

Summary of the 15th Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal: 23–26 June 2026

“We’ve had passionate debates this week, but that just proves that the Basel Convention is alive and relevant.”

This observation of the Chair during the closing plenary of the 15th meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG 15) of the Basel Convention alludes to the intense, and at times, emotional debates during the week. Delegates faced the challenge of how one of the world’s oldest multilateral environment agreements (approaching its 40th birthday) can meet growing, complex waste-related challenges such as trade in plastics, electronic waste (e-waste), batteries, and used textiles, while staying relevant to longstanding challenges such as ship recycling.

OEWG 15 also grappled with how to keep the Convention’s cornerstones—the prior informed consent (PIC) procedure and its technical annexes that guide national authorities in determining when waste shipments should be controlled and subject to PIC—up-to-date and fit for purpose.

The OEWG meets once in the year between the biennial sessions of the Convention’s governing body, the Conference of the Parties (COP). Its job is to ensure existing COP mandates are implemented, and prepare for the next COP.

The agenda for OEWG 15 was more packed than its predecessors, in part because the Convention has undergone important changes in recent years with amendments regarding e-waste and plastic waste and an amendment to the Convention’s Annex IV on disposal and recovery operations, all of which has automatically triggered associated work on guidance, guidelines, and other tools to aid and guide national officials in the proper implementation of those amendments. All this work must be supervised by the OEWG.

Further weighing on the OEWG agenda was work greenlit by COP 17 in 2025 on possible comprehensive amendments to two key Convention Annexes, I (wastes controlled) and III (hazardous characteristics), which not only trigger the PIC and other treaty control obligations, but also have been copied wholesale by most Parties into their national laws and regulations. This means any changes to these annexes implies substantial legislative, regulatory, capacity-building and enforcement investments among Convention Parties.

The OEWG agenda traditionally is divided into four parts: strategic; technical; legal; and international cooperation. At OEWG 15, the strategic work entailed a review of options for improving the PIC procedure. The technical work was the lion’s share of the agenda:

- updating technical guidelines that guide national officials about the environmentally sound management (ESM) of wastes involving persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mercury, batteries, and pneumatic tyres;
- updating technical guidelines necessary as a result of the e-waste and plastic waste amendments;
- deciding on next steps for Convention work on plastic waste;
- examining options for the Convention to address the growing problem of used textiles and textile waste;
- national reporting on waste; and
- work on bringing PIC into the digital age (electronic approaches to notification and movement documents).

The legal work, while consisting of fewer agenda items, consumed nearly as much time and energy, since it featured:

- careful review of proposals for changes in Annexes I and III;
- updating technical materials needed to aid adjustment to the new Annex IV changes; and
- draft revisions to the notification and movement documents and the instructions for completing them.

As for international cooperation, the key debate was what sort of relationship the Basel Convention will have with the International Maritime Organization’s (IMO) Hong Kong Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, now that the latter entered into force in 2025. Some countries are Parties to both, but many are not. Should Basel let Hong Kong take the lead on movements of ships for dismantling/recycling, or should they work hand-in-hand? This debate once roiled the Basel Convention and now has new life.

Also under international cooperation is the growing conviction among Parties that the Basel Convention needs to work closer with the World Customs Organization (WCO) on aligning Basel codes with the WCO’s Harmonized System customs codes so that customs agents can better enforce Basel Convention controls.

OEWG 15 convened 23–26 June 2026 in Geneva, Switzerland. Approximately 580 people attended the meeting, including over 400 representatives of 147 Parties to the Convention, five from non-Parties, 13 representatives of Basel Convention regional centres, 18 representatives of UN agencies, and 165 representatives of non-governmental organizations.

OEWG 15 Report

OEWG 15 Chair Nneka Nicholas (Antigua and Barbuda) opened the meeting on Tuesday, 23 June 2026. Noting that the Group's agenda reflected the growing complexity of the challenges the Convention faces, Nicholas reminded delegates of their charge: ensuring the Convention remains effective in face of a changing landscape of new waste streams posing challenges and evolving scientific understanding of the hazardous components of waste.

Noting the packed agenda, Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, urged delegates to examine the work done since the last COP, test whether the proposed outputs are sufficiently practical and robust, and determine which ones need further refinement before COP 18. He called for clear priorities, practical proposals, and showing ambition in the outcomes delegates seek.

In opening statements, regional groups signaled their support for a productive OEWG and indicated their priority issues. Panama, for the LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP (GRULAC), emphasized the importance of the revised technical guidelines under review, underlining the need for them to be transparent, evidence-based, and reflective of the diverse realities of all regions.

Uganda, for the AFRICAN GROUP, highlighted: improving the functioning of the PIC procedure; the revised technical guidelines on POPs, mercury, and batteries; options on used textiles and textile waste; proposed revisions to Convention annexes; and ship recycling.

Indonesia, for the ASIA-PACIFIC, emphasized: improving the PIC procedure; technical guidelines involving POPs, lead-acid batteries and pneumatic tyres; textiles; and the review of Annexes I and III.

The EUROPEAN UNION (EU) stressed: textiles; improving the PIC procedure; plastic waste; the draft guidance on e-waste; and the review of Annexes I and III.

The AFRICAN GROUP, GRULAC, and ASIA-PACIFIC agreed on the need to strengthen technical assistance and capacity-building and support for regional work and cooperation among neighboring countries regarding Convention implementation.

Parties then adopted the agenda ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/1](#) and [Add.1](#)) and agreed to the proposed organization of work and schedule ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/1](#) and [INF/2](#)).

Matters Related to the Work Programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2026–2027

Strategic Issues: *Work to Improve the Functioning of the Prior Informed Consent Procedure:* On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced its note on the implementation of the mandates established by [decision BC-17/2](#) on work to improve the functioning of the PIC procedure ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/2](#)) and the draft report prepared by a small intersessional working group (SIWG) on further options for improving the functioning of the PIC procedure ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/3](#)).

Most Parties indicated a desire to discuss the SIWG's recommendations in detail in a contact group.

SWITZERLAND underscored the importance of the PIC procedure to the functioning of the Convention, and to ensure that it functions smoothly, especially as more waste streams are added to the procedure. Calling PIC the cornerstone of the Convention,

the EU favored discussion of the SIWG's options regarding: lack of response to a PIC notification; updating instructions for completing the notification and movement document forms; updating guidance on transit and when written consent is not necessary; and procedures applicable for shipment re-routing.

Tanzania, for the AFRICAN GROUP, emphasized the need for clarifying what is regarded as a lack of response to a PIC notification and the timeframes to be considered in this regard, as well as providing guidance on tacit consent. They also urged a review of the notification and movement document forms and clarifying where supporting documents are mandatory or voluntary.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for a focus on information exchange between authorities regarding transit. MALDIVES indicated work on transit is particularly important for many small island developing states, who rely on transboundary movements for disposal of their hazardous waste. The DOMINICAN REPUBLIC and IRAN agreed that work on transit notifications and timelines is important and suggested looking at procedures regarding shipment re-routing.

