

REPLICATION STRATEGY

**GEF/UNEP project
“Integrated Stockholm Convention toolkit to improve the
transmission of information under Articles 7 and 15”**

October, 2022

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1. Introduction

The medium-size project “Integrated Stockholm Convention toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 7 and 15” was approved by GEF in November 2017 and was officially launched at its inception workshop on 25-26 October 2018, in Montevideo, Uruguay.

The project supports the implementation of paragraph 8.e of decision SC-8/8¹ on implementation plans and paragraph 3 of decision SC-8/17² on reporting pursuant to Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention, as well as paragraph 7.c of decision SC-9/9³ on implementation plans and decision SC-9/16⁴ on reporting pursuant to Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention.

The project’s **overall objective** is to facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in National Implementation Plans (Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15).

The project **outcome** is to enhance compliance with the Stockholm Convention through improved transmission, accessibility and use of data contained in NIPs (Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15).

For execution of the project UNEP is partnering with Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions Secretariat and three Basel and Stockholm regional centres: Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific Region in China (BCRC-SCRC-China); Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centre for English speaking countries in Africa (BCRC-SCRC-South Africa); Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centre for Latin America and Caribbean in Uruguay (BCCC-SCRC-LATU).

Eight demonstration countries have been selected to implement a pilot of the project, namely: Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia and Ukraine.

1.1 The global environmental problems, root causes and barriers

1.1.1 Global environmental problems

Chemicals manufacturing and use is continuously growing, while the production is shifting from industrialized countries towards developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

¹ <http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.8-SC-8-8.English.pdf>

² <http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.8-SC-8-17.English.pdf>
<http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.8-SC-8-17.English.pdf>

³ <http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.9-SC-9-9.English.pdf>
<http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.9-SC-9-9.English.pdf>

⁴ <http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.9-SC-9-16.English.pdf>
<http://chm.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP.9-SC-9-16.English.pdf>

In this context, there is a need to strengthen the international co-operation to eliminate and/or reduce the usage of toxic chemicals. At the same time, it is imperiously necessary to promote the development and adoption of safer alternatives, and to build capacity for management at every stage of the lifecycle of chemicals, including disposal.

The existing national laws and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) for the sound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes needs to be fully implemented. Availability of adequate information about listed hazardous chemicals and waste by all involved stakeholders in the implementation of MEAs is essential to support these efforts.

The need for making available the information about chemicals and wastes has grown stronger with the adoption 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which implies facilitating and tracking national reporting under the indicator 12.4.1, "Number of Parties to MEAs that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each agreement".

One of the chemicals and waste related MEAs is the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The National Implementation Plan (NIP) and the National Reports submitted to the Stockholm Convention Secretariat under Articles 7 and 15 of the convention respectively are considered the key data sources for both national and international levels.

In the international context, the data submitted by Parties under the NIPs and National reports is used to conduct the evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Stockholm Convention. One of the indicators assessed during this evaluation was the reduction and/or elimination of overall releases with consequent benefits for human health and the environment across the globe. Still, the low reporting rate by Parties had a direct impact on the analysis required under the Effectiveness Evaluation process as it was acknowledged in the Executive summary of the report on the effectiveness evaluation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants: "a key challenge in undertaking this evaluation was the limited data available from national reports and NIPs"; (...) "Quantitative information on the production of POPs reported by Parties is extremely limited, such that it is not possible to discuss trends".

When it comes to NIPs, there is a lack of consistency between the data to be provided as recommended by the guidance documents and the data actually included in the NIP documents. Parties are interpreting differently what should be included or not in their NIPs, thus, based on such a broad range of NIP approaches, it is rather difficult for any stakeholder to make a global analysis on the NIP data and determine time-trends.

In the national context, the NIPs are not only the foundation stones of national policies, but their submission is also a precondition for accessing funding through the Financial Mechanism of the Stockholm Convention. Therefore, NIPs are key in defining projects that will help Parties meeting their obligations under the Stockholm Convention. However, the prerequisite for meaningful projects for technical assistance that meet Parties' needs is to have accurate inventories data, action plans and costs assessments.

Other identified shortcoming is that Parties seem not to correlate the processes of developing and updating their NIPs with the Reporting obligation under Article 15, although there is clear overlap in the scope of reporting between NIPs and National Reports. Sometimes information and data might be collected for one purpose and not used for the other. For example, the experts that assessed the funding needs of Parties that are developing countries or countries with economies in transition to implement the Stockholm Convention for the period 2018–2029 acknowledged that it proved to be very challenging to identify the source of data and to match tabulated data to the correct years in the various reports.

