

## BRS Conventions COPs Highlights: Monday, 5 May 2025

Substantive matters taken up included Basel Convention (BC) plastic waste amendments, and Stockholm Convention (SC) and Rotterdam Convention (RC) listings. As with financial resources, they saw limited progress. The [meeting documents](#) can be found on the BRS website.

### Basel Convention

**Legal, Compliance and Governance Matters: Proposal by the Russian Federation to amend Article 6.2:** The COP agreed to defer the issue to the next meeting.

**Scientific and technical matters: Nanomaterials:** The Secretariat introduced the document (UNEP/CHW.17/11).

SWITZERLAND, PAKISTAN, and others called for action on nanomaterials, particularly continued data gathering, information sharing, and increased awareness. BANGLADESH proposed developing international standards, and SRI LANKA suggested preparing technical guidelines to control waste containing nanomaterials.

The UN INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH (UNITAR) drew attention to an ongoing webinar series organized by UNITAR and the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions Secretariat. The ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (ESDO) pointed to UNITAR's capacity-building support and to the need to consider nanomaterials in textiles.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH INTERNATIONAL urged prompt action given unknown impacts, particularly on infants and youth and gaps in regulation. They called for including a reference to children's and youth's health in the decision.

The COP adopted the draft decision, pending budget approval.

**BC Technical guidelines:** The COP adopted the decisions regarding the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management (ESM) of waste lead-acid batteries and other waste batteries (CHW.17/5, paragraph 21) and the ESM of waste tyres (CHW.17/5, paragraph 25).

### Rotterdam Convention

**Listing of chemicals in Annex III: Iprodione:** Parties continued their statements on listing iprodione in Annex III as a pesticide (RC/COP.12/11, Add.1). URUGUAY, ARGENTINA, IRAN, CHILE, and CROPLIFE INTERNATIONAL opposed the listing, citing no affordable and efficient alternatives, with CROPLIFE INTERNATIONAL assuring the COP of its safety.

IRAQ, NEW ZEALAND, CHILDREN AND YOUTH INTERNATIONAL, and PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK (PAN) INDIA supported the listing given clear harmful impacts on humans and the environment and in line with World Health Organization (WHO) and Chemical Review Committee (CRC) recommendations.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, ARGENTINA, and GUATEMALA, opposed by the EU, objected to a proposal by RC COP12 President Hammad Shamimi to forward the issue to the RC Listing contact group.

The COP agreed to take up the issue later in the week.

**Chlorpyrifos:** The Secretariat introduced the draft decision to list chlorpyrifos in Annex III and the draft decision guidance document (DGD) (RC/COP.12/8, Add.1). ERITREA, the UK, the EU, SWITZERLAND, BOLIVIA, NEPAL, LEBANON, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, BRAZIL, THAILAND, MEXICO, NORWAY, SERBIA, SRI LANKA, SOUTH AFRICA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, MAURITIUS, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, NEW ZEALAND, IRAQ, COOK ISLANDS, VANUATU, TUVALU, COLOMBIA, GUYANA, STATE OF PALESTINE, IRAN, ETHIOPIA, the INTERNATIONAL POLLUTANTS ELIMINATION NETWORK (IPEN), PAN, and the CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT, supported the listing, noting chlorpyrifos is already listed under the SC and fully meets the criteria for RC listing.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, BELARUS, INDIA, ECUADOR, and INSTITUT DU SAHEL opposed, calling for expert-level consideration, and some citing a lack of alternatives.

SRI LANKA voiced its support for voting on scientific matters. The COP agreed to take this up in the RC Listing contact group.

**Paraquat:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents, including the draft decision to list paraquat and the DGD (RC/COP.12/15/Rev.1, Add.1).

The UK, TOGO, MALDIVES, SWITZERLAND, the EU, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, MALI, NEPAL, COOK ISLANDS, IRAN, NIGER, BELARUS, BURKINA FASO, MAURITIUS, JORDAN, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, BENIN, TUNISIA, IRAQ, CAMEROON, MOZAMBIQUE, CÔTE D'IVOIRE, THAILAND, SENEGAL, and BURUNDI supported listing.