MEXICO underscored the need for developing and implementing a web-based tool that would enable focal points to update their contact information and that of competent authorities in real time. MALI called for replacing paper documents with electronic notifications and shipment tracking in real time. PANAMA called for ensuring that transit countries have access to shipment container information to track shipments.

BANGLADESH suggested focus on addressing root causes of delays and inefficiencies, and harmonizing terminologies. ARGENTINA called for agreement on how best to evaluate what PIC procedures are already in place and to diagnose where improvements must be made. SAUDI ARABIA urged focusing on implementation of the COP 17 decision.

Delegates decided to refer the SIWG report to the Strategic Matters Contact Group, co-chaired by Vivienne Ahern (Ireland) and Miriam Medel Garcia (Mexico), to further develop the options, and to consider the draft decision suggested in the Secretariat's report once the group finished its work. The group met Wednesday evening and examined the options. The group reached general consensus that a stepwise, sequential approach to the options should be followed, and they offered input and guidance to the SIWG as it considers prioritizing and/or sequencing the options, before reporting to COP 18.

On Friday, the plenary adopted the decision as forwarded by the contact group.

Outcome: The OEWG adopted a decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/2](#)) taking note of the revised draft report (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.5) and requesting the SIWG to prepare an updated version of the draft report, taking into consideration the OEWG discussions, for consideration by COP 18.

Scientific and Technical Matters: *Technical Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management of Wastes Consisting of, Containing or Contaminated with Persistent Organic Pollutants:* On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced its note ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on the update of the general technical guidelines on ESM of wastes consisting of, containing, or contaminated with POPs ("POPs waste") ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/4](#)) and the draft updates of three specific technical guidelines on ESM of

wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with: short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) or medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs) ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/5](#)); perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (PFOSF), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds, and perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), its salts and PFHxS-related compounds, or long-chain perfluorocarboxylic acids (long-chain PFCAs), their salts and related compounds ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/7](#)); and a long list of pesticides and two industrial chemicals ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/6](#)). The Secretariat also introduced a report on the work of a SIWG on enhancing the availability of information on disposal methods that constitute ESM of POPs waste ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/16](#)), including a proposed new template for reporting such information.

All delegations intervening agreed the revised guidelines and proposed template should be discussed in a contact group.

SAUDI ARABIA, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, said wording within the revised technical guidelines about “fossil fuels” and “plastic-free” was outside the mandate of the Basel Convention and should be removed.

South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, called for setting the lowest POPs content possible in the name of protecting human health and the environment. The UK said further work on setting low POPs content values needs to be evidence-based. CHINA cautioned against setting overly low POPs limits and suggested for some POPs there is not yet a scientific basis for setting a low POPs content threshold. ARGENTINA also cautioned against setting POPs content thresholds too low, especially when lower content may be difficult to measure in practice, as that would make it difficult to control POPs wastes and to inventory them.

NEW ZEALAND thanked Canada for proposing the template for reporting disposal technologies and suggested that it be used as soon as possible, without waiting for its endorsement by COP 18. TANZANIA also supported the adoption of the template.

The ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (ESDO) and the INTERNATIONAL POLLUTANTS ELIMINATION NETWORK (IPEN) called for setting the lowest possible POPs content levels, adoption of the template, and deleting metallurgy processes from the list of POPs destruction technologies.

Delegates decided to refer the SIWG report, draft guidelines, template, and draft decision to the Technical Matters Contact Group, co-chaired by Katie Olley (UK) and Nana Zhao (China). The group considered the POPs guidelines package on Tuesday night and Thursday. There was broad agreement on the desirability of the template and that the SIWG should employ it in its work immediately. The group also decided that work on the draft pesticides and PFOS guidelines were sufficiently advanced to leave their finalization to the SIWG and instead prioritize work on the draft general guidelines and a review of the new additions to the draft SCCPS/MCCPs guidelines to ensure accuracy.

In the case of the general guidelines, beyond a discussion of the table listing low POPs content, much of the contact group’s focus was on the disputed section regarding POPs elimination through thermal and metallurgical production processes, which remains largely bracketed. Delegates decided to instruct the SIWG

to consider whether all the information contained was accurate, taking into account the individual process descriptions included, and verifying the numbers, figures and sources.

On Friday, plenary adopted the decision as forwarded by the contact group.

Outcome: In its decision (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.3), the OEWG:

- takes note of the draft updated guidelines (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.4, CRP.11, [INF/6](#), and [INF/7](#)) and invited parties and observers to provide comments on the draft guidelines by 31 August 2026;
- takes note of the draft template for the submission of information on new technologies for the destruction and irreversible transformation of the POPs content in waste ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/16](#), Annex II) and requested the SIWG to make use of it; and
- requests the Secretariat, in consultation with the SIWG, to revise the guidelines taking into account OEWG 15’s input and comments received, for consideration and possible adoption by COP 18.

Technical Guidelines on Transboundary Movements of Electrical and Electronic Waste and Used Electrical and Electronic Equipment, in Particular Regarding the Distinction Between Waste and Non-waste Under the Basel Convention: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented a status report ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on implementation of [decision BC-17/4](#), noting only two comments were received from Parties and two virtual consultations were held by the expert working group (EWG).

MALAYSIA reported its recent gazette order banning all imports and transshipments of e-waste of any kind. Noting the lack of new results in the report, the EU suggested further work on the technical guidelines was not a priority at this time. The EU suggested changing the suggested date for submitting further comments from 31 July 2026 to 30 September 2026.

Delegates decided to adopt the decision text suggested in the Secretariat’s report with the changed deadline suggested by the EU.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)), the OEWG:

- invites Parties and others to use and/or test, on a pilot basis, the technical guidelines and to report the results by 30 September 2026 for consideration by the EWG; and
- requests the EWG to update the guidelines, taking into account any such submissions, and to submit updated guidelines for consideration by COP 18.

Technical Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management of Waste Lead-acid Batteries and on Other Waste Batteries: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented a status report ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on implementation of [decision BC-17/5](#), noting the SIWG prepared draft technical guidelines on waste lead-acid batteries (WLABs) ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/8](#)), with China and Uruguay serving as co-leads, and draft technical guidelines on other waste batteries ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/9](#)), with China and the EU serving as co-leads.

ARGENTINA, BANGLADESH, CHINA, the EU, IRAN, and the US called for further work on the two technical guidelines in a contact group. Noting the presence of many solar panels and electric

vehicles in her country, BANGLADESH stressed the importance of having both sets of ESM technical guidelines.

ETHIOPIA said the implementation of the two technical guidelines will require capacity-building and technical support. The Gambia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, said the guidelines should consider the role of the informal sector in battery recovery in developing countries, and suggested developing a financial mechanism to help developing countries manage waste batteries. TANZANIA said implementation of the guidelines would require successful collection schemes and technology transfer.

CHINA emphasized that the guidelines should recognize there is no one-size-fits-all solution for handling waste batteries. The EU welcomed the decision to limit the scope of the “other” batteries guidelines to four battery types and to prioritize well-established recycling technologies.

IPEN said the draft guidelines on WLABs have improved significantly and suggested that the OEWG recommend their adoption at COP 18, while noting the other guidelines require more attention in both the OEWG and the SIWG.