1.1.2 Root causes of the problem

The project identified and addressed following three root causes:

- 1. Format of the NIP itself:** a guidance document on how Parties should develop their NIP was in use since 2003 and was periodically updated; still, it seems the document gives margin of interpretation for Parties to organize their NIPs in different formats. In their first evaluation exercise, the Effectiveness Evaluation Committee suggested that “while ensuring flexibility for countries to prepare their NIPs, electronic templates could be developed for certain parts of the implementation plans containing quantitative information, such as action plans and inventories, harmonized with the reporting under Article 15.” The absence of a structured NIP transmission template means Parties are wasting time and other resources in compiling information with less relevance.
- 2. Lack of national coordination:** the Stockholm Convention Official Contact Points still face difficulties in collecting the information needed to fulfil the reporting requirements. As fulfilling the reporting obligations under Article 15 requires national coordination for collection of information and data from multiple stakeholders, including different ministries, still a framework for ensuring coordination between the different ministries, offices, agencies and research institutes is not existing in many countries. This directly impacts on gathering of the needed information for national reports and NIP updating. Sometimes partial information is provided and can be subject to misinterpretation; or the information submitted is only sectoral, as opposed to a national one thus limiting the validity of data. On top of this, lack of data collection system in some countries is affecting the process of getting data on POPs management at national level. Not least, the issue links to the capacity of national stakeholders to provide relevant data and their understanding of the convention requirements.
- 3. Lack of national resources:** Parties are lacking technical and financial resources to develop national inventories which has strong impact on meeting the Stockholm Convention commitments under Articles 7 and 15.

1.1.3 Barriers

Although, financial resources and technical support on the NIP development and update and national reporting were provided to Parties to the Stockholm Convention, this support is yet to ensure the quality and sustainability of the NIPs and National Reports. There are few key

barriers that remain in respect to addressing the three root causes mentioned above are as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Barriers linked to the three root causes addressed by the project

Root cause	Barrier
<p>Format of the NIP and National Reports</p>	<p>Lack of structured template for NIPs and NIP updates, particularly for quantitative data and ‘dynamic’ qualitative data of particular relevance to POPs management (such as policies or regulations, projects, etc.).</p>
	<p>Lack of relationship between NIPs and National Reports, with limited sharing of information between the two mechanisms.</p>
	<p>Limited evidence of quality control and validation of data submitted in NIPs and National Reports.</p>
	<p>Difficulties in using new electronic reporting system for the national reports, as reported by few countries.</p>
<p>National coordination</p>	<p>Project-based approach to NIP development and update undertaken as a once-off exercise lacking mechanisms to ensure sustainability through institutionalizing the methodology for regular replication</p>
	<p>Existent national coordinating mechanisms not officially tasked with systematically maintaining and updating the information in the NIP or National Reports.</p>
	<p>Relevant data, including quantitative data on stockpiles, trade, and use of POPs, dispersed among diverse data sources that are controlled and owned by various stakeholders e.g. customs reporting, Pollution Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), stockpile owners e.g. vector control programmes or agriculture sector</p>
	<p>Lack of institutional memory, due to frequent change in officials/transfer of officials, which impacts on the sustainability of institutional knowledge within the ministry/department.</p>
<p>Lack of national resources</p>	<p>Lack of resources to produce full inventories e.g. country-wide field visits and site verification for large countries may require substantial resources to attain full coverage</p>

	capacity to effectively determine inventory priorities, physically carry-out those inventories, and collect comprehensive data in a timely manner to meet Articles 7 and 15 requirements.
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1.2 Project component, outcome and outputs

1.2.1 General

Following the project execution, Parties will have access to an additional electronic toolkit, consisting of a series of modules aimed at assisting them in fulfilling their obligations as per Articles 7 and 15.

The new toolkit shall improve the transmission, accessibility and use of data contained in NIPs and National reports following recommendation from the Effectiveness Evaluation Committee. It is expected that consequently, NIPs implementation will increase leading to reduced POPs emissions and releases in the long term.

