

POPS COP-3 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 3 MAY 2007

The Committee of the Whole (COW) met throughout the day to: hear reports of the budget, technical assistance, non-compliance and effectiveness evaluation contact groups; and to discuss national implementation plans (NIPs), synergies, POPs wastes and information exchange. The COW also considered draft decisions on, *inter alia*: revised process for the review of entries in the register of specific exemptions; guidelines on best available techniques (BAT) and draft guidance on best environmental practices (BEP); standardized toolkit for identification and quantification of releases; reporting; and DDT.

The contact groups on technical assistance and the budget met throughout the day and evening. Informal consultations were held on non-compliance and POPs wastes. A Friends of the Non-Compliance Contact Group Chair met in the evening to resolve outstanding issues.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CONTACT GROUP REPORTS: Budget Co-Chair John Roberts summarized his group's work and noted that participants would address substantive issues such as the budget's size and distribution.

Technical Assistance Co-Chair Angelina Madete reported the group's progress on the selection process of regional centers and underscored bracketed texts remained on centers' location and work plan. She noted the group was yet to begin working on financial resource issues. CHINA stressed the importance of starting discussions on financial resource issues as soon as possible.

Non-Compliance Chair Anne Daniel reported that the group agreed she would conduct informal bilateral consultations throughout Thursday and that a Friends of the Chair meeting would convene Thursday evening on outstanding issues.

Effectiveness Evaluation Co-Chair Ivan Holoubek noted agreement on a draft decision, including: the amended global monitoring plan (GMP); the amended implementation plan; GMP report; establishment of regional organization groups and their duties; and the establishment of a coordination group.

NIPs: The EU encouraged parties to finalize their NIPs and to clearly identify national priorities in order to explore synergies with other international chemical regimes such as SAICM, and supported using the draft guidance on socioeconomic assessment for implementing NIPs in a flexible manner. MALI requested a faster and simpler financial procedure for NIPs. CAMBODIA urged the Secretariat to continue providing technical assistance. Noting that the great majority of parties did not use the socioeconomic guidance when elaborating NIPs, BRAZIL underscored the need for capacity building. DJIBOUTI highlighted the need for financial resources to comply with Convention obligations.

ARGENTINA, TONGA, BENIN, TURKEY and TAJIKISTAN reported completion and submission of their countries' NIPs. UGANDA noted that his country has not yet completed the NIP due to lack of experience and capacity.

GRULAC noted that GRULAC countries are not able to fulfill the requirement of reporting within the timeframe set forth in UNEP/POPS/COP.3/21 because it was not available early enough to do so, and requested it be translated into the UN languages. TURKEY explained his country's activities to implement the Convention, including: testing POPs concentration in human blood; organizing training programmes on PCBs; conducting inventories; and developing regulations.

The ROTTERDAM CONVENTION SECRETARIAT highlighted the importance of synergies among the chemical and waste conventions in elaborating NIPs. He emphasized that revision of the NIP guidance document should take into account the linkages of the three chemical-related conventions. The US supported developing the guidance document on socioeconomic cost assessment, but encouraged peer-reviewed cost-benefit models. COW Chair Blaha asked countries to complete their NIPs as soon as possible, and requested the Secretariat prepare a draft decision on the issue.

SYNERGIES : The Secretariat provided a brief summary of the first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Between the Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam Conventions (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.1/4). Working Group Co-Chair Kerstin Stendahl-Rechardt (Finland) noted that the Group identified activities already underway, future activities, and activities regarding decision making and oversight. The EU, INDIA,

SWITZERLAND, the AFRICAN GROUP, SUDAN, GRULAC, FINLAND, JAPAN and JORDAN stressed the importance of synergies. NORWAY, the AFRICAN GROUP, KIRIBATI and GRULAC supported integrating Basel regional centers and Stockholm regional centers to promote practical synergies at the regional level. JAPAN and SWITZERLAND inquired about the cost of convening a second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Joint Working Group (AHJWG). The US supported cost-saving synergies as opposed to substantive and institutional consolidation synergies. IPEN highlighted the closed nature of AHJWG and need for stakeholder involvement in future meetings.

