, Uganda in 18 and 20 June 2019, Parties decided to strengthen cooperation between the Gorilla Agreement and the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP). GRASP is a multi-stakeholder partnership of more than 106 partners that aims to help ensure the long-term survival of bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans and their habitats in Asia and Africa. As part of the cooperation, the Parties decided that the GRASP Scientific Commission should fulfill the role of the Technical Committee and continue its service unless otherwise decided.

Implementation

The Parties implement the Gorilla Agreement through the four sub-species Action Plans:

- Regional Action Plans for the Conservation of Western Lowland Gorillas and Central Chimpanzees 2015-2025
- Revised Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*) 2014–2019

Box 8: Gorilla and infectious disease

Gorillas are susceptible to many infectious diseases that affect humans due to genetic similarity. These diseases pose an existential threat to gorillas, along with other external pressures such as habitat loss and poaching. In the mid-1990s, Ebola outbreaks killed more than 90 per cent of Gorillas in Gabon and Congo (Republic of the). To address the threat, Parties to the Gorilla Agreement are required to support initiatives to stop the spread of Ebola and other infectious diseases as per Article III.2 (f) of the Agreement.

- Grauer's Gorillas and Chimpanzees in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,
-

- Conservation Action Plan 2012-2022 as revised in 2015
- Action Plan for the Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*)

At each MOP, all Parties are required to submit national reports and describe progress in implementing the Agreement in relation to the law enforcement; species and habitat protection; monitoring and related research; human and gorilla health; national policy and legislation; institutions and funding; transboundary activities; tourism; education and awareness; and community-based work.

Financial mechanism

The implementation of the Agreement is supported by the Gorilla Agreement Trust Fund and voluntary contributions by donors. Each Party contributes to the Trust Fund at a scale agreed upon at the preceding MOP. At MOP3 held in 2019, Parties agreed to make an annual contribution of €3,000 for the operation and the activities of the Agreement.

Strengthening cooperation with the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP)

At MOP3, Parties decided to enhance cooperation between the Gorilla Agreement and GRASP. They called for having joint focal points, meetings, scientific advice, work programme, and outreach and fundraising activities between the two mechanisms.

- Contact: CMS Secretariat (Interim Secretariat to the Gorilla Agreement), *cms.secretariat@cms.int*

3.3 Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats

The Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS) was set up in 1991 under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). In recognition of the unfavourable conservation status of bats in Europe, the Agreement was created to provide a framework of cooperation for the conservation of bats in Europe. Bats, being endangered migratory species, can only be properly protected if activities are carried out over their entire migratory range. The EUROBATS Agreement aims to protect all 51 European bat species through legislation, education, conservation measures, and international cooperation throughout Europe, Northern Africa, and the Middle East. EUROBATS has been administered by UNEP since 2001.

- The Agreement entered into force on 16 January 1994.
- 37 out of 63 Range States have so far acceded to the Agreement.
- The EUROBATS Secretariat was established by the first session of the Meeting of the Parties from 18 to 20 July 1995. It started working in Bonn, Germany, in 1996.

Box 9: WHY BATS MATTER?

Bats have been populating the earth for the last 50 million years and represent around a quarter of all mammals. They are the only mammals that can fly.

Bats as Pest Controllers: In Europe, bats hunt insects such as mosquitos and moths to satisfy their considerable nutritional requirement that totals 1/4 to 1/3 of their body weight per night. This explains why they are extremely important links in the ecological chain and help to prevent occasional plagues of insects.

Bats as Pollinators and Seed Dispersers: Beyond Europe, there are well-known carnivore-, nectar- and frugivore bats. The latter has a key role as pollinators and seed dispersers. Over 500 plant species rely on bats to pollinate their flowers (e.g. mango, banana, agave, etc.).

Bats as Indicators of Biodiversity: The pressures they face – such as landscape change, agricultural intensification, and habitat fragmentation – are also relevant to many other wildlife species, making them excellent indicators for the wider wildlife health.

Governance structure

- The Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to EUROBATS is the highest decision-making body of the Agreement, e.g. it adopts

resolutions, including the Agreement's budget. MOP meets every four years.

- The Standing Committee, established at MOP5 from 4 to 6 September 2006, is the administrative body of the Agreement that meets once a year to review the financial
- situation and overall budgetary performance of the Agreement, to provide guidance on other administrative issues between two sessions of MOP, etc.
- The Advisory Committee, established at MOP1 in 1995, is the scientific body of the Agreement that meets once a year. Its tasks include evaluating data and discussing scientific issues concerning bat research and conservation to set priorities for the Agreement's future work, drafting resolutions to be adopted by the next MOP, and setting new guidelines on all areas relevant for bat conservation.
- The EUROBATS Secretariat is the executive body of the Agreement. Its main tasks include coordinating and organising the activities of the Standing Committee and the Advisory Committee as well as arranging MOP. Additionally, the Secretariat undertakes initiatives for implementing the Agreement's strategic objectives, encouraging more Member States to become a party to the Agreement, raising public awareness, exchanging information, and coordinating international research and monitoring activities.