The proposed toolkit will contribute to achieve the outcome 2.3 of the GEF 6 chemicals and wastes focal area by increasing the number of countries that have completed their NIP updates under the Stockholm Convention and have established a sustainable mechanism to update them in the future.

A simplified transmission facilitated accessibility and use of data contained in NIPs and national reports may also provide information on the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular on Goal 12.4 to “By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment”.

In the long term the project will also provide contributions to goals 3.9 and 6.3:

- Goal 3.9: By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination;
- Goal 6.3: By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.

1.2.2 Project component, outcome and outputs

The project comprised of a single component - Component 1 – Development and demonstration of an integrated Articles 7 and 15 electronic toolkit and had a single expected outcome - Outcome 1 - Enhanced compliance with the SC through improved transmission, accessibility and use of data contained in NIPs (Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15).

As regards to expected outputs, these are described below:

1.2.2.1 Output 1.1: Gap analysis and consultations with Parties to the SC and implementing agencies developed, taking into account gender aspects

The general gap analysis confirmed the root causes of the problem and explored barriers to be addressed, in the consultation with project partners and demonstration countries, and GEF Secretariat. It also assessed the knowledge management and reporting mechanisms available and identified the gaps and lessons learned from their use through the pilots conducted at the demonstration countries level.

The consultations on the gap analysis were organized during the project inception workshop which was attended by the demonstration countries, experts and project partners participated in this inception workshop.

National gap analysis for each demonstration country was developed and the quality and completeness of the NIP and national reports already submitted were assessed.

At the national level, demonstration countries organized a national workshop meeting to inform main stakeholders on the project objectives, introduce and validate the national gap analysis and develop a national strategy to keep key national stakeholders actively involved throughout the whole project implementation. As a result, this activity also raised awareness on the challenges of collecting and sharing data on chemicals management at the national level and ways to address it.

To address the gender dimensions of the NIP development, update and implementation processes a guide was developed and disseminated within Africa, Asia and Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions. The gender guidelines are a practical tool to enable development practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in the management of chemicals in general and more specifically in the management, design, and implement the next generation of gender-smart NIPs (UNEP, 2021).

1.2.2.2 Output 1.2: Integrated Articles 7 and 15 electronic toolkit designed taking into account the recommendation on gender, tested and endorsed by the project Steering Committee

This Output addressed the inconsistency of formats of NIPs and the lack of an explicit link between NIPs and National Reports. It developed and tested a toolkit, composed of different modules, to assist Parties in collecting inventory information and other relevant data that can be used in NIPs and in National Reports. The modules are explained in the sections below.

This approach aimed to improve NIP updating/submission and its linkages with the electronic reporting system was agreed by the project Parties and Partners, and was made technically compatible with existing BRS systems, especially the SC-ERS. The early involvement of all the relevant stakeholders on the project design and implementation ensured ownership over the solutions proposed. This connection also allows Parties, when the time of reporting arrives, to use previously collected data from inventories and from their NIP updates.

1.2.2.2.1 Development of toolkit modules and pages

The toolkit comprises four (4) main modules, as presented in Table 2. The toolkit envisages ways of data communication between the different modules and systems. The assessment of knowledge management and data sharing mechanisms, and the mapping of information collected in the country for several purposes gave demonstration countries a better view on the options available to facilitate data gathering at the national level for reporting to the Stockholm Convention.

The users are also able to extract information from the toolkit in a format that can be used for national purposes, such as to report to other Conventions, to understand trends, make priorities and assess national situation to prepare an implementable NIP; they are also able to print the final NIP document for Government approval and submit it to the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention via online submission.

The toolkit modules reflect the Convention related obligations, the option to insert the data collected on different chemicals, information on regulatory frameworks, space for countries to add specific information relevant to their national situation and is aligned with the NIPs Guidance documents.

The NIP submission module is initially made available in one UN language (English). The translation to the other UN languages will be done in the replication phase and financed by the BRS Conventions Secretariat.

Table 2. Integrated Electronic Toolkit Modules

Module	Description
NIPs submission module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aims at assisting Parties in organizing data and information, both qualitative and quantitative, in a template for their initial or updated NIPs submissions. - the template considers/covers identified standard elements of the NIPs and provides a modular approach to the development of updates of the NIP. - the template provides sufficient flexibility to address certain dynamic elements that are likely to change with the listing of new POPs by future COPs. - the template also includes the use of checklists or sets of questions based on the relevant obligations under the Convention to assist Parties to assess whether they need to update their NIP.
POPs inventory module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aims at assisting Parties in POPs data collection process. - encompasses summarized inventory guidance documents. - entry-data forms for the different types of data expected for the different POPs listed to the annexes of the Stockholm Convention.

