

SUMMARY RECORD
1ST MEETING OF THE IOMC TECHNICAL COORDINATING GROUP
ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POPs)

13 MAY, 2003
WASHINGTON, DC

1. The first formal meeting of the IOMC Coordinating Group on Persistent Organic Pollutants took place at the World Bank Headquarters in Washington, D.C., on 13 May 2003. The meeting focused on the development of National Implementation Plans under the Stockholm Convention (including areas where Coordinating Group participating organisations could further cooperate to assist countries), and plans for the upcoming seventh session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. (The approved agenda for the meeting is attached as Annex I and the List of Participants as Annex 2). UNITAR (Craig Boljkovac) chaired the meeting, and acted as Secretariat.

Agenda Item 3: Review of previous meeting minutes, including Terms of Reference

2. As no comments were made on the minutes of the previous (informal) meeting, held in Washington, D.C. on 14 May 2002, they were therefore approved as written.
3. Terms of Reference for the Coordinating Group were circulated for review (appended as Annex 3). They were approved as drafted and previously approved by the 18th meeting of the Inter-Organisation Programme Coordinating Committee, with one amendment. Under the heading “Chair and Reporting,” the second sentence (which reads “The Secretariat will be provided by the IOMC Secretariat.”) was deleted.¹

Agenda Item 4: National Implementation Plans (NIPs)

4. Organisations present gave an overview of the number of countries where each is actively assisting the development of National Implementation Plans. The number of NIP enabling activities that have been approved to-date, divided by GEF Implementing Agency (GEF IA), are as follows (with the number pending in brackets): UNDP – 20 (3); UNEP – 45 (2); UNIDO – 38 (2); World Bank – 3 (0). FAO reported that it is working in support of a number of country NIPs with a variety of other IAs. UNITAR reported that, although it is not a GEF IA, it is actively working to support National Profile activities related to NIP development with UNEP (to-date, 17 countries, including the UNEP-GEF 12-country project on NIPs; and, with UNEP support, for a “UNIDO” country, Armenia). Cooperation with UNDP in one country is also under way.
5. A discussion took place on opportunities that might exist between organisations for NIP-related cooperation. Concerns were raised that, due to the great number of countries involved in NIP development, the wide variety of agencies providing NIP-related support, and the existence of different approaches being taken by the IAs, there was a possibility that the resultant NIPs may end up being of inconsistent quality. A question was raised as to whether there might be an opportunity to work to ensure relative consistency, tailored to

¹ This sentence was not consistent with the version previously approved by the IOCC – it was included as an oversight in the copy reviewed by the participants.

national needs, for the approaches being taken by the various organisations as they assist countries with different components of NIP development (e.g. such as training on inventories). After some discussion it was agreed that a short concept note proposing a medium-sized project be developed for submission to the GEF, supported by all the organisations present, to strengthen training on specific areas of NIP development. A number of areas where training could be focused, and possible lead organisations for each were identified as follows:

- PCBs (UNIDO/UNEP)
- Dioxins (UNEP/UNIDO)
- Infrastructure (UNITAR/World Bank)
- Stakeholder Involvement (UNDP/UNITAR/World Bank)
- Pesticides (FAO/WHO)

A possible approach to training that was discussed comprised a series of workshops on the above themes, targeted to NIP county-level project managers on a global or regional basis. Each organisation would also identify its in-kind contributions to the project in the concept note. In addition, three organisations (UNDP, UNIDO and UNEP) agreed to jointly undertake a demand survey with their respective countries. Jim Willis (UNEP) agreed to produce a first draft of the concept note for circulation and submission as soon as possible.