POPS WASTES: The Secretariat reported on guidelines relating to POPs wastes adopted by the COP to the Basel Convention (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/9). The EU drew attention to a draft prepared with SWITZERLAND (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.8) that further incorporated linkages with the Basel Convention. JAPAN supported the draft, whilst GRULAC and the AFRICAN GROUP requested more time to consider it. Supporting the EU-Switzerland proposal, TOGO stressed the importance of integration between the conventions. NORWAY proposed modifications to the EU-Switzerland text and suggested a working group revise it, but CANADA, CHINA and INDIA favored the Secretariat draft. INDIA and ARGENTINA proposed creating an intersessional working group. IPEN and the INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION expressed concern over the chemical concentrations in both drafts, stressed they pose health risks and that many developing countries classify lower concentration of POPs as hazardous.

COW Chair Blaha established an informal group on POPs wastes, and requested the main actors consult, reach a compromise on the controversial issues and report the results to the COW. The group met in the afternoon and Jane Stratford (UK) reported back to COW that the group valued the Basel guidelines but could not reach agreement on the drafts.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE: The EU expressed hesitation about establishing a clearing-house mechanism on POPs and taking a decision that may jeopardize the effectiveness of the AHJWG work. However, he said the EU supported a decision taking into account the above. COW Chair Blaha asked the Secretariat to prepare a draft decision.

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT DECISIONS:

Revised process for the review of entries in the register of specific exemptions: Regarding the bracketed text in the annex to the draft decision UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.5, JAPAN and CANADA questioned the appropriateness of tasking the Secretariat with developing a recommendation on extension of exemptions, and proposed giving POPRC the task instead. Delegates agreed to alter language to request the Secretariat "prepare a report," and COP-4 will make a "sunset" review of this task. The COW agreed on the draft decision as amended.

Evaluation of the continued need for the procedure under paragraph (b) of Article 3: The COW agreed to forward the draft decision (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.6) without amendment.

Guidelines on BAT and draft guidance on BEP: On the draft decision UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.10, the EU suggested deleting text referring to the GEF, preferring that all GEF-related items be compiled in a single decision. MOROCCO, supported by CHINA, emphasized the importance of referring to the GEF. COW Chair Blaha suggested, and the COW agreed, to

put a footnote in the draft decision stating that the text would be moved to the draft decision on the GEF. With this change, the COW agreed on the draft decision.

Standardized Toolkit: COW Chair Blaha presented the draft decision on guidelines on the standardized toolkit for identification and quantification of releases (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.9). BRAZIL welcomed the draft decision but underlined the need to review and update the section on dioxins and furans. The COW agreed to the draft decision with minor amendments.

Listing chemicals in Annexes A, B or C of the Convention:

COW Chair Blaha presented the draft decision on listing chemicals in Annexes A, B or C of the Convention (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.14). INDIA stressed the need to disclose information on production. COW Chair Blaha said that these concerns would be noted in the meeting report and proposed, and COW agreed, to send the draft decision to plenary.

Reporting: COW Chair Blaha presented UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.15 on reporting to which the COW agreed.

DDT: COW Chair Blaha presented draft decision UNEP/POPS/COP.3/CRP.7 on DDT. The EU proposed additional language including collaboration with the WHO. INDIA proposed several changes, including the need to give further importance to countries in malaria regions when nominating experts. As no agreement was reached, COW Chair Blaha requested the Secretariat prepare another draft decision to be considered by plenary.

CONTACT GROUPS

BUDGET: The Secretariat presented a revised draft decision on the 2008-2009 financing and budget. Several participants asked the Secretariat to improve the budget format regarding synergies to ensure parties know the expenditure of each convention for cooperative activities. Many participants also requested the Secretariat look into UN best practices on budgeting and strategic indicators. Negotiations were expected to continue until 11:00 pm.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Co-Chair Jozef Buys explained the technical assistance group agreed to draft decisions: on the MoU between the COP and the GEF Council; resource mobilization in the financial issues package; and guidance relating to the technical assistance package. The group was expected to work through the night on draft decisions related to: ToRs for the second review; needs assessments; regional centers; and additional guidance on financial resources.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates entered the congress center on the fourth day of negotiations looking slightly tired after another evening of contact groups. Some speculated that because financial issues will be addressed by the technical assistance group, it may act as a "carrot" to hasten agreement on regional centers. As rumors circulated, others doubted it, saying that conference organizers had booked returning buses to nearby hotels up until 4:00 am. In the COW, some participants were surprised by one country's seemingly random reference to "ducks and nuts," others wondered if the expression was a code for some secret message!

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of COP-3 will be available on Monday, 7 May 2007, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/pops/cop3/>