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**Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention  
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of  
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal**  
Third session  
Geneva, 26–30 April 2004  
**Item 6 of the provisional agenda\***  
**Basel Convention partnership work programme**

## **Work programme for the Basel Convention Partnership Programme**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **I. Background**

1. At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted decision VI/32 which, among other things, mandated the Open-ended Working Group to adopt a work programme for the Basel Convention Partnership Programme.
2. At its second session, the Open-ended Working Group agreed through decision OEWG-II/9:
  - (a) Provisionally to adopt the interim partnership work programme;
  - (b) To request the Secretariat to initiate and implement the interim programme;
  - (c) To request written comments to be submitted to the Secretariat by 31 December 2003;and
  - (d) To request the Secretariat to prepare for consideration and adoption at this meeting a final work programme based on the interim programme and the comments received.

#### **II. Implementation**

3. A robust partnership programme capable of engaging a wide range of stakeholders is of critical importance for the effective implementation of the Basel Convention. An important step in broadening the technical and resource base of the Convention, and its capacity to assist developing countries, is to engage industry and broader civil society in the partnership programme.

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\* UNEP/CHW/OEWG/3/1.

## **A. Pilot phase of the Partnership Programme**

4. The first year (from 2003 to date) of the Partnership Programme has seen the successful establishment of a first pilot initiative – the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative, the forging of key contacts with industry and other stakeholders, and an increased understanding of the manner in which the Convention should best put into operation this important element of the Strategic Plan. Valuable lessons have been learnt from experience over the year and these will be important factors in the development of further initiatives. It is now clear that a successful Partnership Programme:

- (a) Is an essential ingredient for the success of the Basel Convention in its second decade of implementation;
- (b) Is important for improving the capacity of the Convention to assist developing countries;
- (c) Is a key plank for a successful resource mobilization strategy that can engage industry, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other significant stakeholders in the needs of developing countries and the work of the Convention;
- (d) Requires sustainability in terms of resources and effort.

5. Given time, the Programme will raise the profile of the Convention and improve political support; provide an avenue for practical project activity informed by industry and non-governmental organization experience; and link the waste challenge of the Basel Convention, its Parties and regional centres to other significant policy agendas, more allies and new funding sources focused on developing capacity in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

6. These benefits will not be easily secured. There is a need to build long-term trust amongst partners and to reconcile and coordinate often competing positions between industry stakeholders, as well as between industry and environmental communities. Early and sustained commitment will, however, result in effective long-term outcomes, particularly in the capacity of developing countries to manage waste in an environmentally sustainable manner.

## **B. Implementation of the interim partnership work programme**

7. Implementation of the Partnership Programme to date has been contingent on voluntary contributions from three Parties and a voluntary contribution from a private sector partner. Work since the provisional adoption of the work programme by the Open-ended Working Group at its second session has focused on the first cluster of activities listed on that programme. It is important to note that initial contacts have been made during this period with the United Nations Global Compact Office. The Office links more than 1,000 companies worldwide interested in the principle of private-public partnerships under the direction of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Creating a link from the Basel Convention Partnership Programme to the United Nation Global Compact is an important initiative that significantly enhances:

- (a) Visibility and credibility of the Basel Convention;
- (b) Long-term prospects of the Convention to promote environmentally sound management in the world's leading companies;
- (c) Potential of the Convention through its Partnership Programme to mobilize technical and financial resources for building developing country capacity.

8. The Global Compact Office has agreed to link the Basel Convention web site to its own web site and to support the Basel Convention Partnership Programme in whatever way it can. Completion of the Partnership Programme and realization of its full potential benefits to the Basel Convention will require a sustained support from Parties to 2006.

9. Progress with implementation in other specific areas is outlined below.

## 1. Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative

10. The second meeting of the mobile phone working group was held in Geneva on 16 and 17 February 2004. It reviewed progress with projects under the initiative and considered a range of other issues. Key outcomes from the meeting included:

- (a) Expansion of the mobile phone working group to include Alcatel, Sharp Telecommunications Europe and Vodafone as members;
- (b) Expansion in principle to include a limited number of other key network operators as members;
- (c) Expansion in principle to include a limited number of key non-governmental organizations as observers;
- (d) Expansion in principle to include a limited number of key refurbishers and recyclers as observers.

