



## POPS INC-4 HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 20 MARCH 2000

On the opening day of INC-4, delegates met in a morning Plenary session to hear opening remarks and address organizational matters. In the afternoon, the Implementation Aspects Group (IAG) addressed technical assistance (Article J) and financial resources and mechanisms (Article K), and the Negotiating Group (NG) considered public information, awareness and education (Article H) and research, development and monitoring (Article I).

### OPENING PLENARY

Jürgen Trittin, German Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, noted sufficient evidence exists to justify banning new POPs and urged the chemical industry to rethink its product policy, noting the highest POPs emissions come from legally produced chemical products. He emphasized a financial framework to phase-out POPs, taking into account countries' differing responsibilities.

Bärbel Dieckman, Mayor of Bonn, encouraged transparency and open communication to guide the week's discussions and reiterated Germany's offer to locate the future Secretariat in Bonn.

Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, urged agreement on eliminating the 12 POPs, said POPs are an example of exporting the disadvantages of economic growth to developing countries, and highlighted the importance of a precautionary approach. He emphasized the importance of technical assistance, technology transfer and a financial mechanism to enable active participation of developing countries.

Chair John Buccini (Canada) introduced, and delegates adopted, the provisional agenda (UNEP/POPS/INC.4/1). Jim Willis, UNEP Chemicals, overviewed intersessional work undertaken by the Secretariat and related meeting documents. With regard to ongoing international activities, Willis overviewed the master list of actions on the reduction and/or elimination of the releases of POPs (UNEP/POPS/INC.4/INF/5) and highlighted UNEP actions on POPs, including training and capacity-building workshops on, *inter alia*, managing PCB stocks and addressing stocks of obsolete pesticides. Chair Buccini supported treating the master list as an ongoing global POPs action plan to expedite the implementation and ratification process. He reviewed the decisions, milestones and meetings since 1995 in addressing POPs, and noted that INC-4 needs to address all aspects of the convention.

**COUNTRY STATEMENTS:** PORTUGAL, on behalf of the EU, stressed the future convention's importance and called for caution as the guiding principle. The US called for a strong and effective treaty with meaningful controls and eliminations. He supported setting realistic goals for byproducts and assisting developing countries through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. He announced a US\$500,000 grant to the GEF/UNEP regionally based assessment of persistent toxic substances. CANADA underlined the importance of technology innovation, pollution prevention, and a sound, science-based process that exer-

cises precaution in identifying additional POPs. He announced that CANADA will provide CAN\$20 million over the next five years for capacity-building activities. INDIA called for assistance that accommodates the differences in priorities and resources among developing countries. JAPAN advocated a science-based risk assessment procedures for listing substances in the treaty and announced a contribution of US\$150,000 to support INC-4 and INC-5.

CHINA underlined the importance of access to technology and financial resources to ensure developing countries' participation, and supported a multilateral funding mechanism similar to that of the Montreal Protocol. CHILE called for, *inter alia*, specific time limits and targets depending on countries' stages of development, exchange of scientific and technical knowledge, and creation of regional centers and certified laboratories. COLOMBIA supported inclusion of the precautionary principle, a transparent financial mechanism and a mechanism to deal with liability and compensation.

Noting many developing countries cannot afford existing alternatives to POPs, THAILAND called for commitment to technical and financial assistance, especially from exporting countries. SOUTH AFRICA, IRAN, CHINA and VENEZUELA emphasized common but differentiated responsibilities. Several countries, including ECUADOR, IRAN and VENEZUELA, stressed the importance of technical and financial assistance. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported using existing mechanisms for technical and financial assistance. NIGERIA stressed integrating the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the future POPs treaty. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for a flexible instrument to enable broad participation. CAMEROON supported a flexible procedure for identifying POPs. NEPAL drew attention to the problem of illegal entry of banned pesticides.

UNITAR noted progress in the IFCS initiative to develop a global capacity-building network for chemicals management and highlighted available guidance and training packages on, *inter alia*, risk management, financial resources and planning. The FAO overviewed ongoing activities on pesticide management. The INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR CONFERENCE called for financial support through a simple, effective mechanism. IPEN'S WOMEN'S WORKING GROUP emphasized that POPs are affecting the mental and physical development of children.