Delegates decided to refer the two draft guidelines to the Technical Matters Contact Group, and to consider the draft decision suggested in the Secretariat’s report once the group finished its work. The group considered the WLAB guidelines on Wednesday and Thursday. The group first examined the WLAB technical guidelines, with a focus on cleaning text in the section on pollution controls, such as emissions/release monitoring and reporting, and on the section on health and safety.

The discussion on the other batteries guidelines focused on a general review of the section on ESM, correcting legal citations, flagging issues for the SIWG to consider, such as battery chemistry marking, or how to discuss “black mass,” the powder obtained from the mechanical crushing of batteries during pre-treatment of waste batteries, which some countries handle as materials, while others consider it waste. In one instance, a Party requested bracketing a reference to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the lifecycle of other waste batteries.

On Friday, delegates agreed to the draft decision as suggested by the Secretariat, but with an adjusted deadline for comments.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)), the OEWG takes note of the revised draft guidelines (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.14 and CRP.15), invites parties and others to provide comments on the draft guidelines by 31 August 2026, and requests China, Uruguay and the EU as co-leads to consult with the SIWG, taking into account the comments received, to prepare revised versions of the guidelines for consideration and possible adoption by COP 18.

Technical Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management of Used and Waste Pneumatic Tyres: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented a status report ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on implementation of [decision BC-17/6](#) calling for an update of the technical guidelines. She explained the draft updated technical guidelines ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/10](#)) had been prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the SIWG on used and waste pneumatic tyres.

MALAYSIA underlined the importance of adopting a harmonized definition distinguishing between used tyres and waste tyres. INDONESIA said the guidelines must remain practical for various national contexts. UKRAINE emphasized the importance of an

extended producer responsibility (EPR) system for scrap tyres. SAUDI ARABIA complained there was inconsistent terminology in the draft guidelines.

South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, said the guidelines should consider the role of the informal sector, infrastructure gaps, and import-driven waste streams that are characteristic of developing countries. The EU said the guidelines must provide clear guidance on repair and retreading.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION suggested referring further work on the draft guidelines to the SIWG. The EU, AFRICAN GROUP, and SAUDI ARABIA called for a contact group to review the draft.

While praising the draft guidelines as greatly improved, IPEN recommended: further work on leaching of chemicals, occupational exposures, and releases of microplastics from tyre wear, disposal and stockpiling; and removing rubber crumb derived from waste tyres for reuse from the guidelines.

The WORLD BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT commended progress made on the guidelines, and urged clear, actionable, and science-based guidance.

Delegates decided to refer the draft update of the guidelines to the Technical Matters Contact Group, and to consider the draft decision suggested in the Secretariat’s report once the group finished its work.

The group considered the guidelines Thursday evening. A key focus of debate was retreading, specifically whether to declare retreading as a waste recovery operation, and whether retreading only involves used tyres, which is the case under the law in some Parties. The group also discussed:

- possible alternative language on mitigation of rubber fume, which contains carcinogenic byproducts;
- language on co-processing of tyres;
- rewording of the section on the use of rubber granulate as filler in artificial turf, playgrounds, and sports grounds;
- rephrasing of the subsection on EPR, possibly through borrowing from the text on EPR in the technical guidelines on ESM of plastic waste; and
- whether to keep or relabel references to microplastics throughout the guidelines.

On Friday, delegates agreed to the draft decision as suggested by the Secretariat, but with an adjusted deadline for comments.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)), the OEWG took note of the updated technical guidelines (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.16) and invited parties and observers to provide comments by 31 August 2026. It requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the SIWG, to revise the guidelines, considering OEWG 15 input and comments received, for consideration and possible adoption by COP 18.

Technical Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management of Wastes Consisting of, Containing or Contaminated with Mercury or Mercury Compounds: On Tuesday, the Secretariat reported ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on updates made to the technical guidelines on mercury wastes ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/11](#)) to reflect the threshold for mercury wastes set by the Minamata Convention and to reflect adjustments consequential to the adoption of the e-waste amendments to the Basel Convention.

MEXICO and the EU welcomed the draft guidelines and proposed decision as presented.

SAUDI ARABIA questioned the reference in table 1 to plastic components containing a brominated flame retardant. The Secretariat pointed out that this is part of the e-waste amendment that entered into force in January 2025.

Delegates agreed to adopt the draft decision suggested in the Secretariat report.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)), the OEWG takes note of the updated guidelines and recommends their adoption by COP 18.

Updates to Technical Guidelines to Reflect Adjustments

Consequential to the Adoption of the E-waste Amendments: On Friday, the Secretariat reported ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on the implementation of [decision BC-17/12](#) on follow-up to the adoption of the e-waste amendments to the Basel Convention, and told the OEWG that draft updates have been prepared for two technical guidelines: on ESM of wastes containing or contaminated with unintentionally produced POPs ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/12](#)); and on ESM of the full and partial dismantling of ships ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/13](#)).

Delegates adopted the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat without comment.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)), the OEWG takes note of the updated guidelines and recommends their adoption by COP 18.

Updates to Technical Guidelines to Reflect Adjustments

Consequential to the Adoption of the Plastic Amendments: On Friday, the Secretariat reported ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)) on technical guidelines work undertaken as part of the implementation of [decision BC-17/11](#) on further consideration of plastic waste, noting that the Secretariat, in consultation with the SIWG on POPs waste, had prepared draft updates of the technical guidelines on ESM of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD) ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/14](#)), and on ESM of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polychlorinated terphenyls (PCTs), polychlorinated naphthalenes (PCNs), or polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs), including hexabromobiphenyl ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/15](#)).

Delegates adopted, without comment, the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/3](#)), the OEWG takes note of the updated guidelines and recommends their adoption by COP 18.

National Reporting: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented its notes on national reporting ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/4](#)) and on possible further revisions to table 9 of the reporting format and to the manual for completing the format for national reporting ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/17](#)).

The UK said any changes to table 9 should be proportionate and implementable, avoiding making reporting overly complex. It favored further discussion in a contact group.

The EU said it could accept the proposed changes to table 9 and agree to the draft decision proposed. BANGLADESH said it would like to propose some changes in a contact group.

SAUDI ARABIA said the proposed changes were not consistent with reporting required by Annexes I and III. INDONESIA cautioned against new mandatory reporting burdens and said any

enhancement to reporting framework must be accompanied by capacity-building and technical assistance. IRAN emphasized that reporting related to Annex IX should not be mandatory.

Delegates decided to ask the Secretariat to consult with interested Parties and make appropriate edits to the proposed table and manual so the OEWG could take a decision later in the week.

On Friday, the Secretariat reported its revisions to the table and manual ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.8](#)). Taking that into consideration, delegates adopted the draft decision suggested by the Secretariat.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/4](#)), the OEWG: invites comments by 30 September 2026 on possible revisions to table 9 of the reporting format and to the manual for completing the format for national reporting; and requests the Secretariat revise table 9 and the manual based on the comments submitted and OEWG 15 discussion for possible adoption at COP 18.