Financial mechanism

EUROBATS Parties provide annual assessed contributions to the General Trust Fund of the Agreement. This fund is used to finance the organisation of the meetings of all Agreement's bodies, the operating of the Secretariat, as well as the production of diverse guideline documents and information material to support bat conservation efforts.

Additionally, EUROBATS receives regular yearly voluntary contributions from several Parties as well as ad-hoc voluntary contributions. These are usually earmarked to support particular activities, such as projects within the EUROBATS Projects Initiative, launched in 2008 to provide funding for small- to medium-sized bat conservation projects.

Bristol Amendment

The Bristol Amendment to the Agreement was adopted on 26 July 2000 and entered into force on 8 June 2002. Among other provisions, the Amendment changed the name of the Agreement from "Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe" to "Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats" and extended the last paragraph of the Agreement text to include non-European Range States and established the Annex 1 to the Agreement, which lists bat species occurring in the Agreement area. The Annex is updated every four years by the Meeting of Parties and currently includes 51 European bat species.

Implementation and Compliance

Each Party shall prohibit the deliberate capture, keeping, or killing of bats except under permit from its competent authority. Parties shall also adopt and enforce such legislative and administrative measures as may be necessary for giving effect to the EUROBATS Agreement. However, the provisions of the Agreement in no way affect the right of Parties to adopt stricter measures concerning the conservation of bats.

Every four years the Parties are required to provide a national implementation report to the Meeting of the Parties. With these reports, Member States reflect on and present their efforts for bat protection in their country.

- Contact: eurobats@eurobats.org

3.4 Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas

The Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) was concluded under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in 1991 and opened for signature in 1992. The Agreement covers over 20 species of toothed whales (Odontoceti) occurring in the Agreement Area (except the Sperm Whale).

- Adopted on 17 March 1992 and entered into force on 29 March 1994.
- 10 Parties (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom).
- In 2007, the ASCOBANS Secretariat was merged into the CMS Secretariat, with the same Executive Secretary.

Box 10:

Small cetaceans are susceptible to a multitude of anthropogenic pressures. Continuously high bycatch rates, chemical pollution, marine debris, prey depletion, habitat deterioration, underwater noise, and other increasing disturbance threaten the existence of small cetaceans in the Agreement Area. Cetaceans play an important part in their ecosystems, maintaining the health and stability of the marine environment.

Migrating cetaceans regularly cross-national boundaries, which is why their protection can only be effectively achieved by means of international cooperation. The aim of the Agreement is to promote close cooperation amongst Parties with a view to achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for small cetaceans in the ASCOBANS Area.

A Conservation and Management Plan, which forms part of the Agreement, obliges Parties to engage in habitat conservation and management, surveys and research, reporting, information sharing, and prohibiting under national law the intentional take and killing of small cetaceans.

Governance structure

- The Meeting of the Parties (MOP) is the principal decision-making body of the Agreement. It meets every four years (originally every three years).
- The Advisory Committee meets annually, except for years of MOP, and divides its agenda between scientific and institutional issues.

Financial mechanism

Parties pay assessed contributions based on an adapted UN scale. Parties also make occasional ad hoc voluntary contributions for specific activities, e.g. for conservation or research projects.

Amendment to the Agreement Area

On 3 February 2008, an extension of the agreement area came into force, which changed the name to "Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas". Instead of only covering the Baltic and North Seas, the Agreement Area now covers the entire coast of the United Kingdom (previously the south and east coasts only), Ireland, the Atlantic coast of France and Spain and the west coast of Portugal.

Implementation and Compliance

According to Article 2.5 of the Agreement, Parties should provide annual national reports covering the progress made and difficulties experienced regarding key activities and threats. Currently, Resolution 8.1 National Reporting mandates which topics are covered which year during the quadrennium between MOPs. Parties implement the Agreement through the ASCOBANS conservation and management plan, resolutions and species action plans.

