



POPS COP-1 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 5 MAY 2005

In the morning and afternoon, delegates met in a high-level segment. The Committee of the Whole (COW) met in an evening session. The legal working group and financial mechanism contact group met throughout the day and evening.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

COP-1 President Mariano Arana (Uruguay) opened the high-level segment. Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, stressed the importance of multilateralism and synergies among environmental agreements. Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Inuit Circumpolar Conference, presented President Arana with an Inuit carving of a drum dancer, symbolizing the connection between North and South.

Leonard Good, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Global Environment Facility (GEF), reiterated GEF's commitment to continue improving its procedures to allow for the successful implementation of the Convention.

SECRETARIAT LOCATION: President Arana introduced the issue of the location of the Secretariat of the Convention (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/26) and a draft decision on voting procedures (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.1). ITALY presented its candidature to host the Secretariat in Rome. SWITZERLAND presented its candidature to host the Secretariat in Geneva. The EU clarified that its Member States would vote individually and that the European Community would not vote. Plenary adopted the decision on voting procedures.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT AND

ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET: Legal working group Co-Chair Anne Daniel (Canada) presented a note on possible arrangements for a joint head of the Secretariats of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.35), responding to the Rotterdam Convention's invitation to co-finance the Executive Secretary of both Secretariats in 2006. John Buccini, Acting Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention, requested clarification on whether the proposed language applied only to the UNEP portion of the Secretariat, and whether the language should indicate that the arrangement should persist beyond 2006. FAO clarified that, as well as Parties, UNEP and FAO both contributed to the Rotterdam Convention's budget. CANADA noted that the Executive Secretary should have all the resources needed to implement the Stockholm Convention. The COP asked the legal group to prepare a decision establishing the joint head, taking the discussion into account.

COUNTRY STATEMENTS: Delegates heard statements from ministers and heads of delegations. Key themes addressed are summarized below.

Implementation of the Convention: Several countries noted efforts to ratify the Convention, their development of national implementation plans (NIPs), and implementation

efforts. SWITZERLAND committed to continued support for implementation. The WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION noted the importance of involving the health sector in NIP development. CANADA stressed the need for a compliance mechanism, and for means for evaluating effectiveness.

Technical assistance: On regional centers, SOUTH AFRICA supported using existing centers to promote synergies in the implementation of all multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). SENEGAL said the Basel Convention regional centers should be strengthened, and supported the development of centers under the Stockholm Convention. EGYPT, CANADA, CHINA, CHILE, JORDAN, VENEZUELA and others called for technical assistance and capacity building. GERMANY and CANADA committed to providing technical assistance. KIRIBATI and MAURITIUS emphasized the need to consider the special situation of small island developing states (SIDS).

Financial mechanisms: Many countries thanked the GEF for providing support in the development of NIPs. BARBADOS stressed the need for clear and transparent accounting. The UK, for the EU, stressed the EU's commitment to a sound financial mechanism.

Synergies between chemicals-related MEAs: The CZECH REPUBLIC, GHANA and others stressed the importance of promoting synergies among chemicals-related conventions, including Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel. SWITZERLAND, SPAIN, NORWAY and the WORLD BANK underscored the importance of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The BASEL SECRETARIAT highlighted opportunities for collaboration.

Domestic issues: Many countries outlined aspects of domestic efforts to promote implementation. KIRIBATI called on Parties to consider improving BAT/BEP guidelines to capture the needs of developing countries, especially SIDS. THAILAND outlined plans to initiate projects relating to control of POPs uses, the use of alternatives, BAT and BEP, and awareness raising. JAPAN highlighted domestic action to dispose of PCBs and to reduce dioxin releases. VENEZUELA highlighted efforts to eliminate obsolete pesticides. MAURITIUS stressed the risk of illegal trade in POPs, and called for a review of this issue.

The importance of chemicals for economic and social development: COTE D'IVOIRE emphasized the role of chemicals in social and economic development, while noting they were a growing threat to human health and the environment.

Management of POPs Wastes: SAMOA noted that safe disposal and cost-effective treatment were regional priorities. SOUTH AFRICA highlighted the ongoing elimination of pesticide stockpiles, including POPs. BELARUS highlighted the need for safe storage and remediation of products containing POPs wastes.

Unintentionally produced POPs: ARGENTINA noted a national inventory on dioxins and furans, and AUSTRALIA



mentioned the recent completion of a comprehensive survey of dioxins. CHILE emphasized the need to develop national strategies to control sources generating unintentionally produced POPs.

Additional POPs: Many countries stressed the importance of the role of the POPs Review Committee (POPRC). The EU announced plans to nominate chlordecone and hexabromobiphenyl, and MEXICO the nomination of lindane. NORWAY highlighted their nomination of penta-BDE. DENMARK, GERMANY and SPAIN supported the inclusion of additional POPs. SWEDEN indicated PFOS as a priority, and emphasized the need to prevent the release of new chemicals with POPs characteristics. MALAYSIA said caution should be exercised before adding new POPs, stressing the need for assistance strategies.

POPs alternatives: SLOVAKIA and MAURITIUS underscored the importance of developing and promoting POPs alternatives. KENYA called for investment in non-chemical alternatives. MEXICO highlighted success with a prevention-based approach to eradicating malaria without pesticides.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE POPRC: Fatoumata Ouane, Secretariat, introduced a draft decision establishing the POPRC (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.13/Rev.1) and outlined a number of minor amendments to the text. Delegates adopted the draft decision.