Electronic Approaches to the Notification and Movement

Documents: On Friday, the Secretariat introduced its notes on the topic ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/5](#)) and on four draft fact sheets on key aspects to consider when developing electronic approaches ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/18](#)). The Secretariat also mentioned that a case study provided by the EU is now available on the Convention website.

The EU supported this work and said they might provide written comments. They asked that the deadline for comments in the draft decision be changed to 30 September 2026. NORWAY welcomed the Secretariat's work and the provision of the EU case study and underscored that this work should be given high priority, grounded in promoting common approaches that would allow international interoperability of electronic notification systems. The US agreed on the importance of this work and the stress on interoperability and offered to lend its experience and expertise to these efforts.

MALAYSIA reported on their pilot project to create an import/export module on the government's digital platform that would handle waste shipment matters.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said electronic approaches may promote efficiency, but they do not allay all their concerns about the PIC procedure. They raised the issue of how artificial intelligence might be used in some systems and said any transition to electronic approaches must take into account the financial implications for countries implementing them, especially for developing countries and economies in transition.

SWITZERLAND welcomed the fact sheets as a good basis for further work. They urged close coordination of such work with the group considering improvement of the PIC procedure.

Delegates adopted the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat with the amended comment deadline.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/5](#)), the OEWG invites comments on the draft fact sheets by 30 September 2026 and requests the Secretariat to revise the fact sheets based on comments submitted and OEWG 15 discussion for possible adoption at COP 18. The OEWG also reiterates its invitation to Parties and observers to work on pilot projects on electronic approaches to the notification and movement documents, taking into account the experiences of other Parties and of non-Parties and the work carried out by other international organizations, and to submit their lessons learned to the Secretariat.

Further Consideration of Plastic Waste: On Wednesday, the Secretariat submitted its note on further consideration of plastic wastes ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/6](#)), as well as a compilation of comments submitted by Parties and others on implementation, challenges, and impacts of the amendments to Annexes II, VIII and IX to the Basel Convention adopted in [decision BC-14/12](#) and an update on the plastics treaty negotiations ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/19](#)).

SWITZERLAND introduced its proposal (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.1), co-sponsored by COOK ISLANDS, ETHIOPIA, MALI, NIGERIA, PALAU, and ZIMBABWE, explaining that it proposes, among other things, to:

- invite Parties and observers to provide, by 30 September 2026, information on approaches and measures to prevent and minimize plastic waste generation, ensure ESM of plastic waste, prevent pollution from plastic waste and protect public health and the environment from transboundary movements of plastic waste;
- request the Secretariat to prepare a compilation of the comments available for COP 18's consideration;
- request the Secretariat to compile insights from the Plastic Waste Partnership's pilot projects aimed at improving and promoting ESM of plastic waste and to prevent and minimize its generation; and
- invite COP 18 to consider establishing a working group to explore possible further approaches and measures to prevent and minimize plastic waste generation, ensure the ESM of plastic waste, prevent pollution from plastic waste, and protect public health and the environment from transboundary movements of plastic waste.

BANGLADESH, NIGERIA, GUINEA, ZIMBABWE, and GEORGIA supported the proposal and asked that it to be discussed in a contact group. The AFRICAN GROUP, EU, TANZANIA, CAMEROON, PANAMA, BASEL ACTION NETWORK (BAN), ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY (EIA), and IPEN supported using the proposal as the basis for contact group discussions on the way forward in the Convention's work on plastic waste.

SAUDI ARABIA, BAHRAIN, QATAR, KUWAIT, IRAN, RUSSIA, and the US opposed the proposal as outside the Basel Convention's mandate and prejudicing the outcomes of the negotiations under the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for a plastics treaty. BRAZIL expressed doubt that discussing the conference room paper (CRP) in a contact group would be productive.

SWITZERLAND noted COP 17 requested specific proposals on the way forward on plastic waste, and said this CRP is a direct response, and observed that Article 4 (General Obligations), paragraph 2 of the Convention calls for waste minimization and preventing pollution from waste in the name of protecting human health and the environment. He suggested that if a contact group discussion was not possible, then perhaps a "Friends of the Chair" group could discuss the CRP.

Noting lack of consensus about considering the issue in a contact group, Chair Nicholas said the plenary would return to the agenda item on Friday.

During Friday morning's plenary, the AFRICAN GROUP, URUGUAY, MALI, THE GAMBIA, SOUTH AFRICA, MEXICO, NORWAY, PANAMA, PALAU, BANGLADESH, ZAMBIA, NEW ZEALAND, NIGERIA, COOK ISLANDS, BENIN, GEORGIA, ETHIOPIA, CAMEROON, GABON, ECUADOR, GUINEA, PERU, COSTA RICA, SWITZERLAND, the UK, and the EU expressed deep disappointment that this agenda item, plus the Swiss CRP and the Norwegian application regarding an Annex adjustment on plastic waste, had not been permitted to be discussed in detail in a contact group, or failing that, some sort of "Friends of the Chair" group.

They pointed out that [decision 17/11](#) and the COP-approved OEWG work programme call for further work in this area, and traditionally the OEWG was a safe space for detailed discussion, usually in contact groups, of differing views in pursuit of forging compromise and promoting cooperation.

Seeking redress for the block on contact group discussion of the COP 17 mandate on this issue, Tanzania, for the AFRICAN GROUP, proposed an amendment to the draft decision text suggested by the Secretariat, requesting the Secretariat "at a minimum" compile existing plastic waste minimization and prevention activities under the Convention's aegis for presentation to COP 18. SAUDI ARABIA and QATAR objected to any mention of plastic waste prevention or minimization in the decision.

Chair Nicholas asked interested Parties to meet as a small informal group, co-facilitated by Tanzania and Saudi Arabia, during lunch to forge a compromise decision text.

In the afternoon plenary TANZANIA reported that compromise had been agreed by the small group. Delegates adopted the proposed compromise.

Outcome: In its decision (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.18), the OEWG takes note of the comments submitted by Parties and others on the amendments to Annexes II, VIII and IX to the Basel Convention adopted in decision BC-14/12, particularly regarding their implementation, challenges, and impacts, as applicable, and the update on the plastic treaty negotiations. The OEWG also requests the Secretariat to prepare a compilation of existing activities on hazardous and other plastic waste carried out in accordance with Article 4 of the Basel Convention, for consideration at COP 18.

Waste Containing Nanomaterials: On Friday, the Secretariat introduced the document ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/7](#)), noting that it has not received new information from Parties and observers and that it organized a webinar on micro- and nano-plastics on 9 September 2025.

SWITZERLAND and the UN INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH (UNITAR) underscored the importance of continuing to collect up-to-date information on this issue. UNITAR highlighted the four webinars on micro- and nano-plastics organized by UNITAR and the BRS Secretariat since 2024 and pledged to continue this work and its e-learning course on nanomaterials safety.

ESDO noted with concern the lack of new information and expressed hope that it represented more a lack of capacity of some governments than a lack of interest in this important topic.