6. Jim Willis reported on UNEP efforts to develop a list of all project managers for NIPs. This list would help to facilitate the exchange of information among countries/IAs on NIPs-related activities. An electronic link to the list will be placed on the Stockholm Convention Internet homepage. UNEP is also planning to set up an email discussion group on NIPs-related issues for country use. A dedicated server will be put in place for this project.
7. Participants also discussed existing guidance materials that can be used for enabling activities related to the Stockholm Convention. UNEP announced that its overall NIPs guidance document will be circulated at INC-7. A revised version of the dioxin and furan “Toolkit” will also be circulated in follow-up to a request made at INC-6. Draft guidelines for POPs-containing wastes have been developed in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, but require further revision before being circulated for comment. UNITAR distributed to meeting participants a working draft of companion guidance on National Profile development for the Stockholm Convention (also available from the UNITAR website). While the guidance was developed as part of the UNEP-GEF 12-country project, all countries are encouraged to consider using it. IAs were requested to ensure that any comments from countries on the utility of the guidance are brought to UNITAR’s attention. Zoltan Csizer of UNIDO reported that a training package on inventories, including existing guidance, had also been developed. UNEP reported that there were no plans at this time to update its existing guidance on PCBs. Niek van der Graaf of FAO reported that guidance addressing stocks of obsolete pesticides will be updated as part of the Africa Stockpiles Project.

Jim Willis also explained that it is possible for guidance to be endorsed by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. This is planned for the overall NIPs guidance document, and is also possible for other guidance materials. Organisations that develop such materials are also welcome to circulate them at the INC (and future INCs/COPs) as information documents.

Agenda Item 5: INC-7 Plans and Related Activities

8. Jim Willis informed the participants that invitation letters for INC-7 have already gone out and should have been received by all organisations. An invitation letter regarding the availability of display space will be sent out shortly. With regard to side events, he explained that while the agenda for the week is quite full it will be possible to schedule more than one event at the same time. Organisations were encouraged to schedule their event as soon as possible to ensure a time slot. Laurent Granier of the GEF indicated that a side event on enabling activities is being considered.

Zoltan Csizer reported on an experts group meeting on Best Available Techniques/Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP) for addressing dioxins and furans releases, that was hosted by the US in March 2003. The purpose of the meeting, which was attended by a wide variety of experts from countries, NGOs and IGOs, was to draft guidelines on BAT, and guidance on BEP. UNIDO participated as one of two (along with UNEP) IGO representatives to the meeting. Detailed discussions took place on non-combustion versus combustion approaches to reducing releases of dioxins and furans. A key outcome of the experts group meeting will be the presentation to INC-7 of generic text on BAT and BEP for its consideration, as planned. A second meeting of the experts group is planned for December 2003, to be hosted by Chile.

Agenda Item 6: Update on Other POPs-Related Activities and Opportunities for Coordination

9. Organisations reported on other POPs-related projects that are currently under way/under development. A number of projects were being presented to the GEF for approval at its Council Meeting on 14-16 May, including a UNIDO/UNDP project on the application of non-combustion technologies for destroying POPs; and China's National Implementation Plan project (World Bank/UNIDO). A medium-sized project addressing global capacity building for NGOs is also pending GEF approval.

UNIDO also reported on the ongoing development of a medium-sized project on source identification of dioxins in fish in Lake Victoria. UNEP reported that it is developing a PDF-B on laboratory capacity for POPs that will be submitted for consideration by the GEF. FAO and UNEP are jointly developing a project examining exemptions for POPs used in termite control, and alternatives.

Mary Ellen Foley of the World Bank reported on a number of projects that are under way as part of the Canada POPs Trust Fund, including a preliminary study on dioxins and furans in India, and over 31 projects that are being led by UNEP. In addition, Mary Ellen reported that the Bank is working to raise awareness within their institution on POPs-related issues.

10. With regard to further coordination among Coordinating Group participating organisations, it was agreed that the training project proposed under Agenda Item 4 constituted a good first step.

Agenda Item 7: Next Meeting Date/Venue; Selection of Next Meeting Chair

11. It was proposed that the next meeting of the Coordinating Group be held in November, 2003, in Bangkok (site of IFCS Forum IV and the first PrepCom for SAICM). An email will be sent around proposing exact dates. It was also proposed that UNITAR chair the next meeting. A request was made by Craig Boljkovac (UNITAR) that, at the next meeting, the secretariat and chairing responsibilities be separated.