Guidance module	- contains contextualized links to relevant guidance documents and other available toolkits (e.g. dioxin and furans toolkit) that support the submissions of NIPs (e.g. inventory guidance documents) and of National Reports (e.g. manuals).
Queries module	- aims at providing stakeholders with the possibility to query the data and information submitted in the NIPs submission module.

1.2.2.2.2 Upload existing NIPs into the integrated electronic toolkit

This activity provided experience in using the tool with concrete data imported either from previously submitted NIPs or from POPs data collection process conducted by the demonstration countries in the format that is available to Party, in order to test the software and identify performance or compatibility issues between the system and the available data.

In the replication phase this will aim at importing, manually, to the toolkit all previously submitted NIPs to guarantee that all NIPs are stored and accessible from the same system.

Once all updated NIPs are stored in the same system, queries on the data and information submitted would help stakeholders (i.e., Parties, implementing agencies, GEF Secretariat, BRS Conventions Secretariat) understand existing gaps, assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention and address the gaps and shortcomings in the NIP implementation process.

1.2.2.3 Output 1.3: Demonstration of the integrated electronic toolkit taking into account gender aspects

The demonstration countries were trained on how to use the toolkit and apply the same concepts to ongoing and recently completed NIP updates.

Each demonstration country has individually tested the toolkit modules and made recommendations for improvement. The NIP related data has been stored in the new toolkit by the demonstration countries project coordinators, with support and training from UNEP.

Additionally, each demonstration country prepared brief reports on compiling potential linkages with the data management systems available at the national level and description of the arrangements for the administration the integrated Article 7 and 15 electronic toolkit at the national level after the project ends.

1.2.2.3.1 Support to planning and delivery of inventory results (integrated electronic toolkit providing the right platform to do this).

Following the demonstration activities, it was established that the toolkit modules provide great support to countries in planning and prioritizing the steps required to produce national inventories in the face of limited resources.

The structure of the new toolkit is used to direct inventory planning, while existing guidance are also used to help countries prioritize and plan field work to support desk studies necessary for NIP updates.

1.2.2.3.2 Support to action planning and integrating the NIP in national processes and budgets

Using the toolkit promoted better planning and prioritizing the steps required to produce more comprehensive national inventories in the face of limited resources. The improvements in inventory data collection and quality supports the demonstration countries to develop more targeted and specific Action Plans, better fitted into the national processes and budgets. Through three workshops in Africa, Asia and Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions, the general considerations on NIP priority setting approach were promoted and best practices from different countries within each region were shared.

1.2.2.3.3 Countries update National Reports with incoming data

The data and information collected with the aim of testing the toolkit, in particular NIP Submission Module, supported demonstration countries to prepare and submit national reports under the 4th and/or 5th reporting cycles pursuant Article 15.

This exercise made demonstration countries acknowledge the NIPs as the main information and data source for fulfilling the reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention.

Nevertheless, understanding the relationship between NIPs and National Reports enhanced the collection and sharing of information between the two mechanisms at national levels.

1.2.2.4 Output 1.4: Development of Replication Strategy

This output is an essential element to ensure maximizing the projects results, but also to sustain results post-project.

1.2.2.4.1 Development of Replication Strategy for improved NIP transmission and support.

The challenges identified in this project concern the majority of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention. To ensure the global environmental benefits in the long term, the NIP and national reports transmissions must improve at all Parties level and not only for the demonstration countries. The replication strategy elements are meant to increase the uptake of the integrated electronic toolkit by other Parties, scaling up the project impacts.

1.2.2.5 Output 1.5: Monitoring and evaluation

Day-to-day project management and monitoring was the responsibility of the Executing Agency – UNEP/Chemicals and Health Branch. The project monitoring started with the

inception workshop and the development of a detailed workplan, budget and detailed monitoring and evaluation plan with key stakeholders.

The gap analysis developed under output 1.1 also contributed to the project monitoring and evaluation by reviewing the quality of NIPs and their fitness for purpose in helping countries plan for Stockholm Convention implementation. This provided the baseline data to assess the project success in helping countries to improve the NIP quality and its fitness for purpose.

