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**Second meeting of the Expanded Bureau
of the ninth meeting of the Conference
of the Parties to the Basel Convention**

Geneva, 24-25 March 2011

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Enhancing cooperation and coordination among the
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

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Note by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. By its decision IX/10, the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Joint Working Group on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions as well as decision RC-4/11 of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and decision SC-4/34 of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention. These three decisions are hereinafter referred to as the “synergies decisions”.
2. These synergies decisions in paragraph 5 of part V decided to convene the simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions held in Bali Indonesia, from 22 to 24 February 2010.
3. The simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions adopted in substance identical omnibus decision BC.Ex-1/1 of the Conference of Parties to the Basel Convention, RC.Ex-1/1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and SC.Ex-1/1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (hereinafter referred to as the “omnibus decisions”).
4. The omnibus decision contains six parts:
 - (a) I on joint activities;
 - (b) II on joint managerial functions;
 - (c) III on joint services;
 - (d) IV on synchronization of budget cycles;
 - (e) V on joint audits;
 - (f) VI on review arrangements.

* UNEP/SBC/BUREAU/9/2/1.

5. The same information on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, prepared by the three secretariats on the above six parts, will be made available to the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention, to be held from 25 to 29 April 2011 in Geneva, to the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Conventions, to be held from 20 to 24 June 2011 in Geneva, and to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel, Convention, to be held from 17 to 21 October 2011 in Cartagena, Colombia.

I. Implementation

6. The documents to be submitted to the three conferences of the Parties address the six parts of the omnibus decisions: I. Joint activities, II. Joint managerial functions, III. Joint services, IV. Synchronization of budget cycles, V. Joint audits and VI. Review arrangements. There is an overall cover note, introducing addenda and draft text for the preambular paragraphs (document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32). The full list of documents, as submitted to the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention, is available in the annex to the present note. The documents submitted to the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention will be identical in content.

7. It is expected that decisions on enhancing synergies based on the proposals contained in the above documents will be adopted at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention, and will be also adopted by the conferences of the Parties to the Rotterdam and Basel conventions based on the equivalent proposals.

A. Joint activities

8. The 21 proposed cross-cutting and joint activities, prepared by the three secretariats on the basis of proposals from inter-secretariat thematic groups that, in line with the synergies decisions, have been established to develop and implement joint activities, are described and included in the annex I to the document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.1.

9. The reports on joint activities of the three conventions during 2009 and 2010 to support the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by Parties and other stakeholders are available in documents UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/14 (joint activities carried out by the secretariats), UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/15 (reports by Parties, Basel and Stockholm convention's regional centres and non-governmental organizations), UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/16 (reports by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/49 (information submitted by international organizations, from the IOMC on efforts to promote programmatic cooperation and coordination and on activities to implement the synergies decisions), UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/46 (additional information on the Safe Planet Campaign) The report on other clearing-house mechanisms and similar mechanisms in the area of chemicals and wastes is presented in document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/17. The revised joint workplan for the development of a clearing-house mechanism is contained in the annex II to the document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.1.

10. The 21 proposed cross-cutting and joint activities were agreed upon by the Synergies Oversight Team (SOT), comprising the executive secretaries of the three conventions, and two representatives of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, respectively.

11. The SOT approved the proposals for funding of joint activities to be included in the budget proposals for the three conventions. The proposed programme budget for 2012-2013 for the Stockholm Convention is presented in document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/35. An equivalent document will be submitted to the Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention. It is important to note that those parts of the proposed programme budgets for 2012-2013 that relate to the implementation of the decisions on enhancing synergies will be equivalent in the relevant documents submitted to the three Conferences of the Parties.

B. Joint managerial functions

12. The issues concerning the joint managerial function are managed by UNEP Executive Director in consultation with the Director General of FAO. Regarding the joint head of the secretariats of the Basel, Stockholm and UNEP part of the Rotterdam conventions, the Executive Director of UNEP had consulted with the Bureaux of the three conferences on the job description prior to initiating

recruitment. The position was advertised, and broadly distributed to reach a wide audience, at the end of August 2010 with a closing date for applications of 12 October 2010. At the time of writing of the present document, the joint head had not yet been appointed.

C. Joint services

13. The Executive Director of UNEP, in consultation with the Director-General of FAO and through the Executive Secretaries of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, established, on a permanent basis, the joint services for the three conventions, called for in paragraph 3 of section III of the omnibus decisions, immediately after the simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the conferences of the parties. The information on the joint services is contained in document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.3.

14. The joint financial and administrative support service provides financial and administrative services to the three secretariats, including in terms of human resources, costing of the programmes of work, budgets, contractual arrangements with service providers and consultants, procurement, payments and audits. In addition, it provides conference and support services to the secretariats, such as logistical arrangements, correspondence, registration of participants, travel and other related support functions.

15. The Joint Convention Services (JCS) are operational and working well. Two examples of increased efficiency gained through the JCS, namely the good support to the Seventh session of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG 7), in May 2010 and to the Sixth meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee of the Stockholm Convention in October 2010.

16. The introduction of paperless meetings has resulted in savings in paper, photocopying and temporary staff. Although much of those savings could well be absorbed by the setting up of wireless and intranet facilities at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, the costs are being shared between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and subsequent meetings will use the same equipment, resulting in long-term savings.