Delegates decided to adopt the decision suggested by the Secretariat.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/7](#)), the OEWG invites Parties and observers to make available to the Secretariat, by 31 December 2026, any new information related to activities aimed at addressing issues related to waste containing nanomaterials, including case studies and best practices relating to the management of such waste. The OEWG asks the Secretariat to make such information available on the Convention website, and to organize activities, subject to the availability of resources, to raise awareness among Parties of activities aimed at addressing issues related to waste containing nanomaterials, including case studies and best practices relating to the management of such waste.

Follow-up to the Amendments to Annexes II, VIII and IX on E-waste: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its note ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/8](#)) on the implementation of the mandates established by [decision BC-17/12](#), on follow-up to the amendments to Annexes II, VIII and IX on e-waste, and the draft guidance document ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/20](#)) on the identification of electrical and electronic waste under the new entries adopted by [decision BC-15/18](#), as well as on the distinction between waste that is to be classified as electrical and electronic waste (Y49 or A1181) and waste that is related to such electrical and electronic waste but can be classified under another entry in Annex II, VIII or IX.

All Parties intervening called for further discussion in a contact group.

CANADA welcomed the start of developing guidance work linked to the amendments but wanted to discuss the proposed decision. The UK said the guidance was well developed as-is and urged its adoption as soon as possible.

The EU welcomed the draft guidance as a good starting point, but said they needed:

- clarification of which electrical and electronic equipment and their components are classified as waste and how to distinguish components and materials from processing waste;
- a clear statement that all Convention controls applied, without exceptions, to all waste considered electrical and electronic under the new entries adopted by decision BC-15/18; and
- specification of how Convention procedures should be applied to shipments between two Parties in instances where one had not yet accepted the new entries.

GUINEA complained about non-reusable e-waste from end-of-life vehicles entering Africa, presenting a major public health problem, and urged ensuring such shipments are subject to PIC.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said, given that e-waste was complex and, in some cases, valuable and that such waste was potentially harmful if the importing country lacked proper methods for identifying the risk level posed, it was important to take great care to ensure that proposals pertaining to the issue be both technical and realistic.

MEXICO urged avoiding different interpretations by Parties regarding equipment that is still functional and called for also looking at how to handle remanufactured equipment.

INDONESIA supported improving the guidance with concrete examples to aid frontline enforcement officers.

The US urged keeping the guidance focused on the COP 17 mandate.

BAN complained that the consultant preparing the guidance has included language in the draft suggesting that Annex entries B1010

and B1050 can be interpreted as allowing a 10% contamination rate when the actual entries say no such thing, and insisted that any guidance references to Annex entries be changed to match exact Convention Annex wording.

The BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL RECYCLING said the entry into force of the e-waste amendments have disrupted some waste shipments classified under Annex IX and welcomed the idea of introducing contamination thresholds as offering additional legal clarity and certainty.

The INTERNATIONAL ELECTRO-TECHNICAL COMMISSION (IEC) noted its growing body of technical standards would be directly relevant to this work under the Basel Convention, and urged Parties to leverage IEC expertise in support of such efforts.

The INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY COUNCIL (ITI) urged completing work on the guidance in time for its adoption at COP 18.

Delegates agreed to refer the draft guidance to the Technical Matters Contact Group for review. The group reviewed the document on Thursday, focusing not on direct textual changes but rather on guiding the EWG in how to finalize the draft guidance. Some comments added to the guidance were editorial, while others were technical, such as:

- reflect on codes/approach to be used when export/import countries disagree;
- remove references to reuse;
- reflect on issues of contamination and depollution;
- consider the use of—and whether and how to—relate Basel codes to Harmonized System customs codes; and
- clarify distinction of A1181 and Y49 entries, in relation to Annexes I and III.

The group also revised the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat, primarily to revise the deadline for providing comments on the revised draft.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.9](#)), the OEWG takes note of the revised draft guidance ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.13](#)) and invites Parties and observers to provide comments on the draft guidance by 31 August 2026 and requests the Secretariat to make the comments available on the Convention website. It requests the Secretariat, in consultation with the EWG, to revise the guidelines while considering OEWG 15 input and comments received, for consideration and possible adoption by COP 18.

Used Textiles and Textile Wastes: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its note on used textiles and textile wastes ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/9](#)) and a compilation of comments and a report on possible options available under the Basel Convention to address used textiles and textile wastes ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/22](#)).

Most Parties intervening asked to discuss the options in detail in a contact group. KENYA suggested instead asking COP 18 to create a special intersessional process to work on options for COP 19.

SWITZERLAND said the report was a good basis for discussing Basel Convention options. The EU said this is the type of emerging challenge the Basel Convention must deal with. They urged discussing prioritization, sequencing, and timing of the options.

JORDAN said the report confirmed the need to develop procedures to control transboundary movements while encouraging reuse and recycling in an environmentally conscious way.

JAPAN cautioned that most countries are still reeling from the challenges in implementing the e-waste and plastic waste amendments, so taking on another major challenge might stretch capacities to the limit. They suggested Parties reflect on whether the issue was truly appropriate for the Convention.

The US also cautioned against expanding the scope of the Convention to yet another complicated waste stream and suggested instead focusing on fine-tuning implementation of the e-waste and plastic amendments.

Noting the lack of agreed standards, definitions, and classification criteria for used textiles, CHINA urged undertaking technical studies first before deciding on additional measures.

ANGOLA said imports and sale of secondhand clothing employs large percentages of the service sectors in African countries. He cautioned against restricting trade in used textiles.

KENYA suggested it was premature to consider options such as applying PIC or revising Annex entries.

UKRAINE suggested the problem is not the trade in used or waste textiles, but rather in ensuring ESM. They suggested, supported by IRAN, aligning Basel codes with customs codes on textiles.

South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, expressed concern about transboundary movements of textile waste under the guise of secondhand clothes, much of it damaged and unusable. She supported inclusion of used textiles and textile waste under PIC and cautioned against creating loopholes.

TANZANIA said guidance was needed on how to distinguish between used textiles and waste textiles. CAMEROON called for applying PIC to used textiles and textile waste.

SAUDI ARABIA expressed concern about some of the suggested options and called for a more holistic approach to the textile issue. QATAR said the focus should be on capacity-building before moving on to other measures under the Basel Convention. They suggested the science is not sufficiently advanced to do anything meaningful on the presence of plastic residues or nanomaterials in textile wastes.

ARGENTINA suggested focusing on three pillars: classification and certification; inspection instruments; and traceability. She said these tools could be supported by technical guidelines.

The GHANA USED CLOTHING DEALERS ASSOCIATION said secondhand clothing is a huge employer in Ghana, that research shows only a small proportion of textile imports are waste, and applying PIC is not appropriate.

BAN urged closing “the textile loophole” by:

- establishing an Annex II listing to establish PIC;
- a targeted update to Annex VIII to address the hazardous textile trade; and
- a new narrowly defined Annex IX entry to allow trade in clearly defined non-hazardous natural fiber waste streams destined for proven ESM.

EIA said the important question is how to address the growing trade posing as secondhand goods that cannot be absorbed in local markets. IPEN recommended: applying PIC; addressing textiles

containing hazardous chemicals and considering an Annex VIII entry; and avoiding loopholes such as “preparing for reuse.”

