

## SUMMARY OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION: 11-15 OCTOBER 2010

The sixth meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC-6) of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) took place from 11-15 October 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland. Over 120 participants attended the meeting, including 29 of the 31 Committee members, 56 government and party observers, and over 20 representatives from non-governmental organizations.

POPRC-6 adopted 12 decisions, including on: support for effective participation in POPRC's work; the work programmes on new POPs; and intersessional work on toxic interactions. POPRC adopted the risk profile for hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD) and established an intersessional working group to prepare a draft risk management evaluation on HBCD. POPRC also agreed, by a vote, to adopt the risk management evaluation for endosulfan and recommend listing endosulfan in Annex A, with exemptions. The Committee considered a revised draft risk profile on short-chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs), agreeing to convene an intersessional working group to revise the draft risk profile on the basis of an intersessional discussion of the application of the Annex E criteria to SCCPs and of information arising from a proposed study on chlorinated paraffins by the intersessional working group on toxic interactions.

While many participants were anticipating fireworks during deliberations on some of the more contentious issues on POPRC's agenda, most discussions during the week were characterized by an amicable cooperation that allowed the Committee to conduct its work efficiently and effectively.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION AND THE POPS REVIEW COMMITTEE

During the 1960s and 1970s, the use of chemicals and pesticides in industry and agriculture increased dramatically. In particular, a category of chemicals known as POPs attracted international attention due to a growing body of scientific evidence indicating that exposure to very low doses of POPs

can lead to cancer, damage to the central and peripheral nervous systems, diseases of the immune system, reproductive disorders and interference with normal infant and child development. POPs are chemical substances that persist in the environment, bioaccumulate in living organisms, and can cause adverse effects on human health and the environment. With further evidence of the long-range transport of these substances to regions where they have never been used or produced, and the consequent threats they pose to the global environment, the international community called for urgent global action to reduce and eliminate their release into the environment.

In March 1995, the United Nations Environment Programme's Governing Council (UNEP GC) adopted Decision 18/32 inviting the Inter-Organization Programme on the Sound Management of Chemicals, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) and the International Programme on Chemical Safety to initiate an assessment process regarding

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a list of 12 POPs. The IFCS *Ad Hoc* Working Group on POPs concluded that sufficient information existed to demonstrate the need for international action to minimize risks from the 12 POPs, including a global legally-binding instrument. The meeting forwarded a recommendation to the UNEP Governing Council and the World Health Assembly (WHA) that immediate international action be taken on these substances.

In February 1997, the UNEP Governing Council adopted Decision 19/13C endorsing the conclusions and recommendations of the IFCS. The Governing Council requested that UNEP, together with relevant international organizations, convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) with a mandate to develop, by the end of 2000, an international legally-binding instrument for implementing international action, beginning with the list of 12 POPs. In May 1997, the WHA endorsed the recommendations of the IFCS and requested that the World Health Organization participate actively in the negotiations.

The INC met five times between June 1998 and December 2000 to elaborate the convention, and delegates adopted the Stockholm Convention on POPs on 23 May 2001, in Stockholm, Sweden.

Key elements of the treaty include the requirement that developed countries provide new and additional financial resources and measures to eliminate production and use of intentionally produced POPs, eliminate unintentionally produced POPs where feasible, and manage and dispose of POPs wastes in an environmentally-sound manner. Precaution is exercised throughout the Stockholm Convention, with specific references in the preamble, the objective and the provision on identifying new POPs.

The Stockholm Convention entered into force on 17 May 2004, and currently has 172 parties.

The Convention can list chemicals in three annexes: Annex A contains chemicals to be eliminated; Annex B contains chemicals to be restricted; and Annex C calls for the minimization of unintentional releases of listed chemicals. When adopted in 2001, 12 POPs were listed in these annexes. These POPs include 1) pesticides: aldrin, chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, mirex and toxaphene; 2) industrial chemicals: hexachlorobenzene and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); and 3) unintentionally produced POPs: dioxins and furans.

When adopting the Convention, provision was made for a procedure to identify additional POPs and the criteria to be considered in doing so. At the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP1), held in Punta del Este, Uruguay from 2-6 May 2005, the POPRC was established to consider additional candidates nominated for listing under the Convention.

The Committee comprises 31 experts nominated by parties from the five regional groups and reviews nominated chemicals in three stages. The Committee first determines whether the substance fulfills POP screening criteria detailed in Annex D of the Convention, relating to its persistence, bioaccumulation, potential for long-range environmental transport (LRET), and toxicity. If a substance is deemed to fulfill these requirements, the Committee then drafts a risk profile according to Annex E to evaluate whether the substance is likely, as a result of its LRET, to lead to significant adverse human health and/or environmental

effects and therefore warrants global action. Finally, if the POPRC finds that global action is warranted, it develops a risk management evaluation, according to Annex F, reflecting socio-economic considerations associated with possible control measures. Based on this, the POPRC decides to recommend that the COP list the substance under one or more of the annexes to the Convention. The POPRC has met annually in Geneva, Switzerland, since its establishment.

**POPRC-1:** The first meeting of the POPRC (POPRC-1) was held from 7-11 November 2005. The Committee considered five chemicals proposed for inclusion in the Convention and agreed that intersessional working groups would develop risk profiles on these chemicals, to be assessed by POPRC-2. POPRC-1 also reviewed its role and mandate, and took decisions on several operational issues, including developing procedures for handling confidential information, work plans for intersessional activities, and criteria and procedures for inviting additional experts.

**POPRC-2:** POPRC-2 was held from 6-10 November 2006. The Committee adopted the risk profiles for commercial pentabromodiphenyl ether (c-pentaBDE), chlordecone, hexabromobiphenyl (HBB), lindane, and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), and agreed that intersessional working groups would develop draft risk management evaluations (RMEs) for these chemicals to be assessed by POPRC-3. The Committee also agreed to consider five newly proposed chemicals for inclusion in the Convention: alpha hexachlorocyclohexane (alphaHCH), beta hexachlorocyclohexane (betaHCH), pentachlorobenzene (PeCB), commercial octabromodiphenyl ether (c-octaBDE) and short-chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs), and agreed that intersessional working groups would develop risk profiles on these chemicals to be assessed by POPRC-3.

**POPRC-3:** This meeting took place from 19-23 November 2007. The Committee approved the RMEs for five chemicals, and recommended that COP4 consider listing under Annexes A, B, or C: lindane; chlordecone; HBB; c-pentaBDE; and PFOS, its salts and PFOS fluoride (PFOSF). Risk profiles were approved for four chemicals, and POPRC-3 adopted a work programme to prepare draft RMEs for those chemicals, namely on: c-octaBDE, PeCB, and alphaHCH and betaHCH. The Committee decided that a proposal by the European Community to consider endosulfan for inclusion in Annex A, B or C would be considered by POPRC-4.

**POPRC-4:** This meeting convened from 13-17 October 2008. POPRC-4 considered several operational issues, including conflict-of-interest procedures, toxic interactions between POPs, and activities undertaken for effective participation of parties in POPRC's work. The Committee approved the RMEs for four chemicals, and recommended that COP4 consider listing under Annexes A, B, or C: c-octaBDE, PeCB, and alphaHCH and betaHCH. A draft risk profile for SCCPs was discussed and the Committee agreed to forward it to POPRC-5 for further consideration. POPRC-4 also evaluated a proposal to list endosulfan under the Convention and agreed, by vote, that it met the Annex D criteria for listing and that a draft risk profile should be prepared for consideration by POPRC-5. POPRC-4 also began an exchange of views on a proposal to list hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD).