Contact: ascobans.secretariat@ascobans.org

4. Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

BASEL CONVENTION

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal is the most comprehensive global environmental treaty on hazardous and other wastes requiring special consideration. The Basel Convention aims to protect human health and the environment from the negative effects resulting from the inappropriate management of hazardous wastes, including in the context of their movements across borders. The scope of application of the Basel Convention covers a wide range of hazardous and other wastes and its provisions centre around the principal aims of reducing waste generation; promoting environmentally sound management of wastes; restricting transboundary movements of hazardous wastes except where it is perceived to be in accordance with the principles of "environmentally sound management"; and applying a regulatory system in cases where transboundary movements are permissible. Examples of wastes regulated by the Basel Convention include biomedical and healthcare waste, electrical and electronic waste, plastic wastes, used lead acid batteries, persistent organic pollutant (POP) wastes, mercury wastes, etc.

- Adopted on 22 March 1989 and entered into force on 5 May 1992.
- 188 Parties to the Convention.
- Secretariat administered by UNEP, located in Geneva, Switzerland, headed by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Rolph Payet.

Governance structure

- The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Basel Convention meets every two years to review and evaluate the implementation of the Convention. A Bureau composed of a President and nine Vice-Presidents is elected at each meeting of the COP.
- The COP has established the following subsidiary bodies which meet in between meetings of the COP:
  - The Open-ended Working Group which, among other things, assists the COP in developing and keeping under continuous review specific operational policies and decisions taken by the COP, considers and advises the COP on issues relating to policy, technical, scientific, legal, institutional, administration and other aspects of the implementation of the Convention, prepares its work plan for consideration by the COP, and reports to the COP on the activities it has carried out between meetings of the COP.
  - The Implementation and Compliance Committee which assists Parties in complying with their obligations under the Convention and facilitates, promotes, monitors and aims to secure the implementation of and compliance with the obligations under the Convention.
- The COP routinely establishes ad hoc expert groups to carry out specific work in between the COP meetings (e.g. updating of technical guidelines on specific waste streams). It also establishes multi-stakeholder partnerships which bring together Parties and non-State stakeholders to tackle specific issues.

Financial mechanism and technical assistance

The Convention does not establish a financial mechanism. It provides for the delivery of technical assistance to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to assist them in building their capacity (human resources, policy, legal and institutional frameworks) to fulfill their obligations under the Basel Convention. Technical assistance is delivered through face-to-face and online trainings, partnerships as well as through the network of 14 Regional Centres that have been established under the Convention to provide training and facilitate technology transfer to address specific regional or sub-regional needs of the Parties (see annex for the list of Basel Convention regional centres).

Plastic Waste Amendments

At its 14th meeting held from 29 April to 10 May 2019, the COP adopted amendments to Annexes II, VIII, and IX to the Convention with the objectives of enhancing the control of the transboundary movements of plastic waste and clarifying the scope of the Convention as it applies to such waste. These amendments entered into force on 1 January 2021. Through the "Plastic Waste Amendments", the Annexes to the Convention specify the new categories of plastic waste that will be subject to the Convention's control procedure for transboundary movements, but also stipulate provisions pertaining to waste minimization as well as to the environmentally sound management of wastes. To assist Parties in implementing the provisions related to the new amendments, COP 14 adopted several other decisions, including decision BC-14/13, initiating further actions to address plastic waste under the Convention.[5] Specifically, through decision BC-14/13, the COP established the Global Partnership on Plastic Waste aimed at promoting the environmentally sound management of plastic waste and preventing their generation. Through that same decision, the COP also requested the updating of technical guidelines on the identification of and environmentally sound management of plastic waste as well as the inclusion of consideration related to plastic waste into the current process for the review of the Annexes to the Convention.

Ban Amendment

On 5 December 2019, the "Ban Amendment" to the Basel Convention entered into force, providing for the prohibition of transboundary movement of hazardous waste destined for disposal operations from Parties in Annex VII (OECD, EU member states and Liechtenstein) to non-Annex VII countries (all other countries). The Amendment also prohibits transboundary movements of hazardous wastes pursuant to Article 1.1 (a) (wastes controlled by the Convention except for those considered or defined as hazardous by the national legislation) destined for disposal. This entry into force is seen as a flagship international effort to ensure that transboundary movements only take place to those countries with the capacity to manage hazardous wastes in an environmentally sound manner, while allowing Parties wishing to do so to receive such wastes.

Implementation and compliance

All Parties must implement and comply with the obligations under the Basel Convention. Implementation and compliance matters fall within the mandate of the Implementation and

[5] Decisions BC-14/9 on cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, BC-14/10 on national reporting, BC-14/18 on technical assistance, BC-14/19 on the Basel Convention Partnership Programme, BC-14/21 on international cooperation and coordination, and BC-14/23 on the clearing house mechanism for information exchange.

Compliance Committee established in 2002 under Article 15, paragraph 5 (e) of the Convention, which has the dual mandate to:

- Assist with any submission made to it in accordance with the terms of reference relating to the compliance of an individual Party.
- Review general issues of implementation and compliance.