The MITUMBA CONSORTIUM ASSOCIATION OF KENYA said two million Kenyans, particularly women and youth, are employed in the secondhand clothing trade, which is not waste. “We are champions of circular economy; we seek the freedom to prosper with dignity.”

The SECONDARY MATERIALS AND RECYCLED TEXTILES ASSOCIATION (SMART) urged distinguishing between waste and legitimate secondhand clothing, saying credible data shows the latter comes with high reuse and recovery rates. She urged collecting clear and reliable data before considering any new controls.

ESDO supported bringing both used and waste textiles under Basel Convention controls, with no loopholes.

Noting the need for more detailed discussion, Chair Nicholas proposed assigning the issue to the Strategic Matters Contact Group since the Technical Matters Contact Group already had a full docket. SAUDI ARABIA, QATAR, ARGENTINA, KENYA, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION objected, saying it was classified as a technical matter under the agreed agenda, so it must go to the technical group. Delegates agreed to refer both the report and draft decision to the Technical Matters Contact Group.

The group devoted its entire Thursday morning session to discussing the options in the report. Most delegates preferred to give first priority to developing technical guidance on how officials can distinguish between used and waste textiles, while gathering data and information to allow work on other options, such as reviewing code and Annex listings, certification and tracing schemes, or EPR. However, a handful of Parties opposed prioritizing options for COP 18’s consideration.

In the end, the contact group decided to invite Parties and observers to submit another round of comments by 30 November 2026, with the understanding that submissions can indicate their ranking of options for Convention action.

On Friday, delegates adopted the decision drafted by the contact group.

Outcome: In its decision (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.6), the OEWG took note of the report on possible options, and invites Parties and observers to submit, by 30 November 2026, comments on the possible options in the report and on other relevant options. It asks the Secretariat to compile the comments received, make them available on the Convention website, and submit the compilation for consideration by COP 18.

Amendments to the Annexes to the Basel Convention: On Wednesday, the Secretariat on an application for the removal of wastes from Annexes VIII and IX to the Basel Convention ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/15](#)) and the application by Norway for the removal of entry B3011 on plastic waste from Annex IX ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/32](#)), noting that Norway submitted the application within the time frame specified in [decision VIII/15](#) for such requests.

NORWAY said the time had come to acknowledge, discuss, and address common challenges facing Parties in the practical implementation of the plastic waste amendment. They said experience has shown challenges in distinguishing entry B3011 from entry Y48 and entry A3210, with a lack of clarity about what constitutes “almost free from contamination.” They also noted cases where plastic materials—particularly shredded or granulated

plastics—are being exported as “products” rather than waste, even when the material still meets the definition of waste and should fall under PIC.

NORWAY proposed that COP 18 consider amending Annexes II, VII and IX to better balance the requirements for a well-functioning market for recycling plastic waste with safeguards for human health and the environment. They said they do not have firm views on all the changes to the 2019 amendments needed but wanted to start the discussion at OEWG 15.

The EU noted that one of the options under consideration regarding the effectiveness of the plastic waste amendment is to bring all plastic waste under PIC, which the Norwegian proposal would in effect do. They reported that since 21 May 2026 all EU exports under B3011 are now subject to PIC, and in November stricter controls will be put in place.

ARGENTINA said it wanted to keep both B3011 and Y48 and could find no technical consideration for amending those entries. They said any revision should strengthen classification with a view to improving control and traceability, and over-regulation should be avoided.

SAUDI ARABIA, supported by the US, suggested that the Norwegian application did not meet the rules under decision VIII/15 because Norway did not include scientific and technical assessments.

JAPAN said it was premature to make an adjustment since only five years have passed since the amendment entered into force, and Parties may only now be seeing the results of their considerable efforts invested to implement the amendment.

SWITZERLAND called for discussing the proposal in a contact group. Acknowledging many challenges in implementing the amendment, starting with the lack of reliable statistics on movements of the materials Norway mentioned, MEXICO said the application is a good starting point for the discussion.

CHINA cautioned against going beyond the remit of the Convention by imposing PIC on all plastic shipments. QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, IRAN, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said they could not support the proposal. The US said the Norwegian proposal was overly broad, lacked substance and direction, and would disrupt recycling markets.

EIA said that evidence suggests B3011 is being used as a pathway to trade plastics with limited oversight. They supported the Norwegian proposal. BAN called for all plastic waste to be subject to PIC.

NORWAY thanked everyone for their views and said it would like to hear more, so he proposed Parties should send in comments after the OEWG up to a set deadline, with the Secretariat requested to put the comments on the Convention website. Chair Nicholas agreed and called on Parties to provide their comments to the Secretariat by 30 September 2026.

Outcome: The OEWG did not adopt a formal decision on this item.

Providing Further Legal Clarity: Review of Annexes I and III:

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced its notes on providing further legal clarity ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/10](#)) and on revised draft recommendations prepared by an EWG on the review of Annexes I and III ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/23](#)).

SAUDI ARABIA suggested that more legal and technical discussion were needed before any action could be contemplated and suggested referring the matter back to the EWG. All other Parties intervening called for detailed consideration of the EWG recommendations in a contact group.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said any new elements proposed for Annexes I and III need to be scientifically based and realistic and not only consider clarity and interpreting the Convention the same way but bear in mind future issues the Convention might confront.

CANADA expressed its conviction that updating the two annexes could yield environmental and human health protection benefits but called for a targeted approach backed by a complete set of scientific and technical supporting information. The UK agreed on the need for a targeted approach and, with ARGENTINA, cautioned about carefully considering the impacts of any Annex I and III changes on Annexes VIII and IX to avoid any misalignment.

SWITZERLAND and the EU said the EWG recommendations were a good basis for discussion. The US offered a long list of concerns about the proposals, including their possible impacts on recycling and circular economy and upon critical mineral recovery. Saying Annexes I and III “have stood the test of time,” she particularly cautioned how changing the Y codes might cause confusion and disrupt PIC procedures.

Kenya, for the AFRICAN GROUP, said seeking legal clarity does not mean a wholesale overhaul of the two annexes that are Convention linchpins, and noting how many national regimes copy their provisions, said technical assistance and capacity-building would be needed to help developing countries adjust to any changes.

CHINA, BANGLADESH, and QATAR echoed the caution about the current version of Annexes I and III forming the linchpins of national regimes and warned against drastic overhaul. BANGLADESH particularly cautioned about the impact on developing countries of further annex references to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

Agreeing that Annex I and III changes would trigger major overhauls in national regimes, INDONESIA emphasized sticking to practical changes where the scientific evidence is strong, and the proposed change would represent a significant improvement. ETHIOPIA called for any annex changes to be “balanced and implementable.”

ARGENTINA provided a long list of concerns about specific proposals in the EWG report and urged any changes to clarify scope of coverage envisaged and backed by clear supporting technical arguments for the change.

ESDO supported exploring the identification of new hazardous characteristics under Annex III.

Delegates decided to refer the EWG recommendations and the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat to the Legal Matters Contact Group, co-chaired by EWG Co-Chairs Perine Kasonde (Zambia) and Artak Khachatryan (Armenia). The group worked Tuesday through Thursday.

