

BRS Conventions COPs Highlights: Thursday, 8 May 2025

The Basel Convention (BC) adopted decisions on the strategic framework and further activities related to plastic waste. The Rotterdam Convention (RC) did not list any further chemicals, and the Stockholm Convention (SC) had to postpone its consideration of medium-chained chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs). The [meeting documents](#) can be found on the BRS website.

Joint Issues

Credentials: The COPs adopted the credentials reports (CHW.17/INF/5; RC/COP.12/INF/3; POPS/COP.12/INF/3).

Election of officers: The COPs elected their respective bureaus and members of subsidiary bodies. Nawaf Bilasi (Saudi Arabia) will be BC COP18 President. Teresa Moreno (Panama) will be RC COP13 President. Aoudou Joswa (Cameroon) will be SC COP13 President (CHW.17/CRP.27; RC/COP.12/CRP.13; POPS/COP.12/CRP.16). The COPs agreed that the Secretariat will facilitate ongoing nomination processes.

Venue and dates of the next meetings: The COPs adopted the decision accepting Panama's offer to host the next meeting in Panama City, Panama, tentatively from 19 to 30 April 2027 (CHW.17/28; RC/COP.12/27; POPS/COP.12/30).

Adoption of the report: Noting they had spoken for 39 countries, UKRAINE asked for paragraph 17 to be amended to reflect that they had spoken "on behalf of a number of countries." The COP agreed to the amendment and adopted the report (CHW.17/L.1; RC/COP.12/L.1; POPS/COP.12/L.1).

Basel Convention

Scientific and technical matters: Further consideration of plastic waste: The COP adopted the decision (CRP.22).

Strategic matters: Strategic framework: The COP adopted the decision and the BC strategic framework for the period 2025–2031 (CHW.17/3/Add.1 and CRP.24).

Rotterdam Convention

Listing of chemicals in Annex III: Mercury: RC COP12 President Shamimi explained that the contact group could not agree to list mercury in RC Annex III.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION and KYRGYZSTAN opposed the listing, saying it is premature, with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION also disagreeing that the listing criteria had been met.

The COP agreed that it had not completed consideration of this agenda item and to include it in the provisional agenda of COP13.

Iprodione: ARGENTINA, ECUADOR, GUATEMALA, and IRAN opposed the listing of iprodione in RC Annex III, and called

for deferring further consideration to the next COP. ECUADOR and ARGENTINA also said they did not agree that the listing criteria had been met.

The COP agreed that it had not completed consideration of this agenda item and to include it in the provisional agenda of COP13.

Methyl bromide: The RUSSIAN FEDERATION and IRAN objected to listing methyl bromide in Annex III. They also disagreed that the criteria for listing had been met. INDIA expressed its reservation to the listing.

The COP agreed that it had not completed consideration of this agenda item and to include it in the provisional agenda of COP13.

Chlorpyrifos: The RUSSIAN FEDERATION opposed listing and disagreed that all criteria for listing had been met.

The COP agreed that it had not completed consideration of this agenda item and to include it in the provisional agenda of COP13.

Paraquat: PARAGUAY, GUATEMALA, ECUADOR, ARGENTINA, and VENEZUELA objected to listing paraquat in Annex III as a pesticide. They also disagreed that the criteria for listing had been met.

The COP agreed that it had not completed consideration of this agenda item and to include it in the provisional agenda of COP13.

Paraquat dichloride formulations: ARGENTINA, GUATEMALA, PARAGUAY, VENEZUELA, and ECUADOR objected to listing paraquat formulations in Annex III as a severely hazardous pesticide formulation.

The COP agreed that it had not completed consideration of this agenda item and to include it in the provisional agenda of COP13.

URUGUAY highlighted the importance of the prior informed consent procedure, emphasized that listing does not entail prohibition, and urged continued work with private certifying agencies.

Stockholm Convention

Listing of chemicals: MCCPs: INDIA proposed a change to the exemption on flexible polyvinyl chloride (PVC), to allow for its use in the construction sector, including in indoor spaces.

Objecting to this proposal, the EU, NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND, and the UK said the contact group found a carefully crafted compromise through thorough consideration by the technical experts. The EU suggested India addresses it nationally since India is an opt-in party. IRAN requested time for further consideration.

Contact Groups

Joint Issues: Co-chaired by Ole Thomas Thommesen (Norway) and Artak Khachatryan (Armenia), the contact group met briefly to review a compromise reached by interested parties. The group agreed to "acknowledge" the activities undertaken

by the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions Secretariat in the plastics Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The group agreed to forward the cleared decision to the plenary.

Financial Resources and Technical Assistance: Co-chaired by Toks Akinseye (the UK) and David Kapindula (Zambia), the contact group met throughout the day. It first considered the decision on resource mobilization from non-state actors. One delegate proposed new text for the draft decision. Several countries insisted on the need to have a clear procedure for channeling financial resources from outside sources, while another suggested establishing a small intersessional working group to work in tandem with the Secretariat and come up with a draft strategy at the next COP.