17. The document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.3 also shows good progress regarding the joint legal service, the joint information technology service including in the development of websites and joint applications and systems. The integration of the three secretariats' websites into a single platform was facilitated with \$20,000 made available from the Basel Convention Trust Fund and voluntary funding of 50,000 Euros received by the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions from the Government of Germany.

18. Concerning the integration of the basic information technology platform and services, the conferences of the parties invited parties and others in a position to do so to provide voluntary funding of \$80,000. To date, no funding has been received for this activity.

19. Developments are also occurring in the joint outreach and public awareness in promoting the three conventions, their objectives, benefits, implementation programmes and activities. including publications, media, the clearing-house mechanism and other forms of communication such as the Safe Planet campaign.

20. The Executive Director of UNEP is covering 50 per cent of the costs for a Senior Resource Mobilization Officer until September 2011, and the UNEP Resource Mobilization Section has stepped up its assistance to the secretariats for the joint resource mobilization service. The Executive Secretaries support these efforts with the assistance of secretariat staff members from technical units. This service would benefit from a dedicated staff member to coordinate the three secretariats' resource mobilization efforts.

21. In response to the relevant request by the Parties to the Executive Director, work is underway to develop scenarios for the UNEP Executive Director in consultation with the Director General of FAO and the Joint Head to consider in their proposal for the modification of the organization of the three secretariats, for consideration by the meetings of the Conferences of the Parties in 2011, which would take effect in the 2012-2013 biennium. Given the close relationship between this request and the request made on joint managerial functions, the Executive Director expressed a wish for the parties to consider these issues together at the 2011 meetings of the conferences. Such proposals could, however, only be finalized after the appointment of the Joint Head.

D. Synchronization of budget cycles

22. The budget cycles of the Basel and Rotterdam conventions, from the biennium 2012–2013, will be in line with those of the Stockholm Convention, UNEP and FAO, enabling UNEP to produce coordinated financial statements for the three conventions.

E. Joint audits

23. UNEP has been informed that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) has included in its workplan for 2011 an audit of the strategic management of UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements with a view to providing reasonable assurance regarding the management of risk, strategic planning and compliance with regulations and rules.

F. Review arrangements

24. Concerning the review of how far the arrangements adopted pursuant to the synergies decisions, in particular on joint activities, joint managerial functions and joint services, have contributed to achieving the objectives of enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the omnibus decisions provide that the review will be undertaken on the basis of two reports: one report prepared by the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, containing information collected from parties through the questionnaire and their own views, and a second report prepared by Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in consultation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), through a joint endeavour of their respective evaluation units, based on the input from parties and taking into account input from the three secretariats and other stakeholders.

25. As requested in the omnibus decisions, the secretariats have prepared detailed draft terms of reference for the preparation of their report, for the consideration of the three conferences of the parties. These terms of reference are set out in annex I to the document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.6.

26. The Executive Director of UNEP, in consultation with the Director-General of FAO, has prepared detailed terms of reference, including performance indicators, for the preparation of UNEP FAO report. The terms of reference are set out in annex II to the document UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.6.

II. Possible action by the Expanded Bureau

27. The Expanded Bureau may wish to take note of the information provided, and provide guidance on the ongoing process.

Annex

List of synergies documents for the Conferences of the Parties in 2011		
Document symbol	Title	Description
General		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32	Enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions	Overall cover note, introducing addenda and draft text for the preamble paragraphs
Joint activities		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.1	Joint activities	Introduces INFs, 21 proposed cross-cutting and joint activities, revised joint workplan for the development of a clearing-house mechanism, draft decision for joint activities
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/14	Report on joint activities carried out by the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2009 and 2010	Activities carried out by the Secretariats in 2009 and 2010 and main joint activities planned for 2011
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/15	Submissions from Parties, regional centres of the Basel and Stockholm conventions and other stakeholders on activities carried out to implement the synergies decisions	Compilation of submissions received from Parties, regional centres and NGOs; summary of the information submitted
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/49	Information submitted by international organizations on efforts to promote programmatic cooperation and coordination and on activities to implement the synergies decisions	Submission from the IOMC
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/16	Reports from UNEP and FAO on progress made in the development of programmatic cooperation in the field to support implementation of the three conventions in areas of common concern and the inclusion of such cooperation in their biennial work programmes	Submissions from UNEP and FAO
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/17	Report on other clearing-house mechanisms and similar mechanisms in the area of chemicals and wastes	Report from the Secretariat on other clearing-house mechanisms
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/46	Additional information on the Safe Planet Campaign	Additional information on proposal "S15N. Safe Planet Campaign: Develop and implement Safe Planet activities"
Joint managerial functions		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.2	Joint managerial functions	Proposal on the reorganization of the Secretariats and JCS, draft decision for joint managerial functions
Joint services		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.3	Joint services	Progress report, draft decision on joint services

Synchronization of budget cycles		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.4	Synchronization of budget cycles	Progress report, draft decision on synchronization. of budget cycles
Joint audits		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.5	Joint audits	Progress report, draft decision on joint audits
Review arrangements		
UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.6	Review arrangements	Terms of reference for the review by the Secretariats and UNEP/FAO, draft decision text on review arrangements