After a discussion on Tuesday on how best to approach the task, the group reviewed Y listings in Annex I, with Parties indicating which ones they would like to retain as-is and those that might be modified, as well as possible new entries proposed, such as new Z1 entry for e-waste (not supported by some). They also discussed

proposed new sections on “metal constituents,” “other inorganic constituents,” and “organic constituents,” which some Parties did not support and others found confusing.

Regarding Annex III, the group discussed: whether and how best to cross-reference entries to the GHS and the UN classifications under the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods; and proposed revisions to entries, such as those on acute toxicity, corrosivity, and infectious substances.

The group drafted a revised decision on legal clarity, which delegates adopted without comment on Friday

Outcome: In its decision on legal clarity (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.10), the OEWG:

- invites Parties and observers to provide by 31 August 2026 comments on which draft recommendations on the review of Annexes I and III (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.12) should be prioritized for further discussion by the EWG to close gaps in the control of transboundary movements of hazardous waste and/or clarify existing entries, and to provide supporting information for including the proposed changes;
- requests the Secretariat to make those comments available on the Convention website; and
- requests the EWG to continue developing draft recommendations on the review of Annexes I and III, taking into account comments provided prior to and the discussions at OEWG 15, for consideration by COP 18.

Consequential Implications of the Amendments to Annex IV:

On Tuesday, the Secretariat referred to the section on this issue in its note on providing further legal clarity ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/10](#)) and introduced a draft assessment prepared by the Secretariat ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/25](#)) on the consequential implications of the amendment to Annex IV for other documents such as technical guidelines and, if appropriate, the glossary of terms. They reported that INF/25 provides an overview of the many documents, some of which are merely editorial and several of which are being worked on by the Convention’s Implementation and Compliance Committee.

BANGLADESH welcomed the work outlined by the Secretariat, especially anything that would help regarding disposal operations D8 (biological treatment), D9 (physio-chemical treatment) and new entry R14 (repackaging prior to submission to any of other operations in Section B). They supported all proposed revisions but asked that the Basel regional centres support their implementation.

Delegates sent this issue to the Legal Matters Contact Group as part of its work on a draft decision on legal clarity.

Outcome: In its decision on legal clarity (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.10), the OEWG invited Parties to submit comments by 30 September 2026 on the consequential implications of the amendment to Annex IV to the Convention for other documents, such as technical guidelines and, as appropriate, the glossary of terms, for consideration by COP 18.

Explanations, Technical Guidelines or Guidance in Relation to the Disposal Operations Specified in Annex IV: On Tuesday, the Secretariat referred to the section on this issue in its note on providing further legal clarity ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/10](#)) and on draft revisions to the notification and movement documents and instructions for completing them ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/24](#)).

CANADA, the UK, and the US suggested deferring revisions to the notification and movement documents until COP 19 to provide time for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to decide on revisions to its waste movement decision.

Delegates sent this issue to the Legal Matters Contact Group as part of its work on a draft decision on legal clarity.

Outcome: In its decision on legal clarity (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.10), the OEWG recommended that COP 19 adopt the proposed revisions to the notification and movement documents and the instructions for completing them.

International Cooperation and Coordination: Basel Convention Partnership Programme: On Friday, the Secretariat introduced:

- the Basel Convention Partnership Programme (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/11), which takes note of work done by the Partnership for Action on Challenges relating to E-waste (PACE), the Household Waste Partnership, and the Partnership on Plastic Waste;
- draft guidance document on television screens, including cathode ray tube, liquid crystal display, and light-emitting diode screens, and video and audio equipment ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/26](#));
- draft guidance document on refrigerators and cooling and heating equipment ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/27](#));
- a report on the implementation of the programme of work of the PACE working group in the 2026–27 biennium ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.14/INF/33](#));
- a report on the implementation of the workplan of the working group of the Household Waste Partnership for the biennium 2026–2027 ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/29](#)); and
- a report on the implementation of the workplan of the working group of the Partnership on Plastic Waste for the biennium 2026–2027 ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/30](#)).

Noting that PACE will meet in September, the Secretariat suggested changing the comment date in the draft decision to 31 July 2026 to allow for sufficient time to digest comments before the Partnership meeting.

The EU and UK welcomed the draft guidance developed by PACE and expressed hope they could be finalized in time for adoption by COP 18. The EU also expressed appreciation for the work of the Household Waste Partnership. URUGUAY expressed appreciation for Plastic Waste Partnership work, which has enabled many countries to draw up national inventories.

Delegates adopted the draft decision with the adjusted comment deadline.

Outcome: In its decision (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/11), the OEWG took note of the progress reports and work plans of the partnerships, invited parties to submit further comments on the draft PACE guidance documents and draft 2028–2029 PACE work programme by 31 July 2026; and requested the PACE working group to continue to develop the draft guidance documents on television screens, including cathode ray tube, liquid crystal display, and light-emitting diode screens, and video and audio equipment, and on refrigerators, cooling and heating equipment, taking into account OEWG 15’s discussion, for consideration at COP 18.

Cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System: On Friday, the Secretariat introduced its note on cooperation with the WCO ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/12](#)) and a report on the status of WCO work in relation to the Basel Convention ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/31](#)). The Secretariat also noted that Canada had submitted a proposal (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.7) that would amend the draft decision suggested by the Secretariat.

The EU emphasized that this work is important to ensure customs codes related to waste are clear and represent the scope of the work of the Basel Convention. He asked to offer edits to CRP.7. Chair Nicholas asked Canada and the EU to meet informally and work out their differences and propose a compromise text.

Canada later introduced a compromise text worked out with the EU, which delegates adopted without comment.

Outcome: In its decision (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.7/Rev.1), the OEWG:

- takes note of the report;
- invites Parties to inform the Secretariat by 31 July 2026 of the types of waste covered by the Basel Convention that should be proposed for inclusion in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System;
- invites Parties and observers to submit to the Secretariat, by 30 September 2026, comments on the need and added value of preparing an indicative table of existing Harmonized System (HS) customs codes for wastes and their correlation with the types of wastes listed in Annexes VIII and IX to the Convention, and requests the Secretariat to publish those comments on the Convention website; and
- recommends that COP 18 consider whether to request the Secretariat to prepare an indicative table of existing HS codes for wastes and their correlation with the types of wastes listed in Annexes VIII and IX of the Convention for consideration by OEWG-16 and COP 19.

Cooperation with the International Maritime Organization: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its notes on cooperation with the IMO ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/13](#)) and on provisional guidance on the implementation of the [Hong Kong Convention](#) for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships and the Basel Convention with respect to the transboundary movement of ships intended for recycling and the associated explanatory note ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/INF/21](#)).

NORWAY introduced its proposal co-sponsored with JAPAN (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.2), saying it was a direct response to [decision 17/23](#) for comments on the provisional guidance on the application of the IMO's Hong Kong Convention and the Basel Convention as drafted by the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee. They explained the CRP recommends that COP 18 adopt the provisional guidance, which Norway considers to be "timely and necessary," and Norway regards the revisions proposed by the Secretariat as concerning.