A group of countries reiterated they want to: remove the “non-state actors” wording; emphasize that mobilized resources should be channeled only to developing countries; remove references to previous COP decisions or work undertaken by the Secretariat; and reference SC Article 13.2 on mobilizing resources from developed countries. Many delegates opposed these suggestions, saying “non-state actors” is common UN language, and the focus of the decision is different from Article 13.

The contact group then turned to the draft decision on technical assistance. They agreed to include “non-party states” as support providers, but did not agree on “others in a position to do.” They also did not agree on whether to include all parties as support, technical assistance, and technology transfer receivers. After prolonged, small group discussions, delegates removed the mentions of Article 13 (financial mechanism) and receivers. They asked for legal assistance from the Secretariat on how to refer to technology transfer, as the RC does not include a provision on the matter. The decision was then agreed.

Discussions on resource mobilization resumed in the evening.

BC Legal: Co-chaired by Perine Nkosi Kasonde (Zambia) and Jason Dunn (Australia), the contact group continued consideration of a revised CRP.14, which was initially proposed by many countries to address problems with paragraph 23 of the compliance decision taken earlier at COP17.

The group revisited the terms of reference of the Mechanism for Promoting Implementation and Compliance with the Convention and the role of the Implementation and Compliance Committee (ICC) in cases where a party has not submitted its national report for five or more years and all facilitation by the ICC has failed. Discussions centered on language recommending that parties do not allow the export of hazardous and other wastes to other parties if the ICC has credible information that the waste will not be managed in an environmentally sound manner. They also discussed bracketed text on the ICC recommending to the COP that it suspend the eligibility of the party to become a member of any Bureau of the COP, Open-ended Working Group, or ICC.

RC Listing: Co-chaired by Marit Randall (Norway) and Caroline Theka (Malawi), the contact group finished its work on the remaining four listing proposals, with some parties reiterating their objections to listing methyl bromide, paraquat pesticide, and paraquat dichloride formulations.

Two parties objected to listing chlorpyrifos. Several parties queried the reasoning, especially since the SC just agreed to eliminate it, reiterating that chlorpyrifos would already be recognized as highly hazardous pesticide because of the SC listing, and, therefore, concerns on trade implications should not apply.

RC Effectiveness: The contact group, co-chaired by Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) and Karoliina Anttonen (Finland), reviewed the Co-Chairs’ proposed draft decision, largely re-inserting previously stated issues.

The preamble sets out a call for information from the parties and observers, including how they use existing databases. Several countries suggested that this invitation be in accordance with national capacities and to enhance understanding of chemicals. They stressed the need to recognize that the RC does not impose trade prohibitions or restrictions. Several opposed, preferring a broader call to allow for more information to be gathered on how countries identify and track international trade in chemicals, seeing this as key to understanding the RC’s effectiveness.

Countries agreed that the text should include either training or mentoring, and debated the scope of both activities and the financial implications.

On private certification bodies, parties disagreed whether the Secretariat or parties should engage in dialogues to address the misinterpretation of RC listing. The main concern was respecting the independence of private actors and staying within the RC’s scope, while also addressing the issue. Parties ultimately agreed it is not a task for the Secretariat, but could not agree whether it is a prerogative of the parties, as some voiced concerns that certification bodies are in foreign jurisdictions. Parties also diverged on whether engagement of certification bodies should happen only regarding chemicals that are already listed, or also for those proposed for listing. Extensive deliberations ensued on how the Secretariat should collect and provide information and further party submissions.

In the Corridors

A clear indication of the hours delegates have put in: the Caffetino ran out of coffee. “One day left, and we have a week of work to do,” remarked a tired delegate heading into an evening contact group. Rather than adopting decisions throughout the day, and focusing minds on just a few tricky talks, the list of unresolved issues was essentially untouched at the end of the day. The RC went through its usual performance of not agreeing to list several chemicals because of a few countries’ objections. In a twist, they also couldn’t agree that the listing criteria were met in a few cases. That was the easiest part of the day.

The SC still hasn’t listed MCCPs or agreed to the proposal to amend the UV-328 listing. MCCPs are held up because an issue that many thought was resolved wasn’t. Despite agreement in the contact group on what types of PVC would and would not be excluded, it was re-opened in plenary. Two conference room papers appeared on the intranet for UV-328: one with the listing amendment, the other with the decision’s preamble. A few said splitting was a legal necessity, while others stressed that the preamble is part of the package because it sets out why this amendment is exceptional and should not become a precedent.

Also still on the list: RC effectiveness, which, after six hours, had not cleared a single paragraph. Technical assistance discussions were moving, largely through small group huddles. BC compliance negotiators felt the weight of their task to quickly negotiate very difficult questions, including what to do with parties who continuously fail to comply.

The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the BRS TripleCOP will be available on Monday, 12 May 2025, at: enb.iisd.org/basel-rotterdam-stockholm-conventions-brs-cops-2025