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**Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed
Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous
Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
Conference of the Parties
Second meeting**

Rome, 27–30 September 2005

Item 6 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Issues arising out of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties:
regional delivery of technical assistance**

Regional delivery of technical assistance

Note by the secretariat

1. In its decision RC-1/14 on the regional delivery of technical assistance, adopted at its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade requested the secretariat to report to the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting on the experience gained in implementing the regional delivery of technical assistance to the Parties of the Convention.
2. Annexed to the present note is a detailed report on technical assistance activities undertaken since the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Also attached is a detailed costed programme of technical assistance activities for 2006 based on the elements included in the annex to decision RC-1/14.
3. The Conference of the Parties may wish to:
 - (a) Note the progress made by the secretariat in the implementation of decision RC-1/14;
 - (b) Invite countries, including developed countries, donors, international organizations and other stakeholders to report on the actions they have undertaken which are relevant to the implementation of paragraphs (a) and (b) of decision RC-1/14.
 - (c) Acknowledge the financial support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the work of the secretariat relating to the regional delivery of technical assistance;
 - (d) Review and approve the proposed work plan and associated budget for 2006;
 - (e) Establish, if necessary, priorities for the work programme, giving due consideration to possible budgetary limitations;
 - (f) Encourage Parties to contribute to the voluntary trust fund, thereby allowing for the implementation of the planned activities.
 - (g) Consider the draft decision contained in appendix III of the report annexed to the present note.

* UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.2/1.

Annex

Report on the regional delivery of technical assistance under the Rotterdam Convention

Background

1. At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties considered a proposal for the regional delivery of technical assistance which had been developed by the secretariat in response to paragraphs 1 and 2 of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee decision INC-10/7¹. It also adopted decision RC-1/14 on the regional delivery of technical assistance.² A copy of the full text of decision RC-1/14 is set out in appendix I to the present report. The decision requested the secretariat to report to the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting on the experience gained in implementing activities to operationalize the regional delivery of technical assistance.

Introduction

2. The present report is focused on the activities undertaken by the secretariat in response to the request by the Conference of the Parties in its decision RC.1/14. It contains three chapters: chapter I, progress made in the implementation of the initial steps for operationalizing the regional delivery of technical assistance; chapter II, progress made in the implementation of the initial technical assistance actions set out in the annex to decision RC.1/14; and chapter III, elements of a work plan for 2006 on the regional delivery of technical assistance.

3. In reviewing the progress made in the regional delivery of technical assistance, the Conference of the Parties may wish to note that FAO made a contribution of \$407,000 in support of supplementary technical assistance activities in 2005.

I. Progress made in the implementation of the initial steps for operationalizing the regional delivery of technical assistance

4. This chapter reports on the progress made by the secretariat in carrying out the initial steps to operationalize the regional delivery of technical assistance set out in paragraphs (c), (d) and (e) of decision RC.1/14 (for the text of the decision, see appendix I).

5. The secretariat has prepared a resource kit as a comprehensive source of information on the Rotterdam Convention. The resource kit incorporates the training materials and information developed in regional training workshops and has been prepared with a range of end-users in mind, including the general public, designated national authorities and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Convention. It includes elements to assist in awareness-raising activities and detailed technical information and training materials aimed at facilitating implementation of the Convention. Individual elements of the resource kit will be updated and improved and the kit itself will be expanded as experience is gained.

6. The kit contains five sections: A. General information; B. Guidance information; C. Documents for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention; D. Training materials; and E. Cross-cutting information. Section E of the resource kit was included in recognition of the fact that there are a number of elements of the Rotterdam Convention that are relevant to general chemicals management or decision-making and to other multilateral environmental agreements. Section E is designed to provide guidance on how these elements might be integrated with relevant technical assistance activities of other international agreements or programmes as well as general information on chemicals that may be of interest or use to countries in implementing the Convention.

A. Identification of partners in the regional delivery of technical assistance

7. Based on decision RC-1/14, the prime partners to be invited to participate in the regional delivery of technical assistance were the regional offices of FAO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Basel Convention regional centres and organizations involved in chemicals management including the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization,

¹ UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.1/28.

² UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.1/33, annex I.

the United Nations Industrial Development Programme (UNIDO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the secretariats of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility. A copy of the resource kit was sent to each of these entities and to all designated national authorities. The organizations and centres were invited to consider how they might incorporate measures to implement the Rotterdam Convention into their current and future activities and to explore opportunities for cooperative actions aimed at promoting the regional delivery of technical assistance.

8. The World Bank and the Global Environment Facility were also invited to explore ways to encourage synergies between their activities and the actions that were necessary for developing countries to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention.