Box 11: Controlling transboundary movements and illegal traffic

In 2013, COP established the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE) with a view to improving cooperation and coordination between relevant entities with a mandate to build the capacity of countries to prevent and combat illegal traffic.

Technical guidelines on the management of specific waste streams and disposal operations
One of the most important contributions of the Basel Convention over the past 20 years is the elaboration of a significant number of policy instruments with non-binding character. Within the framework of the Convention, a large body of technical guidelines on the management of specific waste streams has been developed by technical government expert groups. These technical guidelines have been designed for the use of Governments at all levels, as well as other stakeholders, to provide practical guidance and thus facilitate the management of the relevant waste streams.

Synergies among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

To facilitate the implementation of the Conventions, the COPs of the three Conventions have over the years adopted a series of decisions aiming at enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Conventions, through the so-called "synergies process". This process aims at reducing the administrative burden on Parties, increasing policy coherence, maximizing the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels, and improving implementation of the Conventions.[6]

- Contact: brs@brsmeas.org

[6] More information on the history of the synergies process available at: http://www.brsmeas.org/Decisionmaking/Overview/SynergiesProcess/tabid/2615/language/fr-CH/Default.aspx

Annex: The Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer[7]

Africa and West Asia

Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Arab States, Egypt (BCRC Egypt)	Giza, Egypt
Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the African Region, Nigeria (BCCC Nigeria)	Ibadan, Nigeria
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for French-speaking countries in Africa, Senegal (BCRC Senegal)*	Dakar, Senegal
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the English-speaking African countries, South Africa (BCRC South Africa)*	Pretoria, South Africa

Asia and the Pacific

Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Asia and Pacific Region, China (BCRC China) *	Beijing, China
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South-East Asia, Indonesia (BCRC Indonesia) *	Jakarta, Indonesia
Pacific Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Joint Implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions in the South Pacific region (SPREP)	Apia, Samoa
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer in Tehran, Iran (BCRC Iran) *	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Central and Eastern Europe

Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for CIS countries, Russian Federation (BCRC Russia)	Moscow, Russian Federation
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Central Europe, Slovakia (BCRC Slovakia)	Bratislava, Slovak Republic

Latin America and the Caribbean

Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the South American Region, Argentina (BCRC Argentina)	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean Region, Trinidad and Tobago (BCRC Caribbean)	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Central America, including Mexico, Panama (BCRC Panama) *	Panama City, Panama

[7] The Basel Convention regional centres marked by an asterisk are also Stockholm Convention regional centres.

Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Latin America and Caribbean Region, Uruguay (BCCC Uruguay) * Montevideo, Uruguay

5. Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade

ROTTERDAM CONVENTION

The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade is a comprehensive global treaty that aims at protecting human health and the environment by: promoting shared responsibilities and cooperative efforts associated with the international trade of hazardous industrial chemicals and pesticides; facilitating exchange of information about chemicals; providing for a national decision-making process on their import and export; and disseminating such national decisions on the export and import to the Parties. The Convention helps countries avoid the unwanted import of chemicals listed in Annex III, by subjecting their import and export to a Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure. The PIC procedure requires countries to take decisions on whether they wish to receive future shipments of listed chemicals, based on decision guidance documents that provide information about the risks associated with the handling and use of the chemicals. Exporting Parties have the responsibility to ensure that exports do not occur contrary to the import decision of countries. The Convention covers pesticides and industrial chemicals that have been banned or restricted for health or environmental reasons by the Parties. There are currently 52 chemicals, out of which 35 are pesticides (including three severely hazardous pesticide formulations) and 16 industrial chemicals and one chemical in both the pesticide and the industrial chemical categories.

- Adopted on 10 September 1998 and entered into force on 24 February 2004.
- 164 Parties to the Convention.
- The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention is composed of a UNEP-part located in Geneva, Switzerland, headed by Executive Secretary Mr. Rolph Payet, and an FAO-part located in Rome, Italy, headed by Executive Secretary Mr. Rémi Nono Womdim.

Governance structure

- The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Rotterdam Convention meets every two years to review and evaluate the implementation of the Convention. A Bureau composed of a President and four Vice-Presidents is elected at each meeting of COP.
- The COP has established the following subsidiary bodies which meet in between meetings of the COP:
  - The Chemical Review Committee which reviews chemicals and pesticide formulations according to the criteria set out by the Convention in Annexes II and IV respectively and makes recommendations to COP for listing such chemicals in Annex III.
  - The Compliance Committee that was established in 2019 under Article 17 of the Convention (see below).