The Executing Agency develops and submits technical and financial half yearly/quarterly reports describing the progress against the workplan and budget, identifying obstacles/risks occurring during implementation and the remediation actions to be taken.

Implementing Agency (UNEP) monitors the project progress according to the workplan on a regular basis and provided guidance to the Executing Agency to progress according to the workplan. Yearly during the GEF PIR, UNEP provided information about the status of the project implementation and the disbursements made.

The Executing Agency is responsible for developing the terminal report and final statement of accounts on project closure.

2. Project outputs to be disseminated/replicated (What?)

The main project output to be disseminated and its use replicated is the integrated electronic toolkit (see section 1.2.2.2) for the reporting of quantitative and qualitative information contained in national implementation plans in a manner harmonized with the reporting under Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention, following the paragraph 8.e of decision SC-8/8 on implementation plans and paragraph 3 of decision SC-8/17 on reporting pursuant to Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention, as well as paragraph 7.c of decision SC-9/9 on implementation plans and decision SC-9/16 on reporting pursuant to Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention.

Additionally, the gap analysis, developed under Output 1.1, which identifies and presents:

- the generic overlaps and gaps between data and information requested under the reporting pursuant Article 15 and other reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention,
- the data and information generated during the NIP development and/or update process,
- conclusions and recommendations on modalities to correlate the processes of reporting under Article 15 and other reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention with the process of developing and updating the NIPs,

could be also further disseminated by the different relevant actors described in chapter 3 during the NIP development, update and implementation process.

Not least, the *Guide on Incorporating Gender Dimensions into National Strategy Setting in Chemicals Management for Minamata Convention National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining and Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans*, developed under Output 1.1, could be further disseminated by the different relevant actors

described in chapter 3 among the Stockholm Convention Parties to address the gender dimensions of the NIP development, update and implementation processes.

2.1 Requirements for main project output scaling-up

There are several conditions necessary to ensuring the wider scale use of the integrated electronic toolkit, namely:

- i. The Conference of Parties acknowledges the importance and usefulness of the toolkit and requests or encourages Parties to start using it;
- ii. The BRS Conventions Secretariat provides the necessary training to enable Parties and other relevant actors to use the toolkit;
- iii. The toolkit is translated in the other UN languages;
- iv. The toolkit is permanently maintained and updated following the new developments under the Convention and feedback from Parties;

2.3 Intended scale of ‘geographical’ dissemination

The intended scale of “geographical” dissemination is global, among all Parties to the Stockholm Convention (186 countries worldwide), but also among other interested actors supporting Parties through different NIP related projects (i.e. Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centres, other GEF Agencies (UNIDO, UNDP, UNITAR etc.)).

3. Relevant actors in dissemination/replication of the project outcomes (Who?)

3.1 The Stockholm Convention Parties

There are currently 185 Parties to the Stockholm Conventions which committed to take all the necessary measures to comply with the Convention’s obligations with the aim of protecting the human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.

3.2 BRS Conventions Secretariat

The Article 16 of the Basel Convention, Article 20 of the Rotterdam Convention and Article 19 of the Stockholm Convention lay down the mandates of the Secretariats. The main functions of the Secretariats are to:

- prepare for and service meetings of the Conferences of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies;
- to receive and convey information;
- to assist or facilitate assistance to Parties upon request and to coordinate with other international bodies.

3.3 Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centres

The Basel and Stockholm Conventions have been established a number of regional and subregional centres to provide technical assistance, capacity building and to promote the transfer of technology to Parties that are developing countries or countries with economies in transition in order to enable them to implement their obligations under these conventions.

To date, there are 23 regional centres in total, out of which 14 are Basel Convention Regional Centres (BCRCs) and 16 are Stockholm Convention Regional Centres (SCRCs), with 7 centres serve to both conventions.

The Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and the Stockholm Conventions have identified the coordinated use of regional centres to advance on the cooperation and collaboration among the three conventions at local level. The conferences also invited Parties and other stakeholders to promote full and coordinated use of the regional centres as to strengthen the regional delivery of technical assistance under all three conventions.

The centers are providing technical support to their constituencies with respect to the NIP development/update/implementation and reporting related topics under the Stockholm Convention.

3.4 United Nations Environment Programme

UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations systems designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action.