The Secretariat introduced a draft decision on the rules of procedure for preventing and dealing with conflicts of interest for POPRC activities (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.26), drawn from the rules of procedure of the Rotterdam Convention. CANADA proposed text requesting governments to transmit the experts' declarations of interests to the Secretariat. TANZANIA said the degree of expertise should not be confined to chemicals management, and proposed broadening it to "relevant fields." The decision was adopted with the amendments proposed by Canada and Tanzania.

GUIDELINES ON BAT/BEP: Patrick Finlay (Canada), Co-Chair of the contact group on guidelines on BAT/BEP, presented a draft decision establishing an expert group to complete work on the guidelines, including terms of reference (ToR) (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.28). On participation, he noted that Western European and Other States would have 14 members in order to retain continuity with the original expert group, Africa eight, the Asia/Pacific region eight, Central and Eastern European states three, and Latin America and the Caribbean five. BRAZIL, supported by URUGUAY, objected to the imbalance in representation and called for an increase in members from Latin America and the Caribbean. RUSSIA called for an increase in representation for Central and Eastern Europe. Following informal consultations, delegates agreed to the following membership: nine from Africa; nine from the Asia/Pacific region; four from Central and Eastern Europe; six from Latin America and the Caribbean; and 14 from Western European and Other States. The decision was adopted as amended, and the COW agreed to reflect countries' concerns over representation in the report of the meeting.

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS: Ouane introduced a draft decision on NIPs guidance (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.27), and delegates adopted it without amendment.

EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION: CANADA presented a draft decision, together with Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Norway and Iceland, recognizing the need to establish an effectiveness evaluation panel (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.38). Uruguay, for GRULAC, opposed mentioning a global monitoring system, arguing it would divert resources from national implementation. CHILE, supported by BRAZIL, suggested deleting references to a global coordinating group. After consultations, delegates agreed to delete references to such a group, and to replace the evaluation panel with an evaluation mechanism. They also agreed to request the Secretariat to develop a background scoping paper for a global monitoring plan for consideration by COP-2, including: assessment of

existing datasets on human health and environment; assessment of regional monitoring programs; and identification of gaps and priorities and their costs. The decision was adopted as amended.

BAT/BEP GUIDELINES: KENYA introduced a draft decision with Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Senegal and Tanzania, supported by CHINA and PAPUA NEW GUINEA, initiating activities to promote guidelines on BAT/BEP through awareness raising, training and publicity (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.21). The draft decision requested the allocation of sufficient resources and urged donors to support the activities. The EU highlighted the need to consider budget implications, and noted that the COP, not the Secretariat, is responsible for resource allocation. After informal consultations, delegates deleted the reference to resource allocation and training and adopted the decision.

MEASURES TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE RELEASES FROM WASTES: The EU introduced a draft decision requesting the Secretariat to keep Parties informed of the status and content of Basel Convention developments on technical guidelines on levels of destruction and irreversible transformation (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.21). Delegates adopted the decision.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Guidance on technical assistance: David Ogden, Secretariat, introduced a draft decision on guidance on technical assistance and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.29). After some discussion, delegates agreed to remove a reference to countries of origin in text on developing and updating a list of technologies available to be transferred to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. Delegates adopted the decision as amended.

Regional and subregional centers: Ogden presented a revised draft decision asking the Secretariat to develop ToR for regional and subregional centers (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.25). SWITZERLAND asked that regional and subregional centers be "based on" rather than "linked to" existing regional centers, and suggested requesting the Secretariat to prepare a proposal to strengthen existing regional centers. VENEZUELA proposed asking the Secretariat to provide inputs to define centers' organizational structure, and making reference to Basel regional centers specifically. NORWAY proposed lending wider relevance to text on the consideration of various languages within a given region. NEW ZEALAND suggested asking the Secretariat to consult with existing centers' host organizations. BRAZIL and YEMEN urged adopting the CRP without amendments. After informal consultations, the COW adopted a decision including new text on: language; consultation with host organizations; providing inputs for decision-making on organizational structure; optimization of synergies between relevant MEAs; and a proposal for strengthening regional centers.

GUIDANCE TO THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM: Financial mechanism contact group Co-Chair Jozef Buys (European Community) said the contact group on the financial mechanism had cleared the draft decisions on guidance to the financial mechanism (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.30), and on the review of the financial mechanism, which adopts ToR for the review of the financial mechanism contained in an Annex (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CRP.39). He said the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the GEF Council and the COP was still under debate. The COW adopted the draft guidance and the ToR without amendment. The draft decision on the MoU will be submitted directly to Plenary on Friday.

REPORT OF THE COW: Delegates adopted the report of the COW (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/CW/L.1 and L.1/Add.1). The session concluded at 12:25 am.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates looking forward to sipping *asti spumante* in celebration tomorrow are likely to be disappointed, as Italy is said to be withdrawing its candidacy to host the Secretariat in Rome. This is good news for chocolate lovers: though the Swiss booth at COP-1 was noticeably chocolateless, and the replacement Swiss-flag candies remained relatively untouched, the absence was explained as a "transport issue." Delegates should rest assured that there is plenty of chocolate left in Geneva.