Financial mechanism and technical assistance

The Convention does not establish a financial mechanism. The Convention provides for the promotion of technical assistance among the Parties to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in building their capacity to fulfil their obligations under the Convention. The Secretariat, together with its partners, provides technical assistance to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. In addition to face-to-face training, online webinars are offered, and several guidance documents are made available as a "Resource Kit".

Compliance

Compliance matters under the Convention fall under the mandate of the Compliance Committee, which was established in 2019 under Article 17 of the Convention and entered into force on 6 November 2020, with the dual mandate to:

- Deal with submissions relating to the compliance of an individual Party, and in this regard, may assist individual Parties in resolving compliance difficulties on receipt of a valid submission;
- Review systemic issues of general compliance.

Box 12: Sharing information on hazardous chemicals and pesticides

The Convention also helps countries better manage chemicals through the exchange of information on chemicals: when a country bans or severely restricts a chemical, it informs the Secretariat of its action, which in turn disseminates this information globally. Additionally, exports of chemicals are labelled and accompanied by basic health and safety information in the form of a safety data sheet. This information helps importing countries to minimize risks to workers, others, and the environment. Information on import decisions and regulatory actions taken is made available on the Rotterdam Convention website and circulated every six months through the so-called "PIC Circular".

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6. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION

The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants protects human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs) through a range of measures aimed at reducing and ultimately eliminating their releases. POPs are organic chemical substances – that is, carbon-based – that remain intact for many years and become widely distributed throughout the environment with toxic impact on both humans and wildlife.

POPs accumulate in the fatty tissues of living organizations and are found at higher concentrations in the food chain. The Convention currently targets 30 POPs, 24 of which are targeted for elimination, two are restricted and five are listed for the prevention and reduction of unintentional releases. Three of the latter are also listed for elimination.

- Adopted on 22 May 2001 and entered into force on 17 May 2004.
- 184 Parties to the Convention.
- Secretariat administered by UNEP, located in Geneva, Switzerland, headed by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Rolph Payet.

Governance structure

- The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention meets every two years to review and evaluate the implementation of the Convention. A Bureau composed of a President and nine Vice-Presidents is elected at each meeting of COP.
- The Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC) is a subsidiary body to the Stockholm Convention that meets in between COP to review proposals made by the Parties to list new chemicals to the annexes to the Convention, in accordance with a strong scientific review process laid out in Article 8 of the Stockholm Convention. Based on the risk profile and risk management evaluation, POPRC then recommends to COP to consider listing the chemicals.
- The COP can establish intersessional groups in between its meetings to carry out specific work mandated in a COP decision (e.g. the DDT expert group).

Financial mechanism and technical assistance

The Stockholm Convention provides for the provision of technical assistance and financial resources to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing the Convention. Under Article 14, the Convention identifies the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the principal entity entrusted with the operations of the financial mechanism.

The relationship between the COP and the GEF is defined by a Memorandum of Understanding that was agreed by the COP and the GEF Council. To carry out its role as part of the Convention's financial mechanism, the GEF operates under the guidance of the COP regarding eligibility, overall strategy, policy, programme priorities for accessing and utilizing financial resources. Additional and updated guidance to the GEF is routinely adopted at the meetings of the COP.

The COP conducts periodic reviews of the financial mechanism, including the effectiveness of the mechanism established and its ability to address the

changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition.

The Convention has also established a network of 16 Stockholm Convention regional centres with relevant expertise and capacity to assist countries, taking full account of regional needs and opportunities (see annex for the list of Stockholm Convention regional centres).

Compliance

According to Article 17 of the Convention, the COP shall develop and approve procedures and

institutional mechanisms for determining non-compliance with the provisions of the Convention and for the treatment of the Parties found to be non-compliant. The COP has considered the issue of compliance at all ten of its meetings to-date without reaching a consensus on procedures and mechanisms on compliance with the Convention. Further consideration of the matter of compliance is deferred to the COP10 (second segment) scheduled to be held in July 2021.

Box 13: Support transition to safer alternatives

For some POPs, the transition to safer alternatives requires more effort, as they may be more expensive or require more complex production processes. There is also a need to ensure that the alternatives do not have the same properties as the POPs they are replacing. The Convention allows countries to register exemptions for critical uses when cost-effective alternatives are not readily available. The Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC) prepares a risk management evaluation on candidate POPs which identifies readily available and cost-effective alternatives. At the request of COP, the POPRC can conduct further identification and risk assessments of alternatives for listed chemicals (e.g., DDT, endosulfan, PFOS) to assist countries in their efforts towards phasing out these POPs.