### IMPLEMENTATION ASPECTS GROUP

Chair Maria Cristina Cardenas Fischer (Colombia) opened the IAG by briefing delegates on the intersessional meeting of the IAG Bureau and the resulting compilation text on technical assistance (Article J) and financial resources and mechanisms (Article K) (UNEP/POPS/INC.4/3). She then invited general comments.

CANADA announced it will submit a proposal for a "capacity assistance network" housed in the Secretariat to coordinate assistance from several agencies, including the GEF. Numerous delegations, including NORWAY, the US, ICELAND and AUSTRALIA supported such a network.

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Richard Campbell <richard@iisd.org>, Jonathon Hanks <jon.hanks@iiee.lu.se>, Laura Ivers <laurai@iisd.org>, and Leila Mead <leila@interport.net>. The Digital Editor is Andrei Henry <andrei@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Managing Editor is Langston James Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA and DFAIT), the United States (through USAID), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Commission (DG-ENV). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2000 is provided by the German Federal Ministry of Environment (BMU) and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation (BMZ), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Environment of Austria, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment of Norway, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Environment of Finland, the Government of Sweden, the Government of Australia, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and BP Amoco. Specific funding for this meeting was provided by the UNEP Chemicals Secretariat. The *Bulletin* can be contacted by e-mail at <enb@iisd.org> and at tel: +1-212-644-0204; fax: +1-212-644-0206. IISD can be contacted by e-mail at <info@iisd.ca> and at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications only and only with appropriate academic citation. For permission to use this material in commercial publications, contact the Managing Editor. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists and can be found on the Linkages WWW server at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/>. The satellite image was taken above Bonn ©2000 The Living Earth, Inc. <http://livingearth.com>. For information on the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, send e-mail to <enb@iisd.org>.



**ARTICLE J:** Delegates generally supported the compilation text, with some delegations, including CANADA and BRAZIL, calling for more precise language. URUGUAY said POPs alternatives should be given greater consideration. VENEZUELA supported broader language on training. BRAZIL proposed a provision for assistance in identifying and recovering contaminated sites. ZAMBIA emphasized assistance at the regional level.

Regarding a paragraph recognizing technical assistance as essential to successful implementation of the convention, and calling on parties to cooperate to provide technical assistance, the EU specified technical assistance "upon request." SOUTH AFRICA, on behalf of the African Group, proposed alternative text emphasizing that developed countries provide technical assistance to develop necessary infrastructure and capacity.

On a paragraph listing types of assistance to be provided, the US, supported by CANADA and MICRONESIA, said the list should be illustrative, not exhaustive. CANADA preferred action-oriented text. With regard to assistance to review available infrastructure, capacity and institutions at the national and local level, the EU specified that this be conducted with relevant international organizations.

On assistance to develop and implement programmes and/or national action plans, CANADA proposed specifying assisting national implementation plans as described in Article E, taking into account national priorities. On assistance for training decision makers, managers and personnel responsible for collecting data regarding the effect of POPs, CANADA proposed amending the text to include data collection and analysis required by its proposed harmonized global monitoring programme to be established under Article I. The US suggested including the effects of POPs alternatives. The EU proposed broadening the text to include training for those responsible for meeting the convention's reporting requirements and CANADA suggested this be addressed separately.

Regarding assistance for strengthening training and research capacity at the national and regional level for introducing alternatives for POPs, the EU preferred that this assistance be for "identifying and" introducing alternatives. The US suggested it should be for monitoring POPs releases, reducing the use of POPs, and identifying and developing environmentally sound alternatives to POPs, such as integrated pest management (IPM). INDIA, supported by CHINA, said the reference to IPM was too specific. ZAMBIA proposed amending the US suggestion to provide for continuous reduction of POPs. SOUTH AFRICA noted the African Group's proposal is for "assistance for training and research capacity," not its "strengthening." CANADA proposed "to develop and strengthen." Delegates will consider a revised version of the article incorporating these and other proposals at its next session.