**COP4:** COP4 was held from 4-8 May 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland. Parties adopted 33 decisions on a variety of topics, including financial resources and technical assistance and the agreement to list nine new substances under Annexes A, B, or C of the Convention, namely: c-pentaBDE; chlordecone; HBB; alphaHCH; betaHCH; lindane; c-octaBDE, PeCB and PFOS, its salts and PFOSF. The amendment to list additional POPs under Annexes A, B and/or C entered into force on 26 August 2010 for 151 parties.

**POPRC-5:** POPRC-5 met from 12-16 October 2009, and addressed several operational issues, including: work programmes on new POPs; substitutions and alternatives; toxicological interactions; and activities undertaken for effective participation in the POPRC's work. POPRC-5 agreed that HBCD met the Annex D criteria for listing and that a draft risk profile should be prepared. Draft risk profiles for endosulfan and SCCPs were considered. SCCPs were kept in the Annex E phase for further consideration at POPRC-6 and the Committee, through a vote, decided to move endosulfan to the Annex F phase, while inviting parties to submit additional information on adverse effects on human health.

**Ex-COP:** The simultaneous extraordinary Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions were held from 22-24 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia. Delegates adopted an omnibus synergies decision on joint services, joint activities, synchronization of the budget cycles, joint audits, joint managerial functions, and review arrangements.

### POPRC-6 REPORT

On Monday, 11 October 2010, Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention, opened the sixth meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC), welcoming participants and noting that the POPRC is highly esteemed for its consistent application of sound science in its evaluations. He emphasized that the POPRC must evolve as the needs of parties change, and encouraged the Committee to consider what additional services it may offer to the Conference of the Parties (COP).

POPRC Chair Reiner Arndt (Germany) welcomed the 17 members of the POPRC whose terms began in 2010, including eleven new members and six members who have previously served on the Committee.

Participants adopted the provisional agenda (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/1/Rev.1) and the proposed organization of work (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/2). Chair Arndt emphasized that the POPRC's core mandate is working on proposals for listing substances, including hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD), short-chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) and endosulfan. He reviewed the other work before the Committee including: the work programmes on new POPs, toxic interactions, effective participation by parties in the POPRC's work, and substitution and alternatives.

The Committee met in plenary throughout the week. Contact groups, open to observers, and drafting groups, limited to POPRC members, convened on a variety of topics. Some

items were also addressed in Friends of the Chair groups. This summary of the meeting is organized according to the order of the agenda.

The current members of POPRC are Argentina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, India, Japan, Jordan, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Ukraine and Zambia. The members from Egypt and Bulgaria were unable to attend POPRC-6.

### OPERATIONAL ISSUES

**ROTATION OF MEMBERSHIP IN MAY 2012:** The Secretariat briefed the plenary about the newly designated members of the POPRC whose terms began in May 2010, and drew attention to countries whose terms will end in 2012, namely Bulgaria, Chad, Chile, Colombia, France, Ghana, Honduras, India, Mauritius, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Syria, Switzerland and Togo (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/3/Rev.1).

**OPERATING PROCEDURES:** Regarding the procedure for conflicts of interest, on Monday the Secretariat noted that, while COP4 had adopted the modifications regarding conflicts of interest recommended by the POPRC, the COP had suggested that the POPRC Chair consult the Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention and the COP President in case of conflicts of interest (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/4). The Secretariat proposed amendments to the POPRC terms of reference (ToR) reflecting this suggestion and the changes adopted at COP4.

Colombia asked if the fact that a Committee member belongs to a government represents a conflict of interest. Masa Nagai, UNEP Legal Adviser to the Stockholm Convention, responded that POPRC members are appointed by and accountable to the COP, not their respective governments. India and Colombia asked for clarifications concerning the issue of economic conflicts of interest, and Chair Arndt said that technical decisions should not be influenced by governments, emphasizing that the POPRC collects information on socio-economic issues and technology transfer in the risk management evaluation and the COP makes decisions pertaining to these issues.

On Tuesday evening, Chair Arndt introduced a draft decision on conflicts of interest. Several members sought clarification on the extent of a member's participation on other issues before the Committee should they have a conflict of interest regarding one of the chemicals under review. Chair Arndt explained that on the issue for which a member has a conflict of interest, that member would have the opportunity to participate as an observer but could not take part in the Committee's decision making. On Thursday, the POPRC adopted the decision without modification.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.2), the POPRC recommends that the COP change the Committee's ToR by inserting a new paragraph that provides for the Committee to meet in closed session before the start of each meeting to discuss issues related to members' conflicts of interest, and, should any conflict of interest arise, for the



POPRC Chair to consult the COP President and the Executive Secretary to make a decision on the member's participation in work regarding a particular chemical.

**STANDARD WORKPLAN FOR INTERSESSIONAL WORK:** On Thursday, the Secretariat presented a note on draft workplans for the intersessional period between POPRC-6 and POPRC-7 (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/8), briefly outlining the draft workplans and key dates for the preparation of draft risk profiles and draft risk management evaluations.

#### **TECHNICAL WORK**

**NEW POPS WORK PROGRAMMES:** On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the work programmes on new POPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/2/Rev.1, UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/5, INF/6 and INF/7). Bettina Hitzfeld (Switzerland), Co-Chair of the intersessional working group on new POPs, noted that the COP mandated the POPRC to develop a work programme on the nine newly-listed POPs, and summarized the work before the Committee, which includes developing recommendations on the elimination of brominated diphenyl ethers (BDEs) from the waste stream, and providing recommendations on risk reduction from perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), its salts, and PFOS fluoride (PFOSF).

Alan Watson, Public Interest Consultants, presented an overview of the draft technical report on the implications of recycling commercial pentabromodiphenyl ether (c-pentaBDE) and commercial octabromodiphenyl ether (c-octaBDE), outlining recommendations within it. The first notes that recycling should only occur if articles are first treated to remove POP-BDEs. The second sets out actions to be taken: that developed countries rapidly move to address the handling and treatment of those flame-retarded articles containing higher concentrations of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) in the short term; to improve capacity to consider PBDEs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the medium term; and to establish where high levels of contamination may present risks to human health and/or the environment and to take steps to remediate those in the longer term.

Several members commended the excellent presentation and report. France proposed that to achieve the objectives of the Convention and maintain credibility, recycling of goods in which BDEs have been voluntarily introduced should stop as soon as possible. He further called for broadening that recommendation to apply to articles in which other substances that have POPs characteristics have been voluntarily introduced. Tanzania called for halting the transport of articles containing BDEs from developed to developing countries. China emphasized the need to build capacity in developing countries. Finland called for moving as quickly as possible on this issue, highlighting that, over time, concentrations will be diluted and one will lose track of articles containing these substances.

The Committee agreed that Jianxin Hu (China) and Hitzfeld co-chair a contact group on the issue. Chair Arndt highlighted the complexity of recycling articles containing PBDEs due to their mobility, and called for individuals with expertise in the Basel Convention and in national waste management regimes to present information in the contact group. The contact group met on Monday and Tuesday evening. On Thursday, the Committee discussed the draft decision on the work programmes on new

POPs, which contains in an annex recommendations on the elimination of BDEs from the waste stream and on risk reduction for PFOS.

**BDEs:** Regarding the elimination of BDEs from the waste stream, an observer from the Netherlands expressed concern that some recommendations were non-implementable and could result in a halt in the recycling of articles containing POP-BDEs. He said that it was not possible to stop this recycling without first having implemented effective screening and segregation techniques for POP-BDE containing materials. France noted the importance of maintaining the long-term credibility of recycling. An observer from the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) stressed the importance of stopping the dispersal of these new POPs, even if it means limiting the recycling of waste, noting that, if this recycling cannot be stopped, then dilution will be seen as the solution to POPs pollution.

China recommended encouraging developed countries to transfer screening and segregation techniques to developing countries. Jordan encouraged sharing success stories on how to handle and segregate waste containing POP-BDEs.