Membership is likely to stabilize around twenty companies by the end of 2004.

11. The mobile phone working group considered the work programme of the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative and progress on particular projects and noted that the initiative now had four projects running. The working group determined that a stronger focus should be placed on consistency between those projects and requested the Secretariat to address this issue and to offer assistance on cross-cutting issues that might arise.

12. The working group noted with appreciation the generous financial support of the Governments of Australia and Switzerland and the Shields Environmental Group of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

13. The working group left open amendments to the work programme of the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative, most of which will be completed in 2004. Revisions to this work programme will need to be considered by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention at its seventh meeting. Members of the working group have until 30 June 2004 to submit suggested additions or amendments to the Secretariat. The Secretariat would further welcome suggestions by the Parties about this work programme by that date.

14. There are activities extending beyond 2004, which will be the most directly beneficial for developing countries. In November 2004, the Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative is scheduled to establish one or more take back and treatment schemes in developing countries with financial support from industry.

## 2. Used oils in Africa

15. The Secretariat has been in contact with the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA) about the establishment of a partnership on used oils in Africa. Used oils are important because of the large quantities generated globally, their potential for direct reuse, reprocessing, reclamation and regeneration and because they may cause detrimental effects to human health and the environment, if not subject to environmentally sound management, including collection, handling, treatment and disposal. All the major international oil companies have a presence in Africa but there are also local oil companies. The Secretariat will be seeking to engage these companies in a dialogue. More substantive meetings will be held with IPIECA and relevant oil companies between the third session of the Open-ended Working Group and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties, which would focus on preparing a declaration and draft work programme with direct benefits for African countries for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session.

**3. Electrical and electronic waste**

16. Given the size of this sector, the Secretariat has commenced development of an initial partnership based on the computing industry. The partnership is being developed under the working title of "e2e: The Global Partnership on Computing and the Environment". Initial contacts and discussions have been held with Apple, Canon, Dell, Fujitsu, Hewlett-Packard, Hitachi, IBM Japan, IBM USA, Microsoft, NEC, Seiko Epson, Toshiba and Sony. It will build upon other initiatives under the Basel Convention, such as the high-level round-table held during the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the environmentally sound management of waste and work on electronic waste undertaken through the Basel Convention Regional Centre in Beijing funded through the Strategic Plan.

17. A first preparatory meeting will be held on 4 June in New York to cover general discussion of the parameters of the partnership, membership issues, expectations and aims and possible elements of a work programme. It will involve companies, United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), non-governmental organizations and interested countries. The United Nations Global Compact Office is assisting with this meeting.

18. Parties and signatories to the Basel Convention are encouraged to participate.

**4. Obsolete stocks of pesticides in Africa**

19. The goal of the Africa Stockpile Project is the elimination of existing obsolete stocks of pesticides throughout Africa and assistance in preventing their future accumulation. Country-specific activities have been undertaken to develop the first phase of the programme, which will cover seven countries. A total of \$50 million has been raised for the first phase, half of those funds from the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

**5. Improved stakeholder participation**

20. Beyond the establishment of specific partnerships, the interim partnership work programme calls for a focus on improving and consolidating stakeholder participation in the Basel Convention. In this regard, the partnership initiatives are steadily broadening the base of stakeholders interested in the Basel Convention, to include other specialized agencies of the United Nations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNESCO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Health Organization (WHO); industry leaders such as Alcatel, LG, Matsushita/Panasonic, Mitsubishi, Motorola, NEC, Nokia, Philips, Samsung, Sharp Telecommunications, Siemens, Sony Ericsson, Vodafone, IBM, Sony and DELL; academic institutions such as the United Nations University and Princeton University, non-governmental organizations such as the Basel Action Network, the independent research organization INFORM Inc., the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum and the Digital Partnership. In addition, future partnership initiatives will involve non-governmental organization participation from the outset.