Promoting BAT and BEP and guidance to assist with implementation
The Convention promotes the use of best available techniques (BAT) and best environmental practices (BEP) as a means of preventing releases of unintentionally produced POPs. More recently, guidance on BAT and BEP has been developed for intentionally produced POPs (BDE and PFOS). Government-nominated experts continuously review and update BAT and BEP guidelines to ensure their continued relevance.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the Convention
The Convention requires that the effectiveness of the measures adopted by the Convention is evaluated at regular intervals. A Global Monitoring Plan on POPs provides a harmonized organizational framework for the collection of monitoring data on the presence of POPs in all regions and enables the evaluation of trends in contamination levels.

According to the outcomes of the effectiveness evaluation conducted in 2017, the Convention was assessed as providing an effective and dynamic framework to regulate POPs throughout their lifecycle, addressing the production, use, import, export, releases, and disposal of these chemicals worldwide. Monitoring results indicated that regulations targeting POPs are succeeding in reducing levels of POPs in humans and the environment. For legacy POPs, concentrations measured in air and human populations have declined.
Since the entry into force, 16 new chemicals have been added to the Stockholm Convention for elimination or reduction actions.

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Annex: The Stockholm Convention Regional and Subregional Centres for Capacity Building and the Transfer of Technology[8]

Africa

Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Algeria (SCRC Algeria)	Algiers, Algeria

[8] The Stockholm Convention regional centres marked by an asterisk are also Basel Convention regional centres.

Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Kenya (SCRC Kenya)	Nairobi, Kenya
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Senegal (SCRC Senegal) *	Dakar, Senegal
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, South Africa (SCRC South Africa) *	Pretoria, South Africa

Asia and the Pacific

Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, China (SCRC China) *	Beijing, China
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, India (SCRC India)	Nagpur, India
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Indonesia (SCRC Indonesia) *	Jakarta, Indonesia
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Iran (SCRC Iran) *	Teheran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Kuwait (SCRC Kuwait)	Kuwait City, Kuwait

Central and Eastern Europe

Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Czech Republic (SCRC Czech Republic)	Brno, Czech Republic
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Russian Federation (SCRC Russian Federation)	Novosibirsk, Russian Federation

Latin America and the Caribbean

Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Brazil (SCRC Brazil)	São Paulo, Brazil
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Mexico (SCRC Mexico)	Mexico City, Mexico
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Panama (SCRC Panama) *	Panama City, Panama
Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology, Uruguay (SCRC Uruguay) *	Montevideo, Uruguay

Western Europe and others

	Barcelona, Spain

7. Minamata Convention on Mercury

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is the most recent multilateral agreement on environment and health. It is named after the bay in Japan where, in the mid-20th century, mercury-tainted industrial wastewater poisoned thousands of people, leading to severe health damage that became known as the "Minamata disease". The objective of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. It contains, in support of this objective, provisions that relate to the entire life cycle of mercury, including controls and reductions across a range of products, processes, and industries where mercury is used, released, or emitted. The treaty also addresses ending the mining of mercury, restricting its export and import, controlling its emissions and releases, and ensuring its safe storage and its disposal as waste.

Since the entry into force in 2017, 129 Parties have come together to control the mercury supply and trade, reduce the use, emission, and release of mercury, raise public awareness, and build the necessary institutional capacity to safeguard human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury.

- Adopted on 10 October 2013 and entered into force on 16 August 2017.
- 129 parties.
- Secretariat located in Geneva, Switzerland, headed by Executive Secretary, Monika Stankiewicz.

Box 14:

While mercury is naturally occurring, it is also a by-product of several industrial processes and can be found in many everyday objects, including batteries, dental amalgam, thermometers, and fluorescent lamps. Once released to the atmosphere, soil, and water – often through coal burning and artisanal and small-scale gold mining – mercury bioaccumulates in fish, animals and humans, posing a serious threat to human health and the environment. Through the Minamata Convention the international community can tackle the entire life cycle of mercury.

Governance structure

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the governing body of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Through the decisions taken at its meetings, the COP advances the implementation of the Convention and keeps implementation under continuous review. The COP is supported in its work by a Bureau, consisting of a President and nine Vice-Presidents, one of whom acts as Rapporteur. Since COP2, Bureau members commence their term at the closure of the meeting at which they are elected until the closure of the following ordinary meeting of the COP. Each of the five UN regional groups is represented by two Bureau members, elected from among the representatives of the parties present at the meeting.

An Implementation and Compliance Committee was established as a subsidiary body to the COP to promote the implementation of the Convention and review compliance with all its provisions. Article 15 of the Convention specifies the role, composition and functions of this Committee.

Since the Convention entered into force, the COP has held three ordinary sessions at the seat of the Secretariat in Geneva. Subsequent ordinary meetings of the COP will be held every two years. COP4 will be hosted by Indonesia, Bali in 2021.