Annex 1 – Meeting Agenda
IOMC Coordinating Group on POPs
First Formal Meeting

13 May 2003, World Bank, Washington DC

1. Welcome and introductions (*UNITAR*)
2. Adoption of the draft agenda (*All*)
3. Review of previous meeting minutes (WB, Washington, DC, May 2002), including Terms of Reference approved by IOCC and Secretariat arrangements (*All*)
4. NIPs
 - progress to-date (*all IAs*)
 - coordination opportunities, including UNEP initiative on information exchange among IAS/IOMC organisations on capacity building/training activities for NIPs (*All*)
 - overview of guidance materials (*All*)
5. INC7 plans and related activities (e.g. BAT/BEP Experts Group meeting) (*UNEP/Interim Secretariat*)
6. Update on other POPs-related activities and opportunities for coordination (*All*)
7. Next meeting date/venue; selection of next meeting chair; and closure of meeting

Annex 2 – List of Participants
IOMC COORDINATING GROUP ON POPs
 First Meeting
 May 13, 2003
 World Bank
 MC5-N300

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Annex 3 - Terms of Reference

(As adopted at the 18th meeting of the IOMC/IOCC held in Geneva on 22-23 January 2003)

INTER-ORGANIZATION PROGRAMME FOR THE SOUND MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS (IOMC)

Technical Co-ordinating Group for Persistent Organic Pollutants

Background

1. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants is a global treaty to protect human health and environment from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). POPs are chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in fatty tissue of living organisms and are toxic to humans and wildlife. POPs circulate globally and can cause damage wherever they travel.

2. In implementing the Stockholm Convention, Governments need to take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of POPs into the environment. Specifically, under Article 7 of the Convention, each Party is to develop and endeavour to carry out an implementation plan for its obligations under the Convention, to transmit this plan to the Conference of the Parties within two years of the date of which the Convention enters into force and to review and update the plan, as appropriate, on a periodic basis.

Objectives

3. The key objective of the IOMC Technical Co-ordinating Group on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) is to promote coherence among participating organizations and governments to address POPs and their obligations under the Stockholm Convention.

4. The Technical Group will initially focus on activities such as the development of implementation plans as required by Article 7 of the Stockholm Convention.

5. The Co-ordinating Group will work to:

- Ensure a mutual awareness among participating organizations of relevant activities.
- Avoid duplication and ensure the best use of the relevant strengths of participating organizations in supporting national implementation efforts.

6. *Inter-alia* the Co-ordinating Group will:

- Facilitate consistency and comparability of implementation plans that are developed.
- Co-ordinate the efforts of IOMC Participating Organizations in supporting national governmental efforts in developing and executing plans for implementation of the Convention.
- Exchange information and share experiences on POPs-related projects, including enabling activities such as the development of national implementation plans, on monitoring activities and on lessons learnt.

- Identify technical and policy issues requiring further guidance to assist consistent implementation.

Participation

7. Nominations to the Co-ordinating Group will be invited from:

- Participating Organizations of the IOMC.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- The World Bank.
- The Secretariat for the principal entity entrusted with the operations of the financial mechanism to the Stockholm Convention i.e. the Secretariat for the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Mode of Operation

The Co-ordinating Group will be a subsidiary body of the IOMC.

The Co-ordinating Group will meet as needed and will take advantage of the meeting opportunities presented by other fora in which the members and designated members plan to participate. Initially it is envisaged that meetings may be needed two times a year. Advantage will be taken of electronic and video-conferencing facilities as much as possible.

The Co-ordinating Group may establish *ad-hoc* working groups to co-ordinate specific activities.

Chair and Reporting

The Chair and rapporteur will rotate among the members of the Group. The Co-ordinating Group will make regular reports to IOCC and maintain information on its activities on the IOMC web site.