**PFOS:** Regarding PFOS risk reduction from releases and landfills, France favored including references both to production sites and industrial users. Thailand and Cambodia expressed concern that their countries are unable to implement the recommendations. Cambodia noted that destruction of PFOS-containing materials is impossible in Cambodia due to the lack of incinerators, and suggested deletion of this requirement. Colombia noted that his country would benefit from assistance with analytical tools. Chair Arndt emphasized that the recommended actions are very ambitious and proposed that reference be made to the fact that some countries need technical and financial assistance.

Some countries questioned the rationale for short-, medium- and long-term recommendations. Chair Arndt explained that this is a way of setting priorities, and he stressed the importance of countries in a position to do so taking action in the short term.

On Friday, the Committee heard a Canadian proposal to be included in the report of the meeting, which noted that the work to eliminate POP-BDEs should take into account different national abilities and conditions. Some members supported this text, and New Zealand supported including similar language for PFOS risk reduction.

**Final Decision:** In its decision on work programmes on new POPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.8/Rev.1), the POPRC decides to submit to COP5 recommendations on: how to fill the identified knowledge gaps; eliminating BDEs from the waste stream; and risk reduction for PFOS, its salts and PFOSF. These recommendations, contained in the annex to the decision, are classified according to short-, medium- and long-term activities.

**BASEL CONVENTION TECHNICAL GUIDELINES:** On Monday, the Secretariat explained that the Basel Convention has adopted technical guidelines on the environmentally-sound management of POPs, and introduced possible action for the Committee to recommend that the COP invite bodies of the Basel Convention to revise these guidelines with a view to reflecting the newly listed POPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/3). The Basel Convention Secretariat provided background on the preparation of these technical guidelines, noting that Basel Convention COP9

invited parties to submit to COP10 (scheduled for 2011) reports on their experience in applying these guidelines, including on definitions of low POPs content. Jordan and an observer from the Netherlands outlined their national experiences, with the former emphasizing knowledge gaps in identifying BDEs in the waste stream and the latter underscoring the need to strengthen national capacity to measure the content of POPs in imported articles.

Highlighting the call for synergies among chemicals-related Conventions, an observer from IPEN suggested the POPRC contribute its expertise through cooperation with the Basel Convention in revising the technical guidelines. Zambia, Jordan and Colombia supported enhancing synergies in the revision process, with Colombia noting that defining low POP content concentration levels falls within the mandate of both conventions.

On Tuesday, Chair Arndt introduced the draft decision on the updating of the Basel Convention technical guidelines on the environmentally-sound management of POPs. The Committee adopted the decision without amendments on Thursday.

**Final Decision:** In its final decision on updating the Basel Convention technical guidelines on the environmentally-sound management of newly listed POPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.7), the POPRC recommends that the COP:

- invite appropriate bodies of the Basel Convention to establish the levels of destruction and irreversible transformation necessary to ensure that the POPs characteristics are not exhibited and work to establish the concentration levels to define the low POP content of these chemicals;
- make available, among other documents, the recommendations of the POPRC on the elimination of BDEs from the waste stream and on risk reduction for PFOS to the appropriate bodies of the Basel Convention; and
- invite the Basel Convention COP to consider the involvement of the POPRC in the work on updating the technical guidelines.

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION OF NEW POPS:** On Wednesday, Roland Weber, POPs Environmental Consulting, presented new information related to unintentional sources of pentachlorobenzene (PeCB) releases (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/21), notably PeCB release from degradation of quintozene/pentachloronitrobenzene (PCNB) and PeCB release and stockpile from chlorinated solvent production, and he highlighted the importance of establishing a strict best available techniques (BAT) and best environmental practices (BEP) regime with appropriate BAT/BEP destruction capacity for chlorinated solvents.

Chair Arndt noted the new information will not be integrated into the PeCB risk profile adopted at POPRC-3, and suggested that it be referred to the BAT/BEP expert group. Ukraine and the Czech Republic noted that more recent information from their respective countries could be useful for the BAT/BEP group. Tanzania emphasized the need for capacity development in countries unable to conduct POPs assessments.

On Friday, the Committee considered the draft decision to forward the new information to the BAT/BEP expert group, should such a group be established by the COP, and requested the Secretariat to forward relevant information to that expert group. Responding to a question from France as to why the BAT/

BEP group would have to be established, Chair Arndt explained the BAT/BEP expert group had completed its work and would need to be re-established. POPRC adopted the decision without amendment.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.17), the POPRC decides to forward new information on unintentional releases of PeCB to the BAT/BEP expert group, should the COP establish it, and requests the Secretariat to forward further relevant information to that group.

**DEBROMINATION OF BROMINATED FLAME RETARDANTS:** On Wednesday, Weber gave a presentation on new information on the debromination of brominated flame retardants, recalling that the topic had previously been considered by POPRC-4 (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/20). In particular, Weber presented recent findings on degradation pathways of PBDEs, explaining that debromination is the main degradation pathway, often to POP-BDEs, but that in other settings oxidative degradation scenarios can lead to the formation of brominated furans. He presented several studies on debromination, including: through microbial degradation; in several species of fish, birds and mammals; in sediments; in landfills; in soil-plant systems; and through photolytic degradation. He concluded that the general view of the scientific community is that the question is no longer whether debromination of PBDEs happens but rather its speed and finer details.

Canada provided information on a recent Environment Canada report on debromination and bioaccumulation, which concluded that the transformation of decabromodiphenyl ether (decaBDE) is significant and its products are found in the ambient environment and in biota, noting that in August more stringent regulation measures were proposed to deal appropriately with the substance. An observer from IPEN suggested POPRC inform the COP of these findings, especially as they relate to the unintentional formation of listed POPs.

Following a discussion of the technical information in the presentation, the POPRC agreed to take note of this information and consider the issue at its next meeting.

**INTERSESSIONAL WORK ON SUBSTITUTION AND ALTERNATIVES:** On Monday afternoon, the Secretariat introduced the issue (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/4, UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/8, and INF/9). Samuel Banda (Zambia), Chair of the intersessional working group on substitution and alternatives, introduced the draft guidance document on alternatives to PFOS, its salts and PFOSF. Banda emphasized that, because the listing of PFOS addresses a large group of chemicals, many substitutes and alternatives must be evaluated, and suggested establishing a contact group to finalize the draft guidance with the understanding that new information may be incorporated into future editions.

France underscored the need to consider the persistence, bioaccumulation potential and toxicity of alternatives, and, with Tanzania, called for regular updating of the document. An observer from Sierra Leone noted that the document had to be completed in time for POPRC-6 and would need to be regularly updated.

An observer from the US said the document provided a good overview of PFOS alternatives. An observer from Canada highlighted a recent study suggesting that cyclic siloxanes known as D4, D5, and D6 are amenable to long-range environmental transport (LRET).

Canada emphasized that PFOS is different from other POPs and encouraged investigating creative solutions to share information. France noted that the EU will register many relevant chemicals by the end of 2010 and could provide information on their toxicity and persistence. Colombia underscored the need to specify criteria that show the toxicological risks associated with different products. Germany highlighted the work of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs), and suggested creating a webpage where the POPRC's latest information could be posted along with new, non-assessed information regarding alternatives. Canada noted that establishing an intersessional working group could constrain incorporation of all new information between POPRC meetings due to timing requirements for document preparation and translation.

Banda emphasized the need to disseminate information to the people using the substances. Thomas Yormah (Sierra Leone, former Chair of the intersessional working group on substitution and alternatives) noted that there are several tools developed for effective dissemination. Executive Secretary Cooper mentioned the Safe Planet campaign, launched at the 11th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in February 2010, which aims to raise the profile of hazardous chemicals and wastes and reach a broader audience, and he invited the POPRC to present its activities through this campaign.