The Chemicals and Health Branch of the UNEP, Economy Division leads UNEP sub-programme on Chemicals and Waste. The overall objective of UNEP's Economy Division is to encourage decision makers in government, local authorities and industry to develop and adopt policies, strategies and practices and technologies that promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production, make efficient use of natural resources, ensure safe management of chemicals and contribute to making trade and environment policies mutually supportive. It promotes the development, use and transfer of policies, technologies, economic instruments, managerial practices and other tools that assist in environmentally sound decision making and the building of corresponding activities.

UNEP's Programme of work centers around assistance to countries and multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) secretariats to assist in technical-scientific issues related to priority chemicals. It has been promoting, inter alia, monitoring around the world, existing capacities and providing technical and scientific input to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. It also provides targeted technical assistance to the execution of the Enabling Activity projects under Stockholm Convention (NIP update projects).

3.5 Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Following the principles laid down under Article 13 of the Stockholm Convention relative to the new and additional financial resources necessary to enable developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the Convention, Article 14 of the Convention entrusts the GEF as its financial mechanism. To give effect to this relationship, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Conference of the Parties and the Council of the GEF was signed and is periodically updated.

3.6 Other GEF Agencies Implementing Enabling Activity projects (NIP development/update)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Similar with UNEP, UNIDO is also a GEF Agency and is playing a role for supporting developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the Stockholm Convention.

The focus of UNIDO’s strategic programmes and mandate is on Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development, as per the Sustainable Development Goal 9 on Infrastructure, Industry and Innovation, with main emphasis on industrial sectors mentioned in the Convention, including, but not limited to, power utilities, metallurgical industries, pesticide manufacturers, recycling industries, as well as textile and leather industries.

Working with both governments and industry, UNIDO helps to:

- optimize production processes to avoid POPs emissions;
- set up new facilities and production lines utilizing POPs alternatives;
- construct and operate facilities for the safe management of POPs-containing material;
- develop new industries without POPs releases;
- establish recycling and waste management industries in a manner that minimizes the generation and release of POPs throughout industry;
- helps strengthen the capacity of public and private sector support institutions to assist industries and SMEs in implementing their countries’ POPs National Implementation Plans
- provide regulatory and policy guidance, technical guidelines development and capacity building to ensure sustainable industrial transformation in an economically and environmentally sound.

3.6.2 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP has actively been supporting developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, in their efforts to reduce and eliminate POPs and meet the objectives of the Stockholm Convention. Many of the challenges and priorities relating to the reduction and elimination of POPs require enhancement of national capacities with respect to human resources development and institutional strengthening, as well as increased availability of technical knowledge and training opportunities. UNDP assists countries in gaining the knowledge, experience and resources required to tackle POPs management and elimination

issues. UNDP assists countries in meeting their commitments under the Stockholm Convention, including (UNDP, 2013):

- Meeting reporting obligations, sharing lessons learned and adopting global best practices.
- Building necessary capacity to implement POPs risk reduction measures, including the disposal of POPs and POPs waste.
- Reducing the exposure and release of POPs to protect human health and the environment.
- Demonstrating effective alternative technologies and practices that avoid POPs releases.

During the early years of the Convention’s implementation, much of the focus was on national planning as well as building necessary national capacity, meeting countries’ reporting obligations, and compiling the first National Implementation Plans (NIPs) (UNDP, 2013).

1. Implementing and updating the strategy of dissemination/replication (How?)

Each of the actors described in section 3 plays an important role in the implementation and further updating of this strategy, as presented in detail below.

4.1 Stockholm Convention Parties

The Stockholm Convention Parties are the end-users of the integrated electronic toolkit. The toolkit was developed to address the inconsistency of formats of NIPs and the lack of an explicit link between NIPs and National Reports.

Composed of different modules, the toolkit assists Parties in collecting inventory information and other relevant data that can be used in NIPs and in National Reports in a consistent and correlated manner. When using it the Parties could identify the potential areas for making the toolkit more user friendly and/or the need for further improvements and updates.

The Stockholm Convention Parties are also one of the users of the integrated electronic toolkit. The toolkit allows Parties to:

- retrieving valuable data and information on POPs management for internal use in:
 - different reports and information papers;
 - assessing the effectiveness of the Convention implementation at national level and observing time trends;
 - awareness raising and information exchange with all relevant actors involved in the NIP implementation;
- visualizing data and information from other countries across the world, Parties to the Convention;
- planning and prioritizing the steps required to produce national inventories in the face of limited resources;
- developing more targeted and specific Action Plans, better fitted into the national processes and budgets.