Financial mechanism

The Minamata Convention on Mercury, under Article 13, set up a financial mechanism to support

developing country parties and parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention. The Mechanism is composed of the:

- Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (GEF)
- Specific International Programme (SIP) to support capacity-building and technical assistance.

The relation between the GEF and COP is defined by a Memorandum of Understanding that was agreed by COP and the GEF Council. In carrying out its role as part of the Convention's Financial Mechanism, the GEF operates under the guidance of COP regarding overall strategies, policies, programme priorities, and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources. The COP guidance to the GEF, which includes an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support, was adopted at COP1 in 2017. GEF5 to GEF7[9] has provided substantial funding to countries both to enable ratification and now more recently to support implementation.

The COP also established the SIP by agreeing on its Terms of Reference, the establishment of a Governing Board, and hosting arrangements for the Programme. The SIP is a grant-making mechanism that provides direct support to the parties. The Secretariat manages project applications, the screening, and appraisal process for each application round, while the Governing Board reviews project submissions and allocates available funding to selected projects. Two rounds of applications to the SIP have been concluded, and 15 projects have been selected thus far. The third round is expected to open in late 2020.

The COP conducts periodic reviews of the financial mechanism, including the level of funding, the guidance provided by the COP, and the mechanism's effectiveness and ability to address the changing needs of developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition. Based on such reviews, the COP will take appropriate action to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism.

Key provisions and obligations

The Convention contains important elements that will contribute to identifying whether and how it is meeting its objective.

- The Convention embeds in its Article 21 the requirement for Parties to report to the COP, through the Secretariat, on the measures they have taken to implement the provisions of the Convention, on the effectiveness of these measures, and the possible challenges in meeting the objectives of the Convention. 76.3% of the parties have submitted their first national reports, due by 31 December 2019.
- The Convention sets up a process for the evaluation of its effectiveness in Article 22. the COP is tasked with this evaluation, beginning no later than six years after the date of entry into force of the Convention and periodically thereafter. The evaluation will be conducted based on available scientific, environmental, technical, financial, and economic information.
- Some articles of the Convention have requirements for the COP to monitor specific issues. For example, the Convention calls for a periodic review of the financial mechanism, the first of which took place in 2019 at COP3.
- Finally, if the COP decides additional action is required to address mercury, it can use a variety of options, including adding or adjusting annexes or providing guidance on technical issues.

[9] 5th to 7th GEF replenishment cycles

Box 15:

The first three COPs aimed to strengthen the recent Convention. The parties are implementing the Convention through various strategies to address this heavy metal pollutant throughout its life cycle, which includes:

- Banning new mercury mines and phasing out existing ones within 15 years;
- Taking action to reduce the use of mercury in artisanal and small-scale gold mining;
- Phasing out mercury use in certain industrial processes, as well as in the production of everyday items, such as certain compact fluorescent lamps and batteries; and
- Controlling the emissions of mercury as a by-product from a range of industrial sectors – including coal burning.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury, the world's youngest multilateral environmental agreement, will make a real impact on human health and the environment by tackling one of the world's most dangerous pollutants and hopefully, #MakeMercuryHistory.

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8. Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer is a framework agreement that was adopted on 22 March 1985 to protect the ozone layer, which was at the time experiencing massive depletion, particularly over the Antarctic, threatening to cause damage to human health and the environment. The Montreal Protocol was subsequently adopted on 16 September 1987 to control man-made chemicals that deplete the ozone layer, notably chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons, with later adjustments and amendments speeding up the control measures and adding ozone depleting substances such as methyl bromide and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) which were used in a wide range of applications including aerosol propellants, air conditioning, refrigeration, foam-blowing, and fire extinguishing. The Montreal Protocol was also more recently amended to include non-ozone depleting substances called hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which are potent greenhouse gases. Unlike substances previously included under the Montreal Protocol, HFCs have no ozone-depleting potential.

- Entered into force on 22 September 1988 and 1 January 1989, respectively.
- 198 parties to the ozone treaties.
- Secretariat located in Nairobi, Kenya, headed by Executive Secretary.

Box 16:

The ozone layer is a region of high ozone concentration in the stratosphere, some 15-35 km above the Earth's surface. Ozone absorbs ultraviolet radiation (particularly UV-C and UV-B) from the sun, preventing it from reaching the Earth's surface. Increased UV radiation penetrating through to the Earth's surface would cause an increase in the incidence of skin cancers and eye cataracts, and adversely affect plants, crops, ecosystems and many man-made and natural materials.

Governance structure

- The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Vienna Convention meets every three years, and a Bureau (five officers led by the President) is elected at each meeting.
- The Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Montreal Protocol meets annually, and jointly with the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention every three years. A Bureau (five officers led by the President) is elected at each MOP.
- An Open-ended Working Group of the Parties meets in between MOPs to prepare for these Meetings.