On Wednesday, Banda introduced the revised draft guidance on alternatives to PFOS and its derivatives, highlighting changes to the draft guidance document and emphasizing that the document should be a living document and updated regularly. Members suggested minor amendments and on Thursday the Committee considered the draft decision on the issue. Chair Arndt noted new text suggesting the inclusion of information about health and environmental effects in the reporting on national experiences in replacing PFOS. Canada favored not limiting the experiences gathered to the national context. The Committee adopted the decision with minor amendments.

**Final Decision:** In its decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.5/Rev.1), the POPRC:

- endorses the revised guidance document on alternatives to PFOS and its derivatives (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.4/Rev.1);
- agrees that the guidance document should be revised regularly to take into account available information on alternatives to PFOS and its derivatives;
- invites parties and observers to submit comments on the guidance document and information on experience in replacing PFOS and its derivatives with alternative products and/or processes, including information about their health and environmental effects, to the Secretariat by 31 July 2011;
- requests the Secretariat to disseminate the guidance document widely; and
- decides to consider the information provided by parties and

observers and the possibility of initiating the updating of the guidance document at POPRC-7.

#### INTERSESSIONAL WORK ON TOXIC

**INTERACTIONS:** On Wednesday, Ivan Holoubek (Czech Republic), Co-Chair of the intersessional working group on toxic interactions, briefed the POPRC on the group's work to develop an approach to evaluating exposures to multiple chemicals and toxicological interactions of candidate POPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/5 and INF/10), and on the study prepared by the European Commission (EC) on mixture toxicity (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/26). He emphasized that the main problem is determining the methodology for assessing the risks of combined exposures to multiple chemicals.

Chair Arndt highlighted the need to agree on a strategy to assess and use existing information on toxic interactions and on what information on POPs interactions to include in a risk profile. France reiterated the recommendations stemming from the EC study, namely: to explore how exposure to multiple endocrine disruptors should be further addressed within EC legislation; and to examine how legislation accounts for risks posed by exposure to multiple chemicals.

Canada noted that toxic interactions for ecological endpoints are more difficult to assess than for human endpoints. Holoubek proposed focusing on the appropriate methodology for evaluating the effects of toxic interactions of POPs in the bodies of organisms. Switzerland noted that the World Health Organization (WHO) will soon publish a framework for risk assessment of combined exposure to mixtures of chemicals, and supported restricting the study to a family of POPs.

An observer from WWF suggested focusing on short-chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) and medium-chained chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs), as well as possible PFOS substitutes. Highlighting time constraints, France, supported by Switzerland, proposed initiating a simple, concrete study on chlorinated paraffins.

Chair Holoubek emphasized the need to decide on a methodological approach, and France suggested using additivity, emphasizing that it is the simplest method. Chair Arndt noted the lack of funding for studies in the POPRC's budget and suggested planning only one study during the intersessional period. An observer from Sierra Leone underscored the need for a baseline study of body burdens prior to organisms' exposure to the chemicals being evaluated by the toxic interactions study.

On Friday, Holoubek introduced the work programme on toxicological interactions, describing the two proposed case studies to be undertaken during the intersessional period, on the toxicological interactions of chlorinated paraffins, and on an overview of the methodological approaches to the evaluation of mechanisms of the toxic effect of complex environmental mixtures of POPs. Holoubek explained that the case studies will be presented at a workshop in Brno, Czech Republic, in May 2011, and subsequently at POPRC-7. He then introduced the draft decision, underscoring the invitation to parties and the donor community to provide financial support. The POPRC adopted the decision without amendments.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.18), the POPRC requests the intersessional working group on toxicological interactions to undertake the approved work



programme (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.21), and decides to provide input through the work programme to the framework to assess the risks of combined exposures to multiple chemicals developed by the WHO International Programme on Chemical Safety. In the decision, the Secretariat is requested to identify the resources needed to undertake these activities, and parties and the donor community are invited to provide financial assistance to this initiative.

**EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PARTIES IN THE POPRC'S WORK:** On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the documents relating to the report on the outcomes of activities undertaken for the effective participation of parties in the Committee's work (UNEP/POP/POPRC.6/6), and summaries of the intersessional work (UNEP/POP/POPRC.6/INF/11).

Norma Ethel Sbarbati-Nudelman (Argentina), Chair of the intersessional working group on effective participation, noted that regional workshops, jointly organized with the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention, took place in Cairo in November 2009 for English-speaking African countries and in Mexico City in June 2010 for Latin American and Caribbean countries.

The Secretariat summarized its efforts on effective participation, including: technical assistance and capacity-building programmes implemented at national, regional and global levels; strengthening communication on regional and national levels; and workshops arranged with the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions to strengthen synergies among the Conventions.

The Czech Republic and Cambodia noted that information is not properly transferred to national stakeholders, and Jordan suggested that national meetings be arranged to better inform stakeholders of results. Togo stressed the importance of engaging African subregional organizations. Zambia underscored the need for clear, precise agendas for workshops, and India expressed support for more workshops, particularly on new POPs. Germany stressed the preferences of donor countries for effectiveness evaluations of regional workshops.

The Secretariat highlighted its desire to move beyond workshops and called on countries to communicate their needs to allow the Secretariat to provide assistance. Executive Secretary Cooper emphasized the impact of the POPRC's recommendations on sectors that must adapt to the listing of POPs, and encouraged consideration of mechanisms to help the POPRC make its work more globally available.

On Tuesday, Nudelman suggested developing questionnaires, including one on the use of and improvements to the pocket guide on effective participation in the POPRC. Zambia offered suggestions on dissemination, including: making use of the expertise of new and former POPRC members by creating regional clubs; finding ways to attract media interest; and improving integration of the POPRC's work into the agendas of regional economic groups. Chair Arndt recalled the efforts of the Safe Planet campaign to use actors, musicians, and sports figures to raise awareness of POPs issues.

Chad highlighted difficulties in collecting information on the impacts of chemicals, and suggested creating a guide to enable people to participate in POPs management. China said that its registration and licensing system for pesticides makes collection of information easier, while noting that new POPs are very

difficult to trace. He underscored the need to help developing countries conduct research on candidate and new POPs. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) expressed willingness to be informed of existing problems and explore avenues for assistance, providing that these are consistent with the GEF's new mandate on sound chemicals management and mercury.

Syria agreed with Jordan on the importance of national campaigns, and highlighted the need for civil society to participate in the evaluation of hazardous products. Tanzania called for national outreach programmes targeting different groups, with Costa Rica stressing the importance of clearly defining target groups and priority POPs.

Colombia noted the need to examine countries' national actions, and Honduras emphasized the important role played by regional centers and focal points. An observer from Norway underlined her country's interest in engaging in bilateral cooperation to assist countries wishing to nominate a POP of concern to their country or region. An observer from IPEN underscored the role of civil society in outreach and highlighted its activities in relaying the work of the POPRC to non-governmental organizations, civil society and media.

In order to design effective outreach programmes, Executive Secretary Cooper highlighted the need for the Secretariat to know what information and messages should be conveyed and what audience to target.

Chair Arndt invited participants to submit suggestions on this topic to Nudelman. A Friends of the Chair group on the issue met on Tuesday. On Wednesday, Nudelman presented a draft decision on effective participation. Chad suggested adding text on the capacity building of subregional and regional organizations. On Thursday, the Committee discussed a revised draft decision, with the Secretariat highlighting that language on national-level monitoring had been amended to reflect the need to identify and develop a knowledge-base at the national level. France favored including language encouraging past and present Committee members to disseminate information. The Committee agreed to adopt the decision as orally amended.