1. Coordination with FAO and UNEP regional offices and Basel Convention regional centres

9. There are five FAO regional offices (Africa: Accra, Ghana; Asia and the Pacific: Bangkok, Thailand; Europe: Rome, Italy; Latin America and the Caribbean: Santiago, Chile; Near East: Cairo, Egypt) and four subregional offices (North Africa: Tunis, Tunisia; South and East Africa: Harare, Zimbabwe; Caribbean: Bridgetown, Barbados; Eastern Europe: Budapest, Hungary). Both the regional and subregional offices provide technical assistance to member countries. Regional and subregional Plant Protection Officer posts exist in Africa (Ghana and Tunisia), Asia and the Pacific (Thailand and Samoa), Latin America and the Caribbean (Chile and Barbados) and the Near East (Egypt). The technical work programme of these officers is being supervised by the FAO Plant Protection Service at FAO headquarters, which also hosts the secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention. The secretariat works closely with the Regional Plant Protection Officers to facilitate and coordinate technical assistance activities relevant to the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention in their respective regions and to ensure that such activities are incorporated into their annual work plans.

10. The Basel Convention has established regional centres for delivering technical assistance in Argentina, China, Egypt, El Salvador, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nigeria, Senegal, the Slovak Republic, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Samoa and Uruguay. These regional centres are seen as potential regional coordinators and implementers of activities in cooperation or collaboration with the secretariats of other conventions. One of the major challenges faced by the centres, however, is how to secure financial assistance for projects while maintaining support for the structure of the centre. There is no direct mechanism under the Basel Convention to fund the operations of these regional centres. Consequently, cooperation in relation to the Rotterdam Convention may need to be focused on specific, programme-based activities, such as assisting with logistics for meetings, rather than the more general support that could be supplied by the FAO regional offices.

11. UNEP has six regional offices: in Europe (Geneva, Switzerland), Africa (Nairobi, Kenya), North America (Washington D.C., United States of America), Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand), Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico City, Mexico) and West Asia (Manama, Bahrain). The UNEP regional offices promote intergovernmental policy dialogue and regional cooperation, increase national capacity for environmental management and emergency response, raise awareness, enhance information exchange and translate global policies into regional action. Among other things, the regional offices offer insight, key linkages and an understanding of the best procedures to follow for delivery of technical assistance within a given region. They are also able to provide information relating to the Rotterdam Convention through regional meetings or workshops.

12. To review options for facilitating the coordination of regional activities for implementing the Rotterdam Convention, representatives from the FAO and UNEP regional offices and the Basel Convention regional centres were invited to a meeting in Bangkok in October 2004. This meeting provided an opportunity to provide information on the operation of the Rotterdam Convention and to discuss how the various offices might cooperate with the secretariat as regional partners in the delivery of technical assistance. It also presented an opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned in defining country needs and developing technical assistance to meet those needs. Particular attention was paid to the identification of subregional groups as potential partners in the regional delivery of technical assistance.

13. Participants developed lists of possible short, medium and long-term activities. These included the development of additional information materials, missions to selected countries, the identification of opportunities to cooperate with other subregional organizations, and support for subregional activities of the secretariat in promoting the implementation and ratification of the Convention. .

14. Since the meeting, representatives of the FAO and UNEP regional offices have participated in regional and subregional meetings where they have made presentations and responded to questions on the Convention.

15. In addition, the FAO Regional Plant Protection Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean has visited Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala to promote the ratification and implementation of the Rotterdam Convention and has met with the Executive Director of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development to explore possible cooperation by the Commission in the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. This mission laid the foundation for subsequent subregional meetings for Spanish-speaking countries organised in cooperation with the Government of Brazil, the FAO regional office in Chile and the Basel Convention regional centre in Uruguay.

16. The FAO Regional Plant Protection Officers have also played a key role in facilitating and coordinating subregional meetings in the Near East and the Caribbean, held in May and September 2005, respectively. In Asia, the Regional Plant Protection Officer was instrumental in organizing national workshops in China and Sri Lanka, in December 2004 and April 2005, respectively, and in establishing contacts at the national level in Pakistan and Viet Nam to facilitate additional subregional meetings.

17. A follow-up meeting has been planned for November 2005, which will allow representatives of the FAO and UNEP regional offices to consider further opportunities for collaboration. The meeting will provide FAO Regional Plant Protection Officers with an opportunity to incorporate Rotterdam Convention related activities into their work plans for 2006.

2. Other regional entities

18. In view of the large number of regional and subregional organizations in existence, a key question considered at the meeting of regional representatives held in Bangkok was assistance in the identification of possible regional partners. The organizations that were identified were contacted by the secretariat, provided with a copy of the resource kit and encouraged to identify opportunities to include the Convention in relevant aspects of their work.

19. An example of a subregional organization that is well placed to work with the secretariat on the regional delivery of technical assistance is the Sahelian Pesticides Committee (CSP) established under the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). CSP has nine member countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) that have a common registration system for pesticides. As of January 2005, five of these countries were Parties to the Rotterdam Convention. In February 2005, a meeting was convened in Dakar, Senegal between the Committee and designated national authorities. The objective of the meeting was to consider opportunities to integrate the work on the Convention with that of CSP. The specific recommendations of the meeting were forwarded for adoption by CSP at its meeting in July 2005. A copy of the meeting report was posted on the Rotterdam Convention website.