**ARTICLE K:** Delegates considered two options for Article K: policies to, *inter alia*, provide information on available sources and strengthen existing funds and mechanisms; and establishment of an independent multilateral fund. CANADA, NEW ZEALAND and ICELAND supported the first option as the basis for discussion, while CHINA, CUBA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, MICRONESIA, ZAMBIA, the AFRICAN GROUP, and GRULAC preferred the second. The US and AUSTRALIA supported an approach to address country-specific needs. Cautioning that establishment of a new fund could be time consuming and bureaucratic, the US supported a portfolio approach. NORWAY supported the GEF as the major funding source. MICRONESIA said INC-4 should establish an idea of what the mechanism will be like.

#### NEGOTIATING GROUP

The NG, chaired by Buccini, based discussion on the working text of the convention as contained in the report of INC-3 (UNEP/POPS/INC.3/4).

**ARTICLE H:** On public information, awareness and education, POLAND, with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and INDIA, supported deleting chapeau language stating that parties actions be carried out consistent with parties' capabilities, and the GAMBIA, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA and BRAZIL opposed. SOUTH AFRICA suggested alternative chapeau language on taking into

account common but differentiated responsibilities, respective capabilities, and specific national and regional development priorities and circumstances.

JAPAN, with CANADA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, the US, CHINA, INDIA and BRAZIL, supported promotion and facilitation of the article's provisions in accordance with national laws and regulations. The US, supported by URUGUAY, suggested that information be provided if "available," and proposed removing bracketed text referring to specific types of information. The EU proposed a streamlined version of the article, which includes reference to providing information relevant to the convention, deletes subsections referencing specific types of information, and deletes reference to "in accordance with national laws and regulations."

IRAN, with ETHIOPIA, ECUADOR and THAILAND, expressed concern over the EU's proposed removal of the subsections. URUGUAY opposed the EU's proposed removal of a subsection relating to the provision of information on POPs by industry and professional users. CANADA, with ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, ECUADOR, CHILE, VENEZUELA and THAILAND, called for retention of the subsection, as well as "in accordance with national laws and regulations."

The GAMBIA suggested governments should "ensure" rather than "encourage" industry to fulfill the specified obligations. She also proposed including specific reference to women and children, and workers. ARGENTINA recommended retaining reference to alternative methods and to IPM. VENEZUELA emphasized the need for civil society's participation and for POPs substitutes. Chair Buccini said a revised version of Article H would be available the following afternoon.

**ARTICLE I:** On research, development and monitoring, the EU proposed streamlining the article's text to emphasize key elements, retaining language on, *inter alia*: chemical and non-chemical alternatives, monitoring levels in the environment, effects on human health and environment, and social, cultural and economic factors. POLAND, JAPAN and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION supported retaining the provision on monitoring and assessing releases, persistence, and long range transport based on modeling, and harmonizing or standardizing methodologies.

The US proposed that Parties shall "encourage" research, development and monitoring, and that brackets be lifted from references to IPM, non-chemical alternatives, and harmonization of methodologies and techniques. The US said research and monitoring results be publicly available where appropriate. IRAN supported making results publicly accessible. CANADA proposed developing a harmonized global monitoring programme, to be implemented on a regional basis, to detect changes in POPs concentrations in the environment, utilizing existing programmes as much as possible. COLOMBIA, INDONESIA and POLAND, JAMAICA and the US generally supported such a programme. COLOMBIA, supported by JAMAICA, proposed adding language on implementing such a programme in accordance with technical and financial capabilities. The EU questioned the need to establish a formal mechanism, noting the Canadian proposal would be costly. CANADA said the programme constituted a legitimate activity for capacity-building resource allocation. The Secretariat will produce a compilation text based on the various proposals.

#### IN THE CORRIDORS

As various major groups consulted informally on their game plan in preparation for discussions on control measures, a number of observers speculated on the nature of alliances being formed. Speculation was rife on the stance to be adopted by developing countries, and on the impact this may have on agreement on financial mechanisms. While some speculate debates at INC-4 will heat up, others suggested the real showdown will not occur until INC-5.

#### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**PLENARY:** Delegates will meet at 10:00 am for a brief Plenary session to hear updates from working groups.

**WORKING GROUPS:** Following Plenary, the IAG will meet to consider revised text for Article J. The NG will address measures to reduce or eliminate releases (Article D).