**Final Decision:** In its final decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.6/Rev.1), the POPRC:

- invites the Secretariat to continue its activities supporting parties' effective participation in the POPRC's work;
- encourages Committee members to disseminate information about the POPRC's work at the national and subregional levels;
- invites the Secretariat to enhance the UN Safe Planet campaign for responsibility on hazardous chemicals and wastes so that it reaches all stakeholders; and
- invites parties and observers in a position to do so to provide financial support for activities in support of effective participation.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RISK MANAGEMENT EVALUATION ON ENDOSULFAN**

On Monday, the Secretariat outlined the relevant documents pertaining to the risk management evaluation (RME) on endosulfan, including:

- the draft RME prepared by the intersessional working group in July 2010 (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/9);

- comments and responses relating to the draft RME (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/13/Rev.1);
- a compilation of information submitted pursuant to Annex F relevant to endosulfan (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/24);
- an updated supporting document containing comments by the US and Brazil (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/23); and
- the latest version of the draft RME (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/22), including comments by the US and Brazil, made available on 8 October 2010.

Ricardo Barra (Chile), Chair of the intersessional working group preparing the draft RME, summarized the process to develop the RME and its content. Stressing that available information indicates that alternatives may be technically feasible, efficient and potentially safer, Barra also noted that substitution could be complicated for some crop-pest complexes and advocated specific exemptions to permit the development of feasible alternatives. He said that a lack of full scientific certainty should not prevent the chemical from proceeding, and noted the draft RME recommends that endosulfan be considered by the COP for listing in Annex A.

An observer from India pointed out that very limited information has been provided on alternatives and socio-economic issues. The US supported the adoption of the RME, stating it reflects a balanced, objective and accurate presentation. Brazil, the US, Japan and the Republic of Korea announced recent decisions relating to ending the use of endosulfan in their jurisdictions.

India asked that a dissent note on the endosulfan risk profile submitted to POPRC-5 by her predecessor be circulated at POPRC-6 for an open and transparent discussion and possible consideration at COP-5. Chair Arndt noted that the dissent had been shortened and included in the report of POPRC-5, and invited India to submit the full text of the dissent as a conference room paper (CRP) to POPRC-6.

It was agreed to establish a contact group to work on the basis of the October 2010 version of the draft RME. The contact group met on Monday and Tuesday, and a drafting group considered the draft RME on Wednesday and Thursday. The contact and drafting groups were also tasked with considering additional information submitted intersessionally on the adverse effects of endosulfan on human health relating to the risk profile on endosulfan adopted at POPRC-5 (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/12).

On Thursday, Barra reported that the drafting group had considered the information submitted by three observers on the adverse effects of endosulfan on human health and had found that this new information does not change the conclusion of the risk profile adopted at POPRC-5. Barra then introduced the draft risk management evaluation resulting from the drafting group's work.

On the description of alternatives, India expressed concern about limited or absent data on the POPs characteristics of some chemicals listed as alternatives to endosulfan. Regarding alternatives and risk, an observer from India suggested POPRC consider risk assessments of alternatives prior to finalizing the draft RME. Chair Arndt emphasized that the RME is a collection of information submitted by countries and observers, and is

not a risk assessment of alternatives. An observer from the International Stewardship Centre emphasized the need to reflect the role of precaution in the POPRC's evaluation of endosulfan.

On Friday, India asked that the Committee engage in no further consideration of endosulfan until India's procedural and substantive concerns, as noted in dissent notes submitted at POPRC-4, POPRC-5 and COP4 and in a communication to the Executive Director of UNEP, have been addressed. Legal Adviser Nagai noted that the Committee has followed all the procedures required under the Convention and that the Convention requires the Committee to undertake the task of reviewing chemicals. He further explained that since COP4 had decided not to intervene in the POPRC process, the procedure to be followed remains unchanged. India stressed that a CRP submitted by India at COP4 had not been discussed by the COP, and called for discussion of the issue at COP5. She further questioned why a Friends of the President group had not been established at COP4 to address its CRP. Nagai said such a group was formed and met with the Indian representative at COP4.

An observer from the Indian Chemical Council sought clarification on whether preparation of the draft RME had been delegated to a consultant. France, as drafter of the RME, noted he assumed full responsibility for the risk profile and the draft RME and underscored that preparation of these documents had been transparent. Referring to additional information solicited on health effects, an observer from the International Stewardship Centre noted that after exhaustive analysis, the US government and industry have concluded that endosulfan is not a carcinogen or a mutagen and there is insufficient information to determine its endocrine disruption. An observer from the US clarified that the US has not completed a review of endocrine disruption information for endosulfan and has made no determination on the subject.

An observer from the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) supported listing endosulfan in Annex A with as few exemptions as possible, noting that it had received information that Argentina had a range of alternatives available for its essential uses. Argentina underscored that many of the alternatives alluded to would need to be used in much larger volumes than endosulfan.

On the RME's concluding statement, Barra explained there was disagreement on whether listing should be recommended in Annex A, in Annex A with exemptions, or in Annex B. Argentina, Zambia and Cambodia supported recommending listing in Annex B. New Zealand supported recommending listing in Annex A without exemptions. France, with Switzerland, Japan, Honduras, Costa Rica, Tanzania, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Korea, Finland, Mauritius, Ukraine, Nigeria, Togo, Jordan, Canada, Syria, Chad and Colombia, supported recommending listing under Annex A with exemptions. India proposed not proceeding any further on the matter.

After consultations with Chair Arndt, Argentina, Cambodia and Zambia agreed to support recommending listing in Annex A with exemptions, noting that there is a need for financial support for capacity building, survey and monitoring of endosulfan, as well as technical assistance for identifying new potential alternatives and examining their performance under the



conditions of use in their countries. New Zealand also indicated his support for recommending listing under Annex A with exemptions.

Costa Rica, recognizing efforts to reach a consensus, asked that the issue be brought to a vote. On a point of order, Nagai explained a majority vote was required to determine whether the decision and the RME on endosulfan should be put to a vote. China noted he did not want to decide through a vote. Of the 29 members present and voting, 17 voted in favor of voting, and two voted against, with the others abstaining. The Committee then voted to finalize the RME and adopt the decision on endosulfan. The decision was adopted, with 24 members in favor, no members against and five abstentions.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.9), the POPRC adopts the RME for endosulfan (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.16) and decides to recommend to the COP that it consider listing endosulfan in Annex A of the Convention, with specific exemptions.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RISK PROFILES**

**HEXABROMOCYCLODODECANE:** On Tuesday morning, Peter Dawson (New Zealand), Chair of the intersessional working group on hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD), presented the draft risk profile and supporting documents on HBCD (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/10, UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/14 and INF/25), explaining that HBCD is a high production volume brominated flame retardant primarily used in polystyrene insulation boards, and to a lesser extent in textiles and electronics. Dawson noted that releases of HBCD are increasing, underlining that the draft risk profile concludes that the substance meets all of the criteria for listing and is likely, as a result of LRET, to cause significant adverse effects on human health and/or the environment such that global action is warranted.

China noted that it produces HBCD and suggested including additional information in the risk profile, such as data samples taken close to and far from sources of emission, to increase transparency and facilitate decision-making. The Republic of Korea noted that while some participants may want more data, paragraph 7 of Article 8 of the Convention states that a lack of full scientific certainty shall not prevent the proposal from proceeding. Finland said there is no need to account for the precautionary principle as levels are already of concern. Thailand expressed support for moving HBCD to the RME phase.

An observer from the US suggested including a comparison between toxicity levels found in the environment and effect concentrations, while an observer from IPEN cautioned against such a comparison. Finland noted that the toxicity levels have been compared to the extent possible in the risk profile and he said further comparisons are problematic due to a number of considerations, including reproductive stage, species sensitivity and temperature. France expressed concern about introducing comparisons that lack scientific validity. Chair Arndt noted that by benchmarking existing POPs, some problems of comparison could be overcome. An observer from China emphasized that displaying important risk information in tables makes the report more transparent.

