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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 6 of the provisional agenda*

Other matters: addressing the link between waste management and climate change

Addressing the link between waste management and climate change

Note by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. The twenty-fifth session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, by its decision 25/8 on waste management, invited the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention and other international bodies to consider further actions regarding waste management, taking into account the recommendations and the description of the outcome of cooperation with other bodies contained in the report by the Executive Director, and to inform the Governing Council, through the Executive Director, on the outcome of their consideration.

I. Implementation

2. The Executive Director of UNEP has been following up on UNEP Governing Council decision 25/8 to build capacity on waste management. UNEP, based on its successful and continuous support on waste management, has received numerous requests from national governments and other entities to develop a strategy for co-benefits of waste management in the context of climate change. To develop this strategy, UNEP carried out an intensive review of linkages between waste management and climate change and produced a report published in December, titled “Waste and Climate Change: Global Trends and Strategy Framework”.

3. This report is available at <http://www.unep.or.jp/download/Waste&ClimateChange.pdf>

4. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of the different ways in which waste management can contribute to combating climate change. It concludes that “the waste sector is in a unique position to move from being a minor source of global emissions to becoming a major saver of emissions”. According to the report, waste prevention, and recycling or resource recovery, results in the highest climate benefit compared to other waste management approaches. This benefit is achieved through avoiding the greenhouse gas emissions from the energy used to extract or produce the primary materials.

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

5. Several developments are currently taking place at the international policy level that could help promote the actions advanced by the UNEP report. As far as the Basel Convention is concerned, the publication of the report coincided with a paradigm shift being advocated in the lead-up to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP 10); the Conference will focus on the theme of "Prevention, Minimization and Recovery of Wastes". This may include consideration of ways and means to turn certain types of wastes into valuable resources, and thus contribute to the creation of green jobs and business opportunities.

6. In the context of the theme of COP 10, the potential of waste avoidance, recycling and resource recovery, to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the relevant sectors of the economy might also be considered, as well as possible contributions that could be made under the Basel Convention towards the realization of this potential.

7. Another significant policy development, to which both the findings of the UNEP report and the paradigm shift under the Basel Convention can contribute, is the concept of a Green Economy, which will figure prominently on the agenda of the Rio 2012 Summit. Turning wastes into valuable resources through recycling and resource recovery while reducing greenhouse gas emissions could be one of the concrete ways of giving life to this concept.

II. Possible action by the Expanded Bureau

8. The Expanded Bureau may wish to take note of the new developments concerning linkages between waste management and climate change and provide guidance to the Secretariat as to the preparation of relevant documentation for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