Scientific input

The concerted efforts of the Parties to implement the Montreal Protocol are underpinned by the work of the Scientific Assessment Panel, the Environmental Effects Assessment Panel and the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel, key bodies of scientists and experts. Five technical options committees under the Technology and

Economic Assessment Panel inform the parties on ozone- and climate-friendly alternative substances and technologies on specific sectors and uses, as well as related economic issues. The Panels provide the Parties to the Protocol with regularly updated information on scientific, environmental and technical issues relevant to protecting the ozone layer and its state, as well as other relevant atmospheric issues. This information forms the basis for the decisions of the Parties to effectively implement the Protocol. Those decisions include the strengthening of the Montreal Protocol through adjustments and amendments.

The Ozone Research Managers (ORM), a group comprising government atmospheric research managers and scientists in atmospheric monitoring and research, meet every three years in the year of the meetings of COP but several months prior to the latter. The ORM recommendations are considered by the COP, which may subsequently adopt relevant decisions.

Financial mechanism

The Montreal Protocol is implemented by the Parties through their national frameworks. In the case of Article 5 Parties (developing-country Parties whose annual per capita consumption and production of the specific controlled ozone-depleting substances in Annex A of the Protocol was less than 0.3 kg per capita on the date of entry into force of the Montreal Protocol for it, or any time thereafter until 1 January 1999), implementation is carried out with the support of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol and its four implementing agencies.[10] Almost all the Article 5 Parties have established a National Ozone Unit with officers that are dedicated to the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. The National Ozone Officers are linked through the regional networks of the Compliance Assistance Programme, an activity of UNEP as an implementing agency, and they exchange information and experience for effective implementation of the provisions of the Protocol.

The Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol was established in 1991 under Article 10 of the Protocol to provide financial and technical assistance to the Article 5 Parties to enable them to comply with the Protocol. Supported by the Multilateral Fund Secretariat based in Montreal, the Executive Committee, consisting of seven Article 5 and seven non-Article 5 Parties, oversees the operation of the Fund. Since its inception to 2019, the Multilateral Fund has supported over 8,700 projects, including industrial conversion and capacity building. Contributions received by the Fund to date total over US$4.07 billion.

Kigali Amendment

The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol was adopted? And entered into force on 1 January 2019, with the aim of phasing down the production and consumption of 18 hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and their isomers by more than 80% over the next 30 years. These HFCs have been used as an alternative to some ozone-depleting substances but generally harbour high global warming potential (up to 14,800 times that of carbon dioxide, depending on the substance). If fully supported, the reduction of these powerful greenhouse gases can curtail up to 0.4°C of global warming by the end of this century.

Compliance

All Parties have an obligation to provide annual data on their consumption and production of controlled substances in order to enable the assessment of their compliance within the control measures of the Protocol. Compliance is reviewed by the Implementation Committee, consisting of 10 members, two from each region, that adopts a facilitative rather than a punitive approach to cases

[10] UNEP, UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Bank. In the case of countries with economies in transition the Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides implementation support.

of non-compliance, and MOP adopts decisions to appropriately address these cases.

Box 17:

The Montreal Protocol is credited with the successful phase-out of 99% of controlled ozone-depleting substances to date. It is projected that stratospheric ozone concentrations globally and in the northern hemisphere middle latitude will return to pre-1980 levels by the 2030s, while those in the southern hemisphere mid-latitudes and the Antarctic will do so by the 2050s and by 2060s, respectively. Cumulatively, these achievements:

- Will likely avert 443 million skin cancer cases, 2.3 million skin cancer deaths and 63 million cases of cataracts for people in the United States born between 1890 and 2100.[11]
- May have prevented around 2 million cases of skin cancer each year globally by 2030.[12]
- Save billions of dollars from damage to fisheries, agriculture and materials.
- Have avoided an estimated 135 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent emissions between 1990 and 2010.
- Avoid up to 0.4°C of warming by 2100 under the Kigali Amendment.

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[11] Atmospheric and Health Effects Framework Model Estimating Ultraviolet Radiation-induced Health Effects, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2020 https://www.epa.gov/ozone-layer-protection/atmospheric-and-health-effects-framework-model-estimating-ultraviolet

[12] van Dijk A, Slaper H, den Outer PN, Morgenstern O, Braesicke P, Pyle JA, et al. Skin cancer risks avoided by the Montreal Protocol--worldwide modeling integrating coupled climate-chemistry models with a risk model for UV. Photochem Photobiol 2013 Jan;89(1):234-46