A contact group on HBCD met on Wednesday evening, and a drafting group on the issue met on Thursday. On Thursday, Dawson explained that the revised draft risk profile had been rearranged to include a new section on the comparison of exposure levels and effects data that brought together observed levels in remote and other areas and compared those with toxic effect levels. He highlighted editorial changes to the concluding statement, and explained that it was concluded that there was no need to invoke the precautionary approach in recommending listing.

Responding to a question from China on levels and effects in remote regions, Dawson explained that studies have measured concentration levels in those regions but that there are no studies on the effect of those concentrations on polar bears. Finland underscored that the drafting group was careful not to make comparisons that would be scientifically invalid. An observer from Norway warned against making comparisons, underscoring that when dealing with endocrine effects there are no safe levels of exposure. China stressed the importance of documenting both levels and effects in remote regions, underscoring that in principle satisfying the Annex D criteria was not sufficient for meeting the requirements under Annex E.

Finland highlighted that existing data on environmental concentration and data on toxic effects were collected during preparation of the draft risk profile. Canada said the draft risk profile meets all the requirements for a risk profile, and an observer from the US said the new section improved the document.

On Friday, POPRC-6 considered the revised draft risk profile and accompanying draft decision. China sought clarification on a conclusion that releases of HBCD into the environment are increasing in all regions investigated, and the POPRC agreed to specify Europe and Asia/Japan. The Committee also agreed to specify that a number of measured levels in biota are of significant concern for human health and the environment. The POPRC adopted the risk profile and the accompanying decision, with these amendments.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.12), the POPRC adopts the risk profile for HBCD (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.13) and decides that HBCD is likely, as a result of LRET, to lead to significant adverse effects on human health and the environment such that global action is warranted. The decision also establishes an intersessional working group to prepare a draft RME and invites parties and observers to submit the information specified in Annex F by 8 January 2011.

#### **SHORT-CHAINED CHLORINATED PARAFFINS:**

On Tuesday, Mohammed Yadallee (Mauritius), Chair of the intersessional working group on SCCPs, presented the revised draft risk profile on SCCPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/11 and UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/15), noting that earlier versions had been presented at POPRC-3, 4 and 5, and that 20 countries and two observers submitted new information during the intersessional period. Yadallee highlighted empirical and modeling data indicating that SCCPs undergo LRET and are persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic, particularly to aquatic organisms, and noted that the working group had been unable to reach agreement on a concluding statement to the draft risk profile.

Chair Arndt underscored the need to agree by consensus either to accept the document or to set the substance aside. Under paragraph 8 of Article 8 (Listing of chemicals in Annexes A, B, and C) if a substance is set aside at the risk profile stage, a party may then request the COP to consider instructing the Committee to invite additional information and reconsider the proposal. Japan, supported by Thailand, expressed doubt about the risks posed by SCCPs as a result of LRET, and proposed that SCCPs either remain in the Annex E phase of evaluation or be set aside. China expressed doubt that the new information was sufficient to move the substance forward. France suggested that SCCPs be moved forward to the RME phase. India emphasized that international intervention is not warranted and suggested setting SCCPs aside.

An observer from the Inuit Circumpolar Council urged the POPRC to move SCCPs forward, stressing the precautionary principle and the Convention's objective to protect human health and the environment. An observer from Sweden highlighted toxicological interactions of multiple chemicals, suggesting that SCCPs be kept in Annex E until more robust information on how to tackle interactions is presented. An observer from the US stressed the importance of reaching consensus.

Chair Arndt asked the Committee members that had expressed opinions on SCCPs to meet to find a way forward. On Thursday, after a brief report noting the lack of agreement on how to proceed with SCCPs, Chair Arndt formed a Friends of the Chair group. On Friday, Chair Arndt reported on the group's deliberations and introduced a proposal on next steps, which notes that there are two proposed concluding statements to the risk profile and recommends establishing an intersessional drafting group to: discuss the application of Annex E criteria to SCCPs, consider information from the proposed study by the intersessional working group on toxic interactions on chlorinated paraffins, and revise the draft risk profile accordingly for consideration at POPRC-7.

China preferred that the draft risk profile be set aside and not be considered again until POPRC-9. Japan proposed that POPRC-8 consider a revised draft risk profile, and that the Secretariat present a report on progress made at POPRC-7. The Committee agreed to revise the draft risk profile intersessionally on the basis of the results of the toxic interactions study and of the examination of the application of Annex E criteria, and that the revised draft risk profile would be presented to POPRC-8. It was also agreed that an intersessional working group would carry out this work, with the understanding it would shift to a drafting group in the intersessional period.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF PARAGRAPH 3 AND 4 OF ARTICLE 3: REGULATORY AND ASSESSMENT SCHEMES FOR NEW AND EXISTING PESTICIDES AND INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS**

On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the issue (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/17), noting that paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 3 require those parties that have regulatory and assessment schemes for new pesticides or new industrial chemicals to take measures to regulate, with the aim of preventing the production and use of new pesticides or new industrial chemicals that exhibit POP characteristics.

Chair Arndt explained that the POPRC has received responses from 36 parties and one government observer. The Secretariat summarized the responses, noting that many countries have regulatory schemes for pesticides but few have schemes for industrial chemicals. China noted that new control methods for pesticides and industrial chemicals would take effect on 15 October 2010. Canada noted that prohibitions on four PFCs were enacted on 13 October 2010. The Republic of Korea highlighted her country's new POPs Control Act, which will address all relevant new pesticides and industrial chemicals.

Thailand emphasized that most countries do not evaluate new pesticides and industrial chemicals according to Annex D criteria. He noted that this could lead to omissions from or misinterpretations of the table in Annex I, which summarizes submitted information relevant to the implementation of paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 3 of the Stockholm Convention. Chair Arndt suggested removing Annex I to avoid confusion and errors, and giving parties and observers additional time to add information before sending the report to the COP.

On Friday, the Committee considered the draft decision on the implementation of paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 3, and Thailand called attention to the fact that paragraph 4 language on regulatory and assessment schemes for pesticides or industrial chemicals is not properly reflected. The Committee adopted the decision with minor amendments.

**Final Decision:** In its decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.15), the POPRC requests the Secretariat to update the compilation of information with additional information to be provided by parties and observers before 31 December 2010, and to submit the updated information to COP5.

#### **OTHER MATTERS**

**POPS AND CLIMATE CHANGE:** On Thursday afternoon, the Secretariat introduced a concept note for a project on POPs and climate change (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/27), explaining this project was being carried out by an expert group convened to review existing information and data on the interlinkages between the climate and POPs from a global perspective, for submission to COP5. The Committee agreed that it would be valuable for the POPRC to review the project study to assess whether the information it contains might have an impact on the scientific basis of the POPRC's work. On Friday, the Committee adopted the decision with minor amendments.

**Final Decision:** In its decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.19), the POPRC: takes into account the information provided on the Secretariat's initiative to review the interlinkages between climate change and POPs; takes note of the outcome of the study by the expert group on climate change and POPs; and invites the COP to forward the outcome of the study to the Committee for further consideration.

**POPS-FREE PRODUCTS:** The Secretariat outlined the main elements of a pilot project and programme to highlight products free of POPs (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/28), which aim to raise awareness on POPs and the availability of POPs-free products, extend the outreach of the Convention, and receive information on substitutions and alternatives. He outlined the criteria for products to be included in the POPs-free products list,

and said industry will absorb the costs of analyzing the products. Further, he noted that the results of the pilot phase and possible steps forward will be discussed at COP5.

Several countries shared their observations on the POPs-free products project, with some delegates discussing detection limits, France emphasizing that recycling and the notion of unintentional trace contaminants in relation to products free of POPs may be problematic, and Finland noting that alternatives to POPs are not always harmless. In addition, an observer from Norway suggested targeting non-chemical alternatives, Zambia expressed concern that the project is a deviation from the Convention's original aim, and an observer from Sierra Leone said that developing world manufacturers may not have the expertise or resources to analyze POPs levels.

