Public-private partnerships are voluntary and creative mechanisms that support the work of the Convention by offering fora for open and frank dialogue and practical action by all stakeholders. They are comprised of all levels of government, industry and business sectors, non-governmental organizations, academia and other international institutions and bodies.

Distinct from other mechanisms of the Convention given their cooperative nature and structure, partnerships can address complex and emerging waste streams through the work of a range of experts committed to achieving common and technically viable solutions.

- Partnership activities can result in agreements or pledges of voluntary action in order to find innovative solutions and practical actions in the management of complex and emerging waste streams.
- Partnerships strengthen Parties’ capacity to implement the Convention.
- Industry. in particular, plays a vital role in partnerships as it possesses the technical skills, know-how and infrastructure needed for the environmentally sound management (ESM) of many waste streams, including sound recycling and safe disposal of end-of-life products.
- Civil society plays an important role by providing their expertise and skills in raising awareness and in presenting academic studies and activities underway.

The concerted and active involvement of all stakeholders to address a priority focus area of the Basel Convention helps to:

- Enhance collaboration by bringing together experts and policy makers to develop guidance and guidelines together
- Tap expertise and knowledge at a broader level;
- Leverage resources at all levels;
- Create a level playing field for environmentally sound management, and identify what Parties can do to promote this activity by working with the partnership;
- Seek creative or innovative solutions of mutual interest collectively;
- Forge new linkages and alliances between capacity-building needs and cooperative actions.

Private-Public Partnerships provide an effective and open way for stakeholders to meet together to address common areas of concern and identify a programme of actions to undertake collectively.
The History of the Basel Convention Partnerships Programme

Partnerships are a priority identified by Parties as a way to address important challenges and issues with the environmentally sound management of wastes and their transboundary movement.

Recognizing the need for active support of key stakeholders, including consumers, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and industry, Ministers adopted the 1999 *Basel Declaration on Environmentally Sound Management*, emphasizing the critical importance of public-private partnerships as a means to accomplish the objectives of ESM.

The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2002 adopted the *Basel Convention Partnership Programme* under decision VI/32 as part of its *10-year Strategic Plan*, convinced that the active involvement and support of industry and business organizations and non-governmental organizations is necessary to achieve the aims of the Basel Convention.

This was affirmed in 2004, in the *Ministerial Statement on Partnerships for Meeting the Global Waste Challenge*, in which Parties and other States agreed, among other things, to adopt a partnership approach when dealing with priority wastes streams. Subsequently, in the *Nairobi Declaration* relating to electrical and electronic wastes issued in 2006, the Ministers and heads of delegation attending the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties underlined the fact that the Basel Convention provides an effective framework for developing strategic partnerships to continue discussing and exchanging views and experiences.

Partnerships are an important mechanism in the rapidly changing world of the international community and are recognised as an important tool to uphold UN principles and initiate practical action by engaging stakeholders at all levels. The Millennium Declaration demonstrates the how partnerships fostered by the international community will “give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes.”

Many other organizations within the United Nations system have initiated their own partnership programmes, for example within the United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security promoted by FAO, IFAD and WFP; the National Cleaner Production Centres promoted by UNEP and UNIDO; and finally The Cities Alliance, promoted by UN-HABITAT and the World Bank. Most notable, however, is the United Nations Global Compact which was initiated by the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan. The Global Compact engages the business community through nearly 2,000 companies and other stakeholders in a common effort to support 10 internationally agreed principles in human rights, labour, environment and anticorruption and operates in more than 70 countries.
Success Factors and Lessons Learned

Drawing on the experience to date, particularly with the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative, partnerships would be guided by these overarching working principles:

- Involve all stakeholders in the initiative from the very start and ensure transparency throughout the partnership;
- Ensure a balanced representation from developed and developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, including by making travel funds available for those who need them;
- Establish strong mechanisms for planning, coordination and consensus-building amongst all stakeholders;
- Build confidence amongst stakeholders, who may have different priorities and mandates;
- Identify and engage committed individuals from the public and private sectors who can play a leadership role;
- Mobilize and secure sufficient and sustainable human and financial resources from the start; and
- Take a step-by-step approach, adjusting the work programme as needed to benefit from lessons learned.

Building Partnerships

Current Partnerships
- Asia-Pacific E-waste Programme
- Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative (MPPI)
- Used oils in the Caribbean
- Household wastes mixed with hazardous wastes

Emerging Partnerships
- Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment (PACE)
- Global E-waste
- Biomedical and health-care wastes
- Mercury and other heavy metals
Opportunities through Partnerships

Basel Convention Partnerships provide stakeholders with the opportunity to:

- Develop new guidelines, practices, voluntary agreements and pilot projects, with global, regional and local level interests in mind;
- Raise consumer awareness about actions individuals can take;
- Encourage regional awareness raising approaches such as: high level dialogues and workshops on ESM of used and end-of-life products.
- Achieve better product stewardship, for example through changes at the design stage that facilitate future recycling, and consequently promote waste minimization, the life-cycle approach and integrated or “mixed” waste management;
- Create linkages between capacity-building needs and priorities of existing international financial or bilateral funding mechanisms;
- Strengthen the capacity Parties to implement the provisions of the Basel Convention
- Build capacity and expand the knowledge base of both the private and public sectors

Public-Private Partnerships:

For further information, please contact:

Secretariat of the Basel Convention/UNEP
International Environment House
13-15 chemin des Anémones
1219 Châtelaine (Geneva)
Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 917 82 18
Fax +41 22 917 34 54
Email: sbc@unep.ch
www.basel.int