21. The first of a planned series of non-governmental organization round-tables was held in November 2003 in Bangkok, concurrently with meetings of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) and the first preparatory committee for the Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals Management. Some 40 participants considered the relationship between waste minimization, the Basel Convention, and the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

22. A second non-governmental organization round-table, focusing on the theme of local action on waste, is planned to be held immediately before the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. This event will also elicit views from the non-governmental organization community on the main issues before the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting. Lists of potential invitees have been developed with both Secretariat and regional centre inputs and letters have been sent to donor countries seeking financial contributions to assist participation by non-governmental organizations in the second round-table and the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

## C. Work plan

### 1. Financial basis

23. Among other things, decision OEWG-II/9 encouraged Parties and signatories to follow the lead of Australia and Switzerland in providing additional financial support to the Basel Convention Partnership Programme. The Government of Japan has responded with a generous voluntary financial contribution to the programme.

24. Although the programme has significant potential to leverage resources from the private sector and other sources over time and is central to the future success of the Convention, it does need further support from the Parties in its early years. Existing voluntary contributions will only finance the programme until October 2004. For the sustainability of the programme, an appropriate level of support should be reflected in the Basel Convention Trust Fund.

### 2. Finalization of the work plan

25. Decision OEWG-II/9 also encouraged Parties, signatories and other stakeholders to provide written comments on the interim partnership work programme to the Secretariat by 31 December 2003. No written comments have been received.

26. In the attached draft, the Secretariat has proposed three changes to the interim work programme agreed to by the Open-ended Working Group at its second session, based upon discussions with stakeholders and Parties:

(a) The insertion of a new subheading and paragraph directly after the existing two paragraphs dealing with rights and responsibilities, which would draw attention to the importance of civil society and read as follows:

**“Engaging civil society**

“The engagement of civil society is a priority for the Partnership Programme. Partnership initiatives should fully involve environmental and other non-governmental organizations, along with industry leaders”;

(b) Allowance has been made in the work plan as set out in table 1 for one partnership on a matter not considered in the Strategic Plan – that is, an initiative on emissions of greenhouse gases from landfill. The Secretariat proposes this addition for consideration by the Parties because of the potentially significant links between climate change and the environmentally sound management of landfills. Emissions of methane from landfill, and emissions of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide from incineration, contribute to global warming. This is also true for emissions of carbon dioxide from the collection, transportation and treatment of wastes from the fuel used in these operations. The Secretariat has held initial discussions with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which can proceed further should this initiative be included in the work plan;

(c) Specific reference has been made in the section dealing with priority areas to allow the Secretariat to develop work in a timely manner in response to partnership opportunities that may arise from time to time.

## III. Proposed action

27. Following consideration of the draft work programme, the Open-ended Working Group may wish to adopt a recommendation along the following lines:

*The Open-ended Working Group,*

*Recalling* decision VI/32 of the Conference of the Parties and its own decision OEWG-I/6 on cooperation with environmental non-governmental organizations and industry,

1. *Adopts* the 2004–2006 work plan of the Basel Convention Partnership Programme;
2. *Requests* the Secretariat to implement 2004–2006 work plan of the Basel Convention Partnership Programme in cooperation with all relevant and interested partners;
3. *Encourages* Parties and signatories to follow the lead of Australia, Japan and Switzerland in providing funding to the Basel Convention Partnership Programme and becoming actively involved in the programme;
4. *Encourages* broader civil society, including environmental non-governmental organizations and the industry sector, to provide technical and financial support for the Basel Convention Partnership Programme and to become involved in specific activities at the regional, national and international levels.