**EX-COP OUTCOMES:** On Thursday, the Secretariat reported on the outcomes of the simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the COPs to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, which are relevant to the work of the POPRC (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/16), outlining joint activities, including: cooperation on technical and scientific issues, joint awareness-raising and training workshops, and the implementation of the synergies decisions.

**PROPOSAL FOR AN ARTICLE BY THE POPRC:** The Chair presented a note by the Secretariat on a proposal for an article by the POPRC (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/18) on the Committee's work and its role as an interface between science and policy.

Several countries welcomed the suggestion to produce a scientific article, with Switzerland proposing to include information on how the Committee applies listing criteria, Chile favoring the inclusion of lessons learned, and Argentina noting the timeliness, given that POPs are receiving increasing attention in the scientific community.

**UNINTENTIONAL CONTAMINANTS:** The Secretariat introduced the issue, explaining that the EC had submitted a letter inquiring how to apply the notion of "unintentional trace contaminants" for PFOS, c-pentaBDE and c-octaBDE. She noted that in response to this letter the Secretariat had gathered information related to experiences in applying this notion in different countries, receiving submissions from 11 parties and two observers (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/INF/19/Rev.1). Chair Arndt further explained that according to the Convention, quantities of a chemical occurring as unintentional trace contaminants in products and articles shall not be considered listed under Annex A.

The EC informed the POPRC that since submitting the letter in February, the EC has set a lower threshold limit, to allow detection and enforcement, and an upper threshold limit, below which the substance cannot be meaningfully used. Zambia underscored there are no safe numbers in handling POPs. Thailand noted the difficulty of assessing unintentional traces. Sierra Leone stressed differing capacities in measurement accuracy.

The POPRC agreed to take note of the information and to forward the issue to the COP. On Friday, the Secretariat introduced a decision on the issue, which the POPRC adopted without amendment.

**Final Decision:** In the decision (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/CRP.14), the POPRC requests the Secretariat to update the compilation of information with additional information from parties and observers by 31 December 2010 and to submit the updated information to COP5.

**PERFLUORINATED CHEMICALS:** On Thursday, the Secretariat relayed information on a Webinar scheduled for 27 October 2010, convened by the OECD to provide an opportunity for information exchange on activities for the management of PFCs.

**PAPERLESS MEETING:** On Friday, the Committee shared experiences on the paperless meeting concept. Several countries commended the Secretariat on its efforts and expressed support for paperless meetings. Cambodia suggested that conference room papers be provided for Committee members. Zambia proposed that more guidance be given on documents discussed, and Switzerland recommended that documents deliberated in contact groups be posted electronically more frequently to increase accessibility. An observer from Sierra Leone highlighted the environmental aspect of not printing or distributing paper.

#### **DATES AND VENUE OF THE COMMITTEE'S SEVENTH MEETING**

On Friday, the POPRC agreed that POPRC-7 would be held from 10-14 October 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### **CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

On Friday, Chair Arndt presented the draft report of POPRC-6 (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.6/L.1 and L.1/Add.1), with France asking to delete a reference to benchmarking as a possible option to move SCCPs forward. The Committee adopted the report of the meeting as orally amended. Chair Arndt commended members and observers for their contribution to a successful meeting, and thanked the Secretariat, report writers, conference services and interpreters for their efficient support. He closed the meeting at 5:50 pm

### **A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF POPRC-6**

Quiet pervaded the Sunday pre-meetings of the sixth meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC-6), prompting some to worry that the lack of discussion of the more contentious issues represented the calm before the storm. The Committee's two previous meetings were dominated by tense debates on chemicals under review, notably on endosulfan and short-chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs), and many expected fireworks at POPRC-6. The Committee was slated to continue the review of these two substances, as well as hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD), and to take on new responsibilities arising from the decision by the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) in 2009 to list nine new POPs in the Convention's annexes. Given this expanded mandate and the continued review of substances with significant socioeconomic importance to some stakeholders, many expected a difficult week, yet POPRC-6 moved efficiently and collegially through the tasks on this year's agenda. By the close of the meeting, participants were upbeat about the positive, productive atmosphere that characterized the week.



This brief analysis will examine POPRC-6's review of nominated chemicals and the Committee's expanding responsibilities associated with the listing of new POPs.

### **SUBSTANCES UNDER REVIEW**

Familiar work on the POPRC's docket included continuing the evaluation of the three chemicals currently nominated for listing under the Convention. Reaching agreement on two of these substances, SCCPs, used in a variety of industrial applications, and endosulfan, an agricultural pesticide, has proven challenging in past meetings, and POPRC-6 again struggled to reach consensus on a way forward.

As noted by POPRC Chair Reiner Arndt, SCCPs have been a "persistent issue" at the POPRC. The draft risk profile on SCCPs has been presented three times since 2007, and each time the Committee was divided, opting to reconsider the issue at its next meeting. The intersessional working group gathered new information on these compounds, and several participants were hopeful that the additional evidence would help the committee reach a consensual decision to move SCCPs to the next phase of evaluation. As the POPRC considered the issue yet again, some members supported moving SCCPs to the risk management evaluation phase, while others preferred setting the chemical aside, thus removing SCCPs from the POPRC's agenda.

Some observers noted that taking decisive action either way would enhance the Committee's decision-making legitimacy by allaying fears of those concerned that, once a chemical has been nominated, it is guaranteed to progress through each stage of evaluation. Reviewing the revised draft risk profile, some argued the evidence clearly supported the need for listing, while others pointed to gaps in data on toxicity in remote areas and questioned the need for global action. The compromise reached, to revisit the issue at POPRC-8 on the basis of an examination of how the screening criteria are being applied and additional information on toxic interactions, reflects the divide that persists on this issue within the Committee, yet also underscores members' commitment to reaching a science-based consensus on even the most difficult issues.

The most controversial substance facing the Committee was the pesticide endosulfan, the listing of which a small but fervent minority of members strongly opposes. Endosulfan dominated the POPRC's agenda during its previous two meetings. This year was a marked change, and indeed, several observers commented that as the number of countries banning endosulfan continues to grow, the writing is on the wall—it will be listed under the Stockholm Convention. This recognition was perhaps best illustrated by the Committee's focus on the availability of alternatives to endosulfan, as stakeholders looked ahead to COP5's negotiations on possible time-limited exemptions for specific uses. Nevertheless, India once again objected to the procedure by which endosulfan has been advanced through each stage of review, and opposed any further action on the substance prior to COP5. While this concern with procedure took little time in plenary discussion, India's opposition compelled the Committee to choose either to set the chemical aside or to vote to move it forward. While several members emphasized their reluctance to vote, 24 Committee members did vote to recommend that COP5 list the substance in Annex A with

exemptions. As a result of this decision, endosulfan will be the only chemical recommended for listing under the Convention at COP5 in April 2011.

### **NEW POPS, NEW RESPONSIBILITIES**

When COP4 agreed to amend the Convention to list nine new substances, the COP asked the POPRC to assess some of the ramifications of these listings. Notably, the POPRC was tasked with providing advice on managing POPs-containing products in the waste stream, and developing guidance on substitution and alternatives.

Finding a solution to the disposal of articles containing POP brominated diphenyl ethers (POP-BDEs) proved to be technically complex. At COP4, parties had agreed to allow for the recycling of articles containing these POP-BDEs under certain conditions in order to avoid adversely impacting the recycling industry. Products containing POP-BDEs, such as some foam carpet pads and computer casings, are widespread and difficult to track in the waste stream, as articles are rarely labeled as containing POP-BDEs. In its examination of the issue, the POPRC has found that countries have vastly different capacities for identifying and dealing with such wastes. However, many participants stressed the urgency of addressing this challenge, as continued recycling will make these POPs more difficult to trace, segregate and remove from the waste stream in an environmentally-sound manner. The Committee discussed not only the scientific and technical underpinnings of these recommendations, but, in keeping with the expansion of its mandate, also addressed the constraints on some parties' capacity to implement them. As a result, the POPRC's guidance reflects these realities and breaks the recommendations down into short-, medium- and long-term actions.

