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**Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
Ninth meeting**

Bali, 23–27 June 2008

Item 7 (a) (ii) of the provisional agenda*

**Implementation of the decisions adopted by the
Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting:
Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Basel
Convention to 2010: programme framework until 2010**

Report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, taking into account the review of the operation of the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres and the role of the Basel Convention Partnership Programme

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Reference is made to the decision OEWG-VI/28 made at the sixth session of the Open-ended Working Group to the Basel Convention which requested the Secretariat to prepare a report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan taking into account the review of the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres (BCRCs) and the role of the Basel Convention Partnership Programme to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting.

II. The Strategic Plan

2. By decision VI/1, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted the Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Basel Convention to 2010 and requested the Secretariat to cooperate closely with the Parties, the Basel Convention Regional Centres and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of those activities contained in the Strategic Plan for which financial support is agreed upon by the Parties;

* UNEP/CHW.9/1.

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3. The following fields of activities are identified in the Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Basel Convention to 2010:

- (a) Prevention, minimization, recycling, recovery and disposal of hazardous and other wastes subject to the Basel Convention, taking into account social, technological and economic concerns;
- (b) Active promotion and the use of cleaner production and technologies, with the aim of the prevention and minimization of hazardous and other wastes subject to the Basel Convention;
- (c) Further reduction of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes subject to the Basel Convention, taking into account the need for efficient management, the principles of self-sufficiency and proximity and the priority requirement of recovery and recycling;
- (d) Prevention and monitoring of illegal traffic;
- (e) Improvement and promotion of institutional and technical capacity-building, as well as the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- (f) Further development of the Basel Convention Regional Centres for training and technology transfer;
- (g) Enhancement of information exchange, education and awareness-raising in all sectors of society;
- (h) Cooperation and partnership at all levels between countries, public authorities, international organizations, the industry sector, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions;
- (i) Development of mechanisms for compliance with and for the monitoring and effective implementation of the Convention and its amendments.

4. In addition, the Strategic Plan identifies the following priority waste streams:

- (a) Electrical and electronic wastes;
- (b) Persistent organic pollutant wastes including obsolete stocks of pesticides, PCBs, and dioxins and furans;
- (c) Biomedical and health-care wastes;
- (d) Used Lead-Acid batteries;
- (e) Used oils;
- (f) By-products from the dismantling of ships;
- (g) Household wastes mixed with hazardous wastes;
- (h) Asbestos wastes and mercury wastes.

III. The role of the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres in the implementation of the Strategic Plan

5. The Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Basel Convention to 2010 specifically included the further development of the Basel Convention Regional Centres for training and technology transfer (Field (f)) among its objectives. Field (f) is divided in activities to be implemented between 2003 and 2004 and activities to be carried out between 2005 and 2010.

6. Among the activities to be implemented between 2003 and 2004 in relation to the development of the Basel Convention Regional Centres are:

- (a) The preparation and use of the business plans;
- (b) The development of programmes and fund-raising activities to support the core functions of the BCRCs and their business plans;
- (c) The elaboration and preparation of training programmes for all key activities areas under the Strategic Plan.

7. In relation to the preparation and use of the business plans, most of the BCRCs developed their business plans for the biennia 2003-2004 and 2005-2006, and all the BCRCs prepared their own business plan for the biennium 2007-2008, to be used as a reference for activities to be developed within the region. Although some BCRCs have received support for the implementation of their business plan through the Basel Convention Trust Fund, the majority of the Centres need the help of the Secretariat to mobilize resources.

8. In regard to the development of programmes and fund-raising activities to support the core functions of the BCRCs according to the business plans, the BCRCs have only limited staff, training and operational resources to maintain fund raising activities. Currently the operation of the Centres is mainly supported by the respective host countries, and most activities are financed through the Basel Convention Technical Cooperation Trust Fund. In this context, one Centre has received funding for a long term project that was channelled through the Secretariat on an interim basis until the legal status of the Centre is clarified. One Centre has acted as a GEF executing agency and has received funding from the GEF via the UNEP GEF Unit. Another Centre is also being considered for a GEF funded project.

9. It is important to note that the role of the BCRCs is not limited to the development of the field (f) of the Strategic Plan. The BCRCs contributed to all the fields of the Strategic Plan by developing and implementing training programmes and its constant update through the delivery of technical materials, workshops, case studies, etc.

10. From all the indicators presented in the field (f) of the Strategic Plan in relation to activities for 2003-2004, further efforts are needed in relation to the mobilization of support to the implementation of the business plans and the development of financial arrangements and partnerships at the regional level. In this regard, efforts are being made through the involvement of the Secretariat in sharing information, experience and methodology between the Centres involved in the undertaking of similar activities in different regions.

11. The Strategic plan also lists the initiatives to be implemented between 2005 and 2010:

(a) The consolidation of strategic partnerships to support the regional delivery functions of the BCRCs;

(b) Joint activities undertaken at BCRCs for the regional delivery of the Basel Convention and other related MEAs;

(c) The development and implementation of regional programmes for environmentally sound management encompassing waste minimization;

(d) The initiation and conducting of training programmes for key Strategic Plan activities.

12. In relation to the activities of consolidation of strategic partnerships to support the regional delivery functions of the BCRCs, it is noted that some activities were jointly developed with the UNIDO's National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPC), the UNEP Regional Offices, and UNDP national offices. Moreover, some centres have developed links with other organizations, for example, the BCRC-Slovakia with the European Commission's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX), and the BCRC-SPREP with the Waigani Convention. However, it is not possible to see this as a consolidation of any strategic partnership reinforcing the Centres as a whole.