## Annex

### Basel Convention Partnership Programme

#### 2004–2006 work plan

##### A. Background

1. At its sixth meeting, in Geneva in December 2002, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention agreed to develop a work programme for cooperation with industry and business sectors and environmental non-governmental organizations with the aim of developing strategic partnerships relevant to the implementation of the Convention, its amendments and protocols (decision VI/32).
2. This document outlines a work programme that responds to those decisions. In particular, it:
  - (a) Takes into account activities for 2003-2004 under the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Basel Convention;
  - (b) Takes into account the Basel Convention regional centres as potential delivery mechanisms for the promotion and nurturing of public-private partnerships that take into consideration regional or subregional specificities;
  - (c) Supports the aims of the Basel Declaration on Environmentally Sound Management;
  - (d) Recognizes and complements existing initiatives and projects.

##### B. Introduction

3. The worldwide environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes as called for in the Basel Declaration on Environmentally Sound Management requires action at all levels of society. Training, information, communication, methodological tools, capacity-building with financial support, transfer of know-how, knowledge and sound and proven cleaner technologies and processes are driving factors to assist in the concrete implementation of the Basel Declaration.
4. The effective involvement and coordination by all concerned stakeholders is seen as essential for achieving the aims of the Basel Declaration.
5. The challenge is to find and develop practical, sustainable solutions to de-link economic development and the waste it traditionally generates. Alternative development models do exist. Industry and Governments have begun to embrace cleaner production technologies and extend producer liability, which provides built-in incentives for greener, less wasteful production and products.
6. Growth in partnerships is hindered by a broad perception that the Basel Convention deals only with hazardous wastes and/or only with the transboundary movement of such wastes. This is particularly acute when the Convention seeks to engage industry in the end-of-life implications of products, which during their life are not hazardous, or wastes. Conversely, considerable potential exists for a broader interpretation of the role of the Basel Convention as an instrument contributing to effective life cycle management of materials and products – e.g., in areas of waste minimization, design for environment, cleaner production and changing consumption patterns, as well as management of wastes, including municipal wastes.

##### C. General principles

###### 1. Rights and responsibilities

7. Partnerships cannot create or abrogate rights or responsibilities of Parties under the Basel Convention.
8. The Partnership Programme is under the authority of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention.

## 2. Engaging civil society

9. The engagement of civil society is a priority for the Partnership Programme. Partnership initiatives should fully involve environmental and other non-governmental organizations, along with industry leaders.

## 3. United Nations guidelines for cooperation with the business community

10. Irrespective of any situation-specific nature, the Partnership Programme supports and is consistent with the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Global Compact. United Nations guidelines<sup>1</sup> stipulate that cooperative arrangements should be guided by the following general principles:

(a) Advance United Nations goals: The objectives need to be articulated clearly and must advance United Nations goals as laid out in the Charter of the United Nations;

(b) Clear delineation of responsibilities and roles: The arrangements must be based on a clear understanding of respective roles and expectations, with accountability and a clear division of responsibilities;

(c) Maintain integrity and independence: Arrangements should not diminish the United Nations' integrity, independence and impartiality;

(d) No unfair advantage: Every member of the business community should have the opportunity to propose cooperative arrangements, within the parameters of these guidelines. Cooperation should not imply endorsement or preference of a particular business entity or its products or services;

(e) Transparency: Cooperation with the business sector must be transparent. Information on the nature and scope of cooperative arrangements should be available within the organization and to the public at large.

## D. Programme objectives

11. Given the size and nature of the waste challenge, and the call on both expertise and resources (internal and external), the Basel Convention Partnership Programme is focused on the following objectives:

(a) To initiate and oversee practical project activity in priority areas, with particular regard to the generation, movement and environmentally sound management of waste and active promotion of the transfer and use of cleaner technologies;

(b) To broaden the resource and support base of the Convention, particularly through:

(i) Improved local and regional participation;

(ii) Improved analysis, understanding and political support for the broadest programme perspective of the role of the Basel Convention in the waste challenge;

(iii) Enhanced access to external expertise and resources (for example, from industry, environmental non-governmental organizations, philanthropic organizations and other United Nations agencies and regional and national authorities);

(c) To improve stakeholder participation and communication.

