

BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS

Agenda Item 2: Brief on the meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in Geneva, Switzerland from 24 April to 5 May 2017

Highlights

- The thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-13), the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-8) and the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-8) will be held back-to-back at the Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG), from 24 April to 5 May 2017;
- The meetings will include a high-level segment on the afternoon of Thursday, 4 May and on the morning of Friday, 5 May;
- The theme for the meetings and the high-level segment is ‘A future detoxified: Sound management of chemicals and waste’;
- Expect about 1,500 participants from up to 185 Parties;
- BRS COPs meeting website: <http://brsmeas.org/2017COPs>

Invitation and registrations

- Official invitation letters, provisional agendas and information for participants were sent out to all Parties to the BRS conventions early December 2016;
- Deadline for registration and requests for financial assistance: 20 January 2017;
- Nominations to be submitted by the country’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva together with an official designation letter;
- Financial assistance may be provided for one participant per Convention for which the eligible country is a Party (i.e. up to three) for the full two weeks;
- Financial support has been provided to date by the European Union, the Governments of Germany, Norway and Switzerland;
- For additional information on registrations, please contact the Secretariat at: stephanie.cadet@brsmeas.org.

Credentials

- Credentials must be submitted by the Head of State or Government, or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- The bureaux of the conferences of the Parties have agreed that, when examining credentials, they would accept, in addition to original credentials in good order, copies of credentials on the understanding that original credentials would be submitted as soon as possible;
- Submission to the Secretariat if possible no later than 24 hours after the opening of the meetings (therefore by 10 am on Tuesday, 25 April 2017);
- Credentials for all 3 meetings can be done in one document. Model for credentials in all 6 languages available at: <http://brsmeas.org/2017COPs/RegistrationandCredentials/tabid/5386/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

High-level segment

- The objectives of the high-level segment are:
 - To provide overall policy guidance and political leadership for renewed commitment towards the implementation of the conventions;
 - To raise political awareness of and support for the implementation of the conventions;
 - To provide an interactive and dynamic platform for ministers and other high-level delegates to exchange experiences, lessons learned and good practices.
- As agreed to by the bureaux of the conferences of the Parties, the high-level segment will be composed of: opening ceremony in plenary, ministerial round tables, ministerial dinner, high-level plenary discussion and panel, and a closing ceremony in plenary.

- The high-level segment's participants will be invited to exchange on the theme of the event: "A future detoxified: Sound management of chemicals and waste" and a number of related sub-themes, as selected by the three presidents of the conferences of the Parties in consultation with the bureaux.
- Financial assistance available for one minister or deputy minister to attend the high-level segment is available to developing-countries and countries with economies in transition that are a Party to at least one of the three conventions, thanks to generous financial support provided by the Government of Switzerland.

Organization of work

- The tentative schedule of work of the meetings, as agreed to by the bureaux of the conferences of the Parties, is available at: <http://brsmeas.org/2017COPs/Overview.aspx>
- The meetings start with a day and a half of joint sessions on cross-cutting issues on organizational matters and substantial issues (see below), followed by separate sessions of the SC COP-8, BC COP-13 and RC COP-8;
- An early Rotterdam Convention specific session will be held in the first week;
- Conclude with joint sessions and convention-specific discussions, as necessary, to consider the outcomes of joint and convention-specific contact groups and to adopt any outstanding decisions;
- On the day before the start of the meetings (Sunday, 23 April), preparatory meetings will be organised (bureaux meetings, regional meetings, other preparatory meetings);
- No formal meetings will be organised on Sunday, 30 April.

Main issues at the agendas of the meetings

Joint issues

- Organizational matters (organization of work, election of officers, credentials);
- Enhancing cooperation and coordination among the three conventions, including the reviews of the synergies arrangements; the clearing-house mechanism for information exchange, mainstreaming gender, synergies in preventing and combating illegal traffic and trade, and a road map called for by the conferences of the Parties in decisions BC-12/22, RC-7/12 and SC-7/30 entitled "From science to action";
- International cooperation and coordination;
- Technical assistance, including regional centres;
- Financial resources, including issues related to the Stockholm Convention's financial mechanism;
- Compliance;
- POPs wastes (POPs wastes technical guidelines);
- Programmes of work and budgets;
- Others, i.e. venue and date of the next COPs, admission of observers and development of draft MOUs between UNEP and each COP.

SC COP-8 issues (among others)

- Listing of chemicals in Annex A, B or C to the Convention (decabromodiphenyl ether, short-chain chlorinated paraffins and hexachlorobutadiene);
- Compliance;
- Effectiveness evaluation;
- Others: Measures to reduce or eliminate releases from intentional production and use (exemptions, DDT, PCBs, brominated diphenyl ethers, PFOS); measures to reduce or eliminate releases from unintentional production (BAT and BEP, Toolkit); implementation plans, reporting and global monitoring plan.