13. Among the activities undertaken in cooperation with other MEA secretariats, fifty-six activities were organized in cooperation with the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. In addition, the BCRCs located in China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation, Senegal and Uruguay have applied to become Regional Centres to the Stockholm Convention. The role of the BCRCs in relation to the process of cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions is currently being reviewed by the Parties in view of the Report on the Review of the Basel Convention Regional Centres and the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Joint Working Group on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

14. The Centres have developed activities in regard to waste minimization. Some activities were undertaken by the Centres with the involvement of the NCPCs, such as the Pilot Programme for the Minimization of Impacts Generated by Hazardous Wastes which was carried out in cooperation with the NCPC in Brazil. The BCRC Slovakia also implemented a training project on the implementation of waste minimization. In addition, larger projects often contain activities on wastes minimization.

15. In regard to the development of training programmes for key Strategic Plan activities, this has been successfully implemented by all the Centres. More than 17 projects and 21 capacity building activities were carried out for the implementation of the Strategic Plan. In addition, 15 projects have been undertaken under the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund, and most of them are related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

16. All the indicators mentioned regarding the activities for 2005-2010 in the field (f), showed that it would be necessary to enhance technical and scientific support provided to the BCRCs by stakeholders concerned, in cooperation with UNEP/UNIDO NCPCs in all the regions, and to improve the capacity of the member countries of the BCRCs in relation to the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes.

17. Overall, the development of the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres has been insufficient for the Centres to play their role to the full extent in the context of the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention. There is a need to complete the work initiated at COP5 concerning the legal establishment of the Centres, increase their financial sustainability, regional visibility and integration into the socio-economic panorama of their own region. The ability of the Centres to forge alliances with stakeholders from different horizons, including industry and civil society, is much required. The process of the review of the Regional Centres, including the Report prepared for this meeting (UNEP/CHW.9/7), is expected to address some of these issues.

18. The Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres provide a critical instrument for the implementation of the Strategic Plan at the regional level. This role was recognized by the Parties in decision OEWG-VI/2 adopted at the sixth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group to the Basel Convention.

IV. The role of the Partnership Programme in the implementation of the Strategic Plan

19. The Partnership Programme serves as an innovative arm of the Convention and helps to accelerate actions that support implementation of the Strategic Plan. Partnerships have an effective role and they contribute to the implementation of the Convention and its' Strategic Plan.

20. By its decision VI/32, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted the Basel Convention Partnership Programme. Decision VI/32 emphasised the importance of partnerships in the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes. It further welcomed and encouraged the importance of partnerships in addressing the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes, including priority waste streams under the Strategic Plan¹. Convinced that the active involvement and support of industry, business organisations and non-governmental organisations is necessary to achieve the aims of the Basel Convention, the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted a Ministerial Statement on Partnerships for Meeting the Global Waste Challenge². Further information on Partnerships and the Partnerships Programme can be found in document UNEP/CHW.9/10.

21. The preparation of guidelines to provide advice in the development of waste prevention and minimization programmes and tools, as well as framework guidelines on hazardous and other waste prevention and minimization are named as activities under the Strategic Plan. Basel Convention Partnerships provide stakeholders with the opportunity to work together with Parties to develop new guidelines, practices, voluntary agreements and pilot projects. An example is the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative (MPPI), which successfully produced five guidelines on the transboundary movement of used and end-of-life mobile phones.

22. The work of Partnerships helps to strengthen co-operation with environmental inter-governmental organisations, identify and engage key industry and business stakeholders to support the aims of the Basel Declaration on Environmentally Sound Management, and develop innovative fundraising for environmentally sound management. These are all initiatives listed under Field (h) of the Strategic Plan.

¹ There are 5 Strategic Plan focus areas mentioned in decision VIII/5: persistent organic pollutant wastes; electrical and electronic wastes, household wastes mixed with hazardous wastes; biomedical and healthcare wastes and used lead acid batteries.

² UNEP/CHW.7/33, pages 99-100.

23. As a flexible means of implementation of the Strategic Plan, Partnerships engage and raise awareness of key industry and business sectors, non governmental organisations, other international bodies and the public. They are also a key mechanism towards strengthening co-operation with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and can be used as an instrument for joint initiatives in support of capacity building, training, awareness and mobilisation of resources to fulfil the aims of the Basel Convention, as stated in Field (h) of the Strategic Plan.

24. Partnerships encourage regional awareness activities and approaches, such as high-level dialogues and workshops, on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life products. Workshops have been organised through existing Partnerships which were of key importance in providing information guidelines to country experts who can use and apply such guidelines. These activities work towards implementation of Fields (a) to (c) of the Strategic Plan.

25. The Basel Convention Partnerships Programme works in co-operation with the Basel Convention Regional Centres (BCRCs) to provide input on activities. Furthermore, BCRC Directors actively participate in the global Partnerships and the Partnerships Programme participates in BCRC workshops and training. This collaborative work has resulted in further development of the BCRCs, in line with Field (f) of the Strategic Plan. Regional Centres are highly encouraged to apply the Partnership approach to achieve capacity building and technical transfer objectives.

26. Linkages between capacity-building needs and priorities of existing international financial or bilateral funding mechanisms are created through Partnerships. The proposed activities of the emerging Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment, for example, include:

“Develop and promote pilot schemes for environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment towards the achievement of MDG goals.”

27. By their nature, Partnerships result in greater education of, enhanced information exchange between, and awareness-raising amongst various sectors of society, in accordance with Field (g) of the Strategic Plan. This is due to the diversity of stakeholders involved in the process, as well as the emphasis on a broad and active level of discussion and action between differing stakeholders.