The EU, MALI, and THAILAND reminded that the listing does not constitute a ban. COOK ISLANDS, recalling that paraquat has been discussed several times, urged parties to agree. BRAZIL supported the listing, recognizing that this issue depends on national capacities and situations.

URUGUAY, VENEZUELA, GUATEMALA, ARGENTINA, ECUADOR, and PARAGUAY opposed the listing, since in practice, listing is an obstacle to trade. URUGUAY and PARAGUAY suggested a risk assessment based on good agricultural practices, which the EU said was outside the RC's purpose. GUATEMALA suggested suspending consideration at this meeting.

CHEMICALS AND WASTE YOUTH PLATFORM, PAN INTERNATIONAL, and PAN INDIA strongly supported listing in Annex III, citing neurological effects on children even with minimal exposure and the absence of an antidote in case of intoxication. PAN INDIA urged replacing paraquat with non-toxic alternatives.

CROPLIFE INTERNATIONAL, praising paraquat's effectiveness on resistant weeds, objected to the listing, stating that it does not fulfill RC requirements because Malaysia's final regulatory action (FRA) was not based on risk evaluation, and Mozambique's FRA was based on a tier-one risk assessment.

The issue will be discussed in the RC Listing contact group.

**RC Compliance:** The COP continued consideration of this issue (FAO/RC/COP.12/17). The EU suggested adding two activities to the Compliance Committee's 2026–2027 work programme (CRP.6):

- to identify and review parties' issues relating to the implementation of the labelling requirements and submission of the Safety Data Sheets;
- to identify and review parties' issues relating to making information on chemical handling, accident management, and safer alternatives public.

BRAZIL, SAUDI ARABIA, INDIA, and PAKISTAN asked to discuss the EU's proposal in a contact group, given cost implications. COP12 President Shamimi will consult with the Bureau on the way forward.

**Enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention:** The Secretariat presented documents, including a Secretariat note and report on information received (RC/COP.12/16, INF/18).

Presenting CRP.4, BRAZIL stated that the RC's effectiveness depends on the ability to act on CRC recommendations, suggesting that listing challenges reflects structural challenges. Noting that many parties cite socio-economic considerations, they highlighted the CRP's request for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and WHO to ensure that RC listing is not a criterion for highly hazardous pesticide (HHP) classifications used by certification bodies to ban pesticides. They highlighted the request for technical support and capacity building and establishing a permanent effectiveness committee.

The EU underlined actions should stay within the RC's scope, and the COP cannot dictate to other international organizations. They also rejected creating another subsidiary body. They presented CRP.8 aimed to clarify the misinterpretation of the listing by private certification bodies.

NORWAY, the UK, and SWITZERLAND supported the EU's proposal and, with NEW ZEALAND, JAPAN, MALDIVES and INDIA, did not support a new committee. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO queried the budgetary implications.

Zambia, for the AFRICAN REGION, GUATEMALA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and SAUDI ARABIA supported CRP.4. ARGENTINA, PARAGUAY, PAKISTAN, EL SALVADOR, ECUADOR, COLOMBIA, and MEXICO welcomed it as a starting point.

IPEN, PAN, and the AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS, objected to Brazil's proposal saying it fundamentally weakens the RC and increases barriers for developing countries by raising the technical requirements for notifications.

SOLIDAR SUISSE characterized the argument about private certification schemes banning RC chemicals as false.

A contact group, co-chaired by Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) and Karoliina Anttonen (Finland), will discuss the CRPs.

### Stockholm Convention

**Compliance:** The COP adopted the draft decision on compliance matters (POPS/COP.12/22), including the work programme of the SC Compliance Committee for 2026–2027.

### Contact Groups

**Financial Resources:** The contact group, co-chaired by Toks Akinseye (the UK) and David Kapindula (Zambia), focused on the African Group's CRP on developing a resource mobilization strategy from non-state actors.

On the preambular paragraphs, some called for references to the responsibility of developed parties to provide financial resources. Others highlighted that the document only relates to mobilization from non-state actors, and only the SC has a financial mechanism for developed countries to contribute to.

On the mandate for proposed intersessional work, views diverged on whether the Secretariat should gather additional information or develop the resource mobilization strategy.