4.2 BRS Conventions Secretariat

BRS Conventions Secretariat is the organization which administers the integrated electronic toolkit developed. Through its Technical Assistance plan, the Secretariat could be requested by the Conference of Parties to provide the necessary training and technical assistance to the Stockholm Convention Parties in using the toolkit.

As the toolkit is a dynamic instrument, the Secretariat is also responsible of maintaining the toolkit updated in accordance with latest developments of the Convention and of revising/improving it in accordance with the recommendations/comments received from Parties using it.

The BRS Convention Secretariat is also one of the users of the integrated electronic toolkit. The toolkit allows BRS Convention Secretariat to:

- retrieve valuable on POPs related data and information across the Parties to the Convention to be used in:
 - o assessing the effectiveness of the Convention implementation;
 - o preparing the draft decisions and information documents for meetings of the Conferences of Parties;
 - o awareness raising and information exchange communications;
- identify the information and data gaps at national, regional and global levels;
- planning and updating the Technical Assistance plan to address the data and information gaps, as well as remaining challenges and shortcomings in the Stockholm Convention implementation;
- visualize POPs data time-trends at national, regional and global levels.

4.3 Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centres

Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centres have an important role in the integrated electronic toolkit use replication among the Stockholm Convention Parties within their constituencies.

The integrated electronic toolkit use replication could be included as an independent activity in the centres business plans or could happen during the implementation of the enabling activity projects to update and/or develop the national implementation plans (NIPs) in case the centres are GEF executing agencies.

The centres are also users of the toolkit, with focus in:

- retrieving valuable on POPs related data and information across the Parties to the Convention within their constituencies to be used in:
 - o assessing the effectiveness of the Convention implementation in a particular region;
 - o identifying the information and data gaps at national, regional and global levels;
- planning and updating their business plan to address the data and information gaps, as well as remaining challenges and shortcomings in the Stockholm Convention implementation;
- visualizing POPs data time-trends at national, regional and global levels.

4.4 United Nations Environment Programme

The Chemicals and Health Branch of the UNEP, Economy Division provides targeted technical assistance to the execution of the enabling activity projects under Stockholm Convention (NIP update projects). All the enabling activity projects to update and/or develop the national implementation plans (NIPs) include a regional/global support component to provide technical expertise and tools to facilitate the updating of the NIPs and information exchange.

The execution of this regional/global component is led by Chemicals and Health Branch of the UNEP, Economy Division and has an allocated budget. Through the regional/global component, the training on the integrated electronic toolkit use replication could be supported and delivered by the Chemicals and Health Branch to the project countries undertaking enabling activity projects with UNEP. Also, UNEP could provide training to the other GEF agencies executing enabling activity projects so they could replicate the knowledge further to the countries they support.

Also, as other GEF Agencies, UNEP is a user of the toolkit POPs related data and information, which can support in describing baseline situations at national, regional and/or global levels when preparing future project proposals, as well as in identifying needs, gaps, challenges and shortcomings in the process of implementation of the Stockholm Convention at national, regional and global levels.

4.5 Global Environment Facility

As the integrated electronic toolkit is one important output of a GEF financed project, GEF could request/recommend/suggest countries having enabling activity projects to use the toolkit to enable them to plan and conduct POPs data and information collection, structure and store data and information gathered throughout the project implementation and execution.

Same as the relevant actors, the GEF could also be one of the users of the integrated electronic toolkit, which will allow retrieving valuable information on POPs management across the world and assessing the effectiveness of the funds use, as well as identifying the future needs for funding.

4.6 Other GEF Agencies Implementing Enabling Activity projects (NIP development/update)

Other GEF Agencies e.g., UNIDO, UNDP could contribute to the integrated electronic toolkit use replication among the Stockholm Convention Parties they support in implementing enabling activity projects (NIP development/update).

In order to be able to contribute to the integrated electronic toolkit use replication, these GEF Agencies need to be briefed by BRS Convention Secretariat together with UNEP on the role, structure, features and functionalities of the tool.

Also, these agencies are users of the toolkit POPs related data and information, which can support them in describing baseline situations at national, regional and/or global levels when preparing future project proposals.

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