JAPAN added that they regarded the Hong Kong Convention as meeting Basel Convention Article 11's allowance for international arrangements providing for ESM no less protective than the Basel Convention. They said Japan could not agree to the guidance revisions proposed by the Secretariat.

INDIA and the IMO supported CRP.2. INDIA said the Secretariat's proposed revisions were duplicative and conflicting, adding procedural burdens without significant additional environmental benefit. The US said it was also concerned about the Secretariat's proposed revisions and could not support the COP opining about what constitutes an Article 11 arrangement, since this potentially would reopen all the existing arrangements under Article 11.

The EU said it was premature to declare the Hong Kong Convention as an arrangement meeting the terms of Basel Convention Article 11, but suggested it was time to consider how to cooperate closer with the IMO.

SAUDI ARABIA said it needed greater clarity about how the provisional guidance would apply to those countries, like Saudi Arabia, which are not party to the Hong Kong Convention. He urged caution and further analysis of the situation before endorsing a course of action. QATAR agreed that legal clarity was needed about the overlap between the Hong Kong and Basel Conventions regarding ship recycling.

BRAZIL said his country was considering becoming a party to the Hong Kong Convention, so it would appreciate greater collaboration between the two regimes and identifying any gaps that might exist.

BAN said legal scholars had long ago determined that the Hong Kong Convention does not provide equivalent protection and Basel COP 10 had said it could not consider it as falling under Article 11. He urged accepting the Secretariat's proposed revisions.

The UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TOXICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS agreed that the Hong Kong Convention does not offer an equivalent level of protection and urged putting an end to the serious environmental and human rights violations involved in many current ship dismantling operations.

The NGO SHIPBREAKING PLATFORM said the Hong Kong Convention has weak protections and noted a recent massive oil spill in India resulting from beaching a ship for dismantling, which is authorized under the Hong Kong Convention.

The BALTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARITIME COUNCIL (BIMCO) said it is committed to promoting safe and environmentally sound ship recycling and supports the Hong Kong Convention. They urged the two conventions to work together, coherently, for recycling facilities that are trying to comply with high standards.

The INTERNATIONAL SHIP RECYCLING ASSOCIATION agreed the Hong Kong Convention does not provide an equivalent level of control, supported endorsement of the Secretariat's proposed revisions, and urged the two conventions to coordinate closely.

Chair Nicholas asked interested parties to consult informally on the Secretariat's proposals and CRP.2 and prepare a draft decision for plenary to consider.

On Friday, delegates adopted a compromise text for a draft decision proposed by the interested parties.

Outcome: In its decision (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/CRP.17), the OEWG:

- recognizes the entry into force of the Hong Kong Convention as an important development towards the environmentally sound recycling of ships;

- invites Parties and observers to submit to the Secretariat by 30 October 2026 comments on how legal clarity and coordination between the two conventions could best be achieved, and requests the Secretariat to compile the comments received, make available on the Convention website, and submit the compilation for consideration by COP 18; and
- recommends the COP further examine the interplay between the Basel Convention and the Hong Kong Convention, with a view to enhancing legal clarity and ensuring that coordination between the two conventions does not result in a lower level of environmental protection under either instrument.

Work Programme of the Open-ended Working Group for the Biennium 2028–2029

On Friday, the Secretariat introduced its note on the work programme of the OEWG for the biennium 2028–2029 ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/14](#)). Delegates adopted the decision suggested by the Secretariat without comment.

Outcome: In its decision ([UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/14](#)), the OEWG took note of the draft work programme and requested the Secretariat to prepare a revised draft, taking into account the decisions taken at OEWG 15, for consideration and possible adoption by COP 18.

Adoption of the Report and Closure of the Meeting

On Friday, the plenary adopted the report of the meeting (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.15/L.1), as presented by Rapporteur Nancy Allimadi (Uganda), with minor amendments.

Regional statements by the AFRICAN GROUP, ASIA-PACIFIC, GRULAC, and the EU all praised the leadership of Chair Nicolas and the spirit of collaboration and compromise that had prevailed at OEWG 15. The AFRICAN GROUP and the EU expressed disappointment about the lack of progress on plastics. Panama, for GRULAC, expressed hope that the results and spirit of compromise exhibited at the end of OEWG 15 would pave the way for a successful COP 18 when it convenes in Panama in April 2027.

The CHEMICAL AND WASTE YOUTH PLATFORM said it looks forward to future work in the Basel Convention on plastic and textile wastes and opined that negotiations on a plastics treaty is not a justification for Basel not to act on plastic waste based on existing authority under the Convention and the COP mandates it already possesses. “Basel is not a stop gap measure until the INC succeeds.”

BRS Executive Secretary Payet thanked all who made it possible to complete OEWG 15’s work on time but cautioned much intersessional work remains to be done before COP 18.

Chair Nicholas thanked everyone for entrusting the OEWG 15 chair to her and hailed the week’s accomplishments. She acknowledged the passionate debates during the week but added that only signifies that the Convention is alive and relevant.

Chair Nicholas closed the meeting at 4:44 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

22nd Meeting of the Chemical Review Committee: The Rotterdam Convention’s CRC will meet to review notifications of final regulatory action on several chemicals and proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations. **dates:** 15–18 September 2026 **location:** Rome, Italy **www:** [pic.int](#)

22nd Meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee: The Stockholm Convention’s Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC) will consider the draft risk profile to list polyhalogenated dibenzo-p-dioxins and dibenzofurans (PXDD/PXDF) in Annex C to the Convention. **dates:** 21–25 September 2026 **location:** Rome, Italy **www:** [pops.int](#)

First International Conference of the Global Framework on Chemicals: The first GFC International Conference will feature a high-level segment and multistakeholder dialogue on the GFC’s five strategic objectives and 28 targets. **dates:** 16–20 November 2026 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** [unep.org/global-framework-chemicals](#)

Plastics INC 5.4: The resumed fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5.4) to advance a plastics treaty will attempt to conclude negotiations. **dates:** 13–24 March 2027 (TBC) **location:** TBC **www:** [unep.org/inc-plastic-pollution/activities](#)

BRS COPs 2027: The 18th meeting of the COP of the Basel Convention will be held in conjunction with the 13th meetings of the COPs of the Stockholm Convention on POPs and Rotterdam Convention on the prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade. **dates:** 19–30 April 2027 **location:** Panama City, Panama **www:** [brsmeas.org](#)

For additional meetings, see [sdg.iisd.org](#)

Glossary

BAN	Basel Action Network
BRS	Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRP	Conference room paper
EPR	Extended producer responsibility
ESDO	Environment and Social Development Organization
EIA	Environmental Investigation Agency
ESM	Environmentally sound management
E-waste	Electrical and electronic waste
EWG	Expert working group
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
IPEN	International Pollutants Elimination Network
OEWG	Open-ended Working Group
MCCPs	Medium-chain chlorinated paraffins
PFOS	Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid
PFOSF	Perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride
PIC	Prior informed consent
POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
SCCPs	Short-chain chlorinated paraffins
SIWG	Small intersessional working group
WCO	World Customs Organization