With these activities, the POPRC's mandate has been expanded to include several issues relevant to the new POPs agenda. As Executive Secretary Donald Cooper noted, the needs of the COP will change as more chemicals are listed, and the POPRC's responsibilities may evolve accordingly. The POPRC is already being called upon to begin addressing the implementation issues associated with listing live chemicals, the impact of which will be felt not only by countries and affected populations, but by producers and users of the listed substances. To some, such activities signal a shift in the POPRC's role from that of a specialized technical review committee to a scientific advisory body.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

COP5 will consider the POPRC's recommendation to list endosulfan, and the negotiation dynamics may be quite different when one chemical is under the spotlight, as compared to the review of the nine recommendations considered at COP4. Some have expressed concern about how parties will react to the fact that the POPRC has had to resort to a vote at every stage of review, arguing that science should not be subject to a vote. Others emphasize the POPRC's rules of procedures allow for voting when all efforts to achieve consensus have been exhausted, and contend that such a move has been necessary to keep political interests out of the POPRC. The extent to which

considerations of process shape the decision on listing will be seen by some as a test of the POPRC's legitimacy and credibility as a science-based review committee.

After six meetings, the POPRC has completed its review of ten chemicals, is continuing work on two substances, and is meeting the challenges of an expanding mandate. No new chemicals have yet been nominated for listing, but some were buzzing about a number of chemicals thought to be "in the pipeline" for nomination. Whether or not these nominations materialize, POPRC will move forward with its work on a robust agenda.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Stockholm Convention Regional Capacity-Building Workshop on New POPs, the Process for Reviewing and Updating National Implementation Plans, and Reporting Requirements under the Stockholm Convention for French-speaking Africa:

This workshop is on the requirements pertaining to the "new POPs" and on the possible implications of such listing at the national level. **dates:** 1-4 November 2010 **location:** Dakar, Senegal **contact:** Stockholm Convention Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8729 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **e-mail:** [ssc@unep.ch](mailto:ssc@unep.ch) **www:** <http://chm.pops.int/Programmes/TechnicalAssistance/TrainingWorkshops/Africa/AfricaFrancophoneDakar2010/tabid/812/mctl/ViewDetails/EventModID/1007/EventID/103/xmid/3733/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

### Regional Awareness Raising Workshop on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination for Implementation:

This workshop aims at offering a holistic approach to the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and is being organized by the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, in partnership with the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central Europe in Slovakia and UNITAR. **dates:** 2-4 November 2010 **location:** Bratislava, Slovakia **contact:** Gerold Wyrwal, Rotterdam Convention Secretariat **phone:** +39-06-5705-2188 **fax:** +39-06-5705-6347 **e-mail:** [pic@pic.int](mailto:pic@pic.int) **www:** <http://www.pic.int>

**Twenty-Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (MOP 22):** This meeting is scheduled to take place in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2010. **dates:** 8-12 November 2010 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Ozone Secretariat **phone:** +254-20-762-3851 **fax:** +254-20-762-4691 **email:** [ozoneinfo@unep.org](mailto:ozoneinfo@unep.org) **www:** <http://ozone.unep.org/>

### 4th EU-JUSSCANNZ Countries Meeting on SAICM:

The meeting will convene back-to-back with the joint meetings of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Chemicals Committee and Working Party on Chemicals, Pesticides and Biotechnology. **dates:** 18-19 November 2010 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** SAICM Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8532 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **e-mail:** [saicm@chemicals.unep.ch](mailto:saicm@chemicals.unep.ch) **www:** <http://www.saicm.org/index.php?content=meeting&mid=118&menuid=&def=1>

**Regional capacity-building workshop on new POPs and the process for reviewing and updating NIPs:** The regional capacity-building workshop on new POPs and the process for reviewing and updating NIPs will offer an

opportunity to become more familiar with the enhanced version of the online electronic reporting system in preparation for the second reporting cycle. **dates:** 23-26 November 2010 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Stockholm Convention Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8729 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **e-mail:** [ssc@unep.ch](mailto:ssc@unep.ch) **www:** <http://chm.pops.int/Programmes/TechnicalAssistance/TrainingWorkshops/AsiaPacific/BangkokThailand2323November2010/tabid/816/mctl/ViewDetails/EventModID/1007/EventID/104/xmid/3752/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

**Second Session of the INC to Prepare a Global Legally Binding Instrument on Mercury:** This meeting is scheduled to be the second of five Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) meetings to negotiate a legally binding instrument on mercury. **dates:** 24-28 January 2011 **location:** Chiba, Japan **contact:** UNEP Mercury Programme **phone:** +41-22-917-8183 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **e-mail:** [mercury@chemicals.unep.ch](mailto:mercury@chemicals.unep.ch) **www:** <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/Negotiations/INC2/tabid/3468/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

**Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention:** The fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention will consider the POPRC's recommendation to list endosulfan in Annex A, with exemptions. **dates:** 25-29 April 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Stockholm Convention Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8729 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **e-mail:** [ssc@unep.ch](mailto:ssc@unep.ch) **www:** <http://www.pops.int>

**POPRC-7:** The seventh meeting of the POPs Review Committee will consider additional chemicals for listing under the Convention and respond to tasks assigned by COP5. **dates:** 10-14 October 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Stockholm Convention Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8729 **fax:** +41-22-917-8098 **e-mail:** [ssc@unep.ch](mailto:ssc@unep.ch) **www:** <http://www.pops.int>

## GLOSSARY

BAT	Best available techniques
BDE	Brominated diphenyl ether
BEP	Best environmental practices
c-octaBDE	Commercial octabromodiphenyl ether
COP	Conference of the Parties
c-pentaBDE	Commercial pentabromodiphenyl ether
CRP	Conference room paper
HBCD	Hexabromocyclododecane
IPEN	International POPs Elimination Network
LRET	Long-range environmental transport
PBDE	Polybrominated diphenyl ether
PeCB	Pentachlorobenzene
PFCs	Perfluorinated chemicals
PFOS	Perfluorooctane sulfonate
POP	Persistent organic pollutant
POPRC	POPs Review Committee
RME	Risk management evaluation
SCCPs	Short-chained chlorinated paraffins



## SIDS Policy & Practice

A Knowledgebase on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States



The International Institute for Sustainable Development is pleased to announce the launch of

# SIDS Policy & Practice: A Knowledgebase on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

## SIDS-L.Iisd.org

SIDS Policy & Practice is a knowledge management project that reports on activities related to the sustainable development of small Island developing States (SIDS). It is managed by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Reporting Services.

The project is conducted in close cooperation with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), in conjunction with the revitalization of SIDSNet, in support of the Barbados Programme of Action, which called for support for "the development of a small Islands' sustainable development information network to facilitate the exchange of experience among small Island developing States." The launch of SIDS Policy & Practice is timed to coincide with the UN General Assembly's High-Level Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation (MSI) of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, being held in New York at UN Headquarters on 24-25 September 2010.

IISD RS is fully responsible for the content posted on SIDS Policy & Practice. Information on implementation activities is provided in cooperation with SIDSNet.

We invite you to visit SIDS Policy & Practice, at [SIDS-L.Iisd.org](http://SIDS-L.Iisd.org). Please also visit our Earth Negotiations Bulletin coverage of the Mauritius Strategy +5 Review at <http://www.Iisd.ca/sids/msl+5/>.

For further information on this initiative or to provide us with information about your SIDS-related activity, please contact Faye Leone, Content Editor, at [faye@Iisd.org](mailto:faye@Iisd.org).