## E. Priority areas

12. The Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Basel Convention to 2010, adopted at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (December 2002), identifies priority waste streams as including electronic wastes, used lead-acid batteries, used oils, obsolete stocks of pesticides, PCBs, dioxins/furans, by-products from the dismantling of ships, biomedical wastes and healthcare wastes. At

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<sup>1</sup> *Building Partnerships: Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Community* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.I.12).

the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (April–May 2003) it was agreed to fund a new partnership with municipalities for the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste in urban areas<sup>2</sup>. These priorities are included in the Basel Convention Partnership Programme.

13. Other partnership opportunities will arise periodically that require a timely response from the Secretariat of the Basel Convention. The Secretariat will assess and initiate responses to these opportunities as required.

14. Existing and planned programme activity encompassed within the above programme objectives is represented in table 1.

## **F. Stakeholders**

15. The Basel Convention Partnership Programme recognizes old friends but acknowledges that sustained interest in the waste challenge and the broadening programme perspective needed of the Convention will require additional partners.

16. There is also a need to look beyond the traditional environmental non-governmental organizations if the Basel Convention is to succeed in developing strategic alliances with organizations with potentially related agendas (e.g., non-governmental organizations involved in poverty reduction, economic or social development, health promotion or occupational health and safety issues) and foundations involved in broader philanthropic work.

17. Basel Convention regional centres have a key role to play both in promoting the Convention amongst potential partners and in providing capacity-building, training and other services at the regional level.

18. Stakeholders will vary according to the particular project or initiative. The criteria for selection of partners will include:

(a) Demonstrated commitment to the principles, practice and promulgation of the concept of environmentally sound management;

(b) Demonstrated commitment to engage in meaningful dialogue and cooperation with other partners, the Parties and signatories to the Basel Convention, Basel Convention regional centres, and the Secretariat of the Basel Convention;

(c) Demonstrated expertise or standing in the subject of the particular project or initiative;

(d) Demonstrated networking capacity.

19. The involvement of partners will at all times be voluntary.

## **G. Management**

20. The senior programme officer (partnerships) will manage the Basel Convention Partnership Programme.

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<sup>2</sup> Decision OEWG-I/1

**Table 1**

**Basel Convention Partnership Programme  
Work plan 2004–2006**

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Programme elements</b>	<b>Key activities</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>
1	Initiate and oversee practical project activity in priority areas, with particular regard to the generation, movement and environmentally sound management of waste and active promotion of the transfer and use of cleaner technologies	Cooperative project development and implementation  Awareness-raising  Stakeholder participation	Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative Used Oils Partnership for Africa Electrical and electronic waste Obsolete stocks of pesticides in Africa Greenhouse gases from landfill (climate change and the environmentally sound management of waste)  Biological and medical waste Used lead-acid batteries Partnerships with municipalities for the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes in urban areas Dismantling of ships  PCBs; dioxins/furans  Ongoing promotion of ratification and implementation of the Basel Convention, its protocols, amendments and decisions	Effective partnerships established with relevant stakeholders to support environmentally sound management activities for priority waste streams identified in the strategic plan Ratifications and implementation of the Basel Convention, its protocols, amendments and decisions
2	Broaden the resource and support base of the Convention	Awareness-raising  Fund-raising  Stakeholder participation	Development of a project: 1. To encourage the development and use of data on waste trends at the national level; 2. To identify, collate and disseminate data on global waste trends (Tentatively called "WasteWatch"; the project would assist the mobilization of political support and benchmark progress in the waste challenge)  Development of a fund-raising programme  Development of a recognition programme for donors	Improved local and regional participation  Improved analysis, understanding and political support  Enhanced access to external expertise and resources (for example, from industry, environmental non-governmental organizations, philanthropic organizations and other United Nations agencies and regional and national authorities)
3	Improve stakeholder participation and communication	Stakeholder participation  Communications and public affairs activities	Establishment of a Basel Convention partners forum  (Aimed at formalizing regular discussion between non-governmental organization partners of the Convention)	Improved support from key industry and non-governmental organization leaders for the aims of the Basel Convention  Improved support for Basel Convention Regional Centres  Improved Convention newsletter