BC COP-13 issues (among others)

- Follow up to the Country-Led Initiative (including Ban amendment, ESM expert group and further legal clarity related outcomes);
- Technical guidelines (such as issues pertaining to the e-waste guidelines, mercury wastes guidelines, POPs wastes guidelines (also a joint issue with SC));
- Others: Cartagena Declaration, national reporting, ICC and related outcomes (ICC programme of work, a draft guidance document, revisions to specific reporting formats, such as on national reporting), Basel Convention Partnership Programme (PACE, ENFORCE, Household wastes), environmentally sound dismantling of ships, operations and work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2018–2019, etc.

RC COP-8 issues (among others)

- Listing of chemicals:
 - Chemicals newly proposed for listing by the CRC: short-chain chlorinated paraffins, tributyltin compounds, carbofuran and carbosulfan;
 - Chemicals already considered by previous COPs: chrysotile asbestos, paraquat dichloride formulation (SHPF), fenthion formulation (SHPF) and trichlorfon.
- Intersessional work on the process of listing chemicals in Annex III
- Compliance;
- Others: increasing notifications of final regulatory actions, etc.

Provisional agendas and documents for the meetings

- Provisional agendas and documents for the meetings are available at: <http://brsmeas.org/2017COPs/MeetingDocuments.aspx>.
- Programmes of work and proposed budgets for the biennium 2018-2019 will be made available on 24 January 2017 (90 days before the meetings);
- Other documents will be made available on 24 February 2017 (6-8 weeks before the meetings);
- Joint documents to two or three COPs are being developed for joint issues (e.g. budget, technical assistance)

Theme of the COPs and the Technology Fair

- The theme of the COPs is: *'A future detoxified: Sound management of chemicals and waste'*;
- A three-day Technology Fair will be held during the 2017 COPs, from 27 to 29 April, with the aim of promoting the transfer of technology for the implementation of the conventions by:
 - providing an opportunity to engage the private sector and industry as well as other relevant partners in the implementation of the conventions;
 - showcasing available clean technologies for the sound management of chemicals and wastes and promoting opportunities for developing alternatives –including non-chemical alternatives– to chemicals listed under the conventions and as well as developing partnerships to deal with particular issues.
- The Fair is expected to be an interactive event hosted under the aegis of the COPs in the exhibition area blending both furnished booths for exhibitors to display their activities as well as a space for hosting specific interactive activities such as panel discussions, debates on ways to promote the transfer of technology, competitions and screening of videos.
- Further information on the Science Fair is available on the BRS COPs meeting webpage or please contact the Secretariat at: maria-cristina.cardenas@brsmeas.org.

Side events and exhibitions

- During the COPs, side events will be held during lunch breaks and in the evenings on major issues related to the implementation of the conventions. Requests for side events during the Technology Fair should demonstrate relevance to the objectives of the Fair.
- Requests to hold a side event during the COPs may be submitted by sending a completed side event application form to the Secretariat at: marylene.beau@brsmeas.org, no later than **3 March 2017**.
- An exhibition is organized during the COPs to disseminate relevant and timely information to the participants of the meetings.
- Requests for exhibition booths should be submitted to the Secretariat at: Charles.avis@brsmeas.org, no later than **3 March 2017**.

Regional preparatory meetings

- Provide Parties with an opportunity to undertake regional consultations in advance of the meetings, identify regional priorities and challenges, and facilitate the preparation of regional positions.
- The meetings will be held as follows:
 - Asia-Pacific Region: 6-8 March 2017, Bangkok, Thailand, organized in cooperation with the regional centre in Indonesia;
 - African Region: 14-16 March 2017, Dakar, Senegal, organized in cooperation with the regional centre in Senegal;
 - Central and Eastern European Region: 21-23 March 2017, Riga, Latvia, hosted by the government of Latvia and organized in cooperation with the regional centre in Slovakia;

- Latin American and Caribbean Region: 28-30 March 2017, Sao Paulo, Brazil, organized in cooperation with the regional centre in Brazil.
- The meetings are organized thanks to generous financial support provided by the Government of Switzerland.
- The BRS regional preparatory meetings are jointly organized with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention and will be followed by working sessions to address regional specific issues related to the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.
- Governments are invited to nominate two representatives of the BRS conventions, if the country is a Party to two or three of the BRS conventions, or one representative if the country is a Party to one of the BRS conventions. All designated representatives are invited to attend both meetings.
- Nominations to be transmitted to the organizing regional centres through an official letter from the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva.
- Registration deadlines:
 - Asia-Pacific: 15 January 2017
 - Africa: 17 January 2017
 - Central and Eastern Europe: 23 January 2017
 - Latin America and the Caribbean: 20 January 2017
- More information on the meetings webpage at <http://brsmeas.org/2017COPs/RegionalPreparatoryMeetings/tabid/5379/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Additional briefings on the COPs

- Permanent Mission Briefings:
 - A first briefing took place in Geneva on 30 November 2016;
 - A second briefing in Geneva will be held at the beginning of April 2017. (Date to be confirmed);
- Webinars:
 - Online briefings in English and French will be organized in March 2017, as follows:
 - Tuesday, 28 March 2017, 10 a.m. (French)
 - Thursday, 30 March 2017, 10 a.m. (English)
 - Thursday, 30 March 2017, 4 p.m. (English)
 - The programme and registration links will be made available on the conventions websites at: <http://brsmeas.org>.