Despite clarification that the report responded to a mandate from the BRS COPs, some opposed any mention of it, while others could accept to "take note" of it. As a way forward, one party proposed establishing a small intersessional working group (SIWG).

**BC Technical Matters:** The contact group, co-chaired by Nawaf Bilasi (Saudi Arabia) and Martien Janssen (the Netherlands), focused on further actions regarding the plastic waste amendments and national reporting.

On plastics, delegates agreed to update the relevant persistent organic pollutants (POPs) waste technical guidelines to reflect the

plastic waste amendments. A lengthy debate ensued on the scope of information to be collected on implementing the plastic waste amendments, including who could submit information, and if this information should include the efficacy of the amendments. Given reservations on the need for a SIWG, discussions will continue.

On possible revisions to table 9 of the reporting format (cases of illegal traffic) and to the manual for completing the format for national reporting (CHW.17/INF/12), several indicated they have numerous comments. There was general support to compile comments for consideration by the Open-Ended Working Group.

**BC Strategic Matters:** Co-chaired by Ann De Jonghe (Belgium) and Lendita Dika (North Macedonia), the contact group focused on the draft strategic framework. On the Secretariat's report on tracking progress, a few parties proposed disaggregating the report by region, and for the Secretariat to coordinate with regional centres and national authorities to ensure it reflects developing countries' capacities.

On the strategic goals and objectives, delegates considered the availability of data, coherence with the BC's language, and avoiding duplication. For these reasons, delegates agreed to delete several indicators. For Objective 1.6 on reducing the generation of hazardous and other wastes, delegates deleted: carrying out inventories; amount of hazardous and other waste generated per capita; and amount of hazardous and other wastes avoided.

For Objective 2.1 on parties implementing the prior informed consent (PIC) procedure, indicators discussed included the number of parties with national regulatory systems for decision making on import, export or transit of wastes, and using electronic approaches to implement the PIC procedure.

**BC Legal:** The contact group, co-chaired by Perine Nkosi Kasonde (Zambia) and Jason Dunn (Australia), continued discussions on Annex IV (disposal operations). There was a lengthy impasse regarding the headings and introductory texts of Sections A (disposal operations) and B (recovery operations).

Discussions considered merging several recovery operations. Many countries opposed the proposal, one arguing it is "not worth the cost of implementation." Given ongoing disagreements, the contact group color-coded all operations according to whether they are agreed (yellow), close to being agreed (grey), or unagreeable (red).

On releases to the atmosphere, a delegate presented the outcome of small group discussions to cover "gases contained in waste." Several delegates said that the proposal is circular and does not resolve their concerns. The item was coded in red. Discussions continued into the evening.

**SC Listing:** A drafting group considered Ethiopia's proposed amendment to the UV-328 listing. The contact group, co-chaired by Timo Seppälä (Finland) and Lamin Jaiteh (the Gambia), tried to finalize medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs). They agreed to the supplemental decision for the COP to review the use of MCCPs, informed by the POPs Review Committee.

The last specific exemption without consensus was for using polyvinyl chloride (PVC) in the construction sector, except in indoor spaces. Delegates debated whether to narrow this exemption further, since PVC is a significant use for MCCPs. Discussions will continue.

### In the Corridors

"Shouldn't the brackets be clearing?" asked a delegate moving from a contact group to plenary, with the expectation of soon making the return journey. A Co-Chair pleaded for progress, citing mounting schedule clashes as issues drag on. SC delegates wondered how long listing would take, especially after a new suggestion touched on the agreed-upon MCCPs chemical identity. Some experts on chlorinated substances have left, and the Co-Chair acknowledged this might be the "most complex listing yet."

Synergies have provided the extra time to get the SC listing right and, in theory at least, solve some BC technical and legal issues. As delegates blocked chlorpyrifos in the RC, some wondered, "Where have synergies gone?" The SC agreed to eliminate the production and use of the pesticide, albeit with several specific exemptions. An RC listing would provide transparency in any ongoing trade for use related to these exemptions. It seems a microcosm for wider questions about the RC's effectiveness, an issue just opened for parties' consideration.