20. The CSP secretariat is following up with the four member countries (Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Niger) that are not Parties to the Rotterdam Convention to encourage them to ratify the Convention. As part of that follow-up, CSP arranged a visit to Niger in April 2005. The report of this mission to Niger was posted on the Rotterdam Convention website.

21. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose members include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, has established a working group on multilateral environmental agreements which meets annually. In cooperation with the ASEAN secretariat, a day was added to the working group meeting held in May 2005 with the objective of considering the status of implementation of the Rotterdam Convention, following up previous regional workshops on the implementation of the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions and identifying opportunities for further cooperation.

22. The working group agreed that its primary role and the role of the ASEAN secretariat in connection with the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention would consist of providing a mechanism for the exchange of information on the status of ratification and implementation among ASEAN members. It was also agreed that further efforts should be made to raise awareness of the importance of ratification of the Rotterdam Convention at more senior levels in ASEAN (for example, among ASEAN senior officials on the environment and participants in the ASEAN ministerial meeting on the environment). Countries should approach the Rotterdam Convention secretariat directly

regarding assistance with the ratification or implementation of the Convention. A copy of the meeting report was posted on the Rotterdam Convention website.

23. The Rotterdam Convention secretariat, in association with the secretariat of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission, has made arrangements so that the status of implementation of the Rotterdam Convention and opportunities for possible regional work on the Convention will be considered at the biennial meeting of the Commission in September 2005.

24. The Rotterdam Convention secretariat has provided input for the draft “concrete measures” circulated by the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. This input will be considered, together with that from all other stakeholders, at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to Chemicals Management, to be held in Vienna in September 2005.

II. Progress made in the implementation of the initial technical assistance actions set out in the annex to decision RC.1/14

25. This chapter reports on the progress made in the implementation of the initial technical assistance actions set out in the annex to decision RC.1/14 (for the text of the decision, see appendix I). It is formatted to reflect the order in which the specific actions were listed in that annex.

A. Elements unique to the Rotterdam Convention

26. Regional workshops held during the implementation of the interim prior informed consent procedure (2002–2004) provided practical hands-on training to designated national authorities relating to the key operational elements set out in articles 6, 7, 10 and 14 of the Convention. In follow-up to these regional meetings, and in line with the need for an approach tailored to the needs of individual countries, a programme of national meetings and small subregional meetings was developed.

27. For both the national and subregional meetings, the agenda aims to facilitate a national dialogue on the ratification and implementation of the Rotterdam Convention, the objective being to identify the key elements in a national action plan or strategy. Where possible, countries that have been involved in the UNITAR programme to assist countries in developing and sustaining integrated national programmes for the sound management of chemicals and wastes were included so that they might apply the knowledge they have gained to the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. The meetings covered a wide range of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Convention, including representatives from agriculture, health and environment sectors, ministries of foreign affairs and customs authorities. These meetings provide an opportunity for the secretariat to receive feedback on the resource kit and to review the overall effectiveness of the programme.

1. National consultations on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention

28. In the national meetings undertaken to date, national counterparts have taken the lead in developing the agenda. Where possible, representatives from other countries in the region were included in order to share their experiences. In response to requests from Governments, national meetings were held in China (December 2004), Sri Lanka (April 2005) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (June 2005). China ratified the Convention in March 2005 and Sri Lanka has initiated the national process for ratification through the preparation and submission of a memorandum to Cabinet recommending ratification of the Convention.

29. As of April 2005, preparations for national meeting were under discussion with the Government of Pakistan. Copies of the reports of all national meetings will be posted on the Rotterdam Convention website as they become available.

2. Subregional consultations on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention

30. The subregional consultations have involved a limited number of countries, including both Parties and participating States. They are seen as an opportunity to share experience and to set the stage for further cooperation among participating countries. Subregional consultations were held in the Near East in Egypt in May 2005 (for Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) and in the Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago in September 2005 (for Barbados, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago).

31. Further subregional consultations are planned for Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America. It is foreseen that this may require up to four separate meetings involving the countries of Central America and those of the Andean and southern cone subregions. Two of these consultations will take

place in 2005. The first will involve a subset of southern cone countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay) and will be convened in Sao Paolo, Brazil, from 17 to 21 October 2005 in cooperation with the Government of Brazil. The second will involve a subset of Andean countries (Peru and Colombia) and Paraguay and will be convened in cooperation with the Basel Convention regional centre in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 21 to 25 November 2005. Copies of the reports of all subregional meetings will be posted on the Rotterdam Convention website as they become available.

32. In order to ensure adequate follow-up to these meetings and to promote further cooperation among countries within different subregions, steps will be taken to identify and train a group of experts from different regions. These regional experts might include present and former members of the Chemical Review Committee and designated national authorities. These experts could help the secretariat in its efforts to follow up with individual countries on specific technical issues relevant to the implementation of the Convention and in the delivery of future national and subregional workshops. A “train the trainer” meeting for these regional experts is planned to take place in late 2005.

B. Crossing-cutting elements

33. A first step in systematically exploring synergies with other international processes, programmes and activities dealing with chemicals management has been the preparation and distribution of the resource kit on the Rotterdam Convention. As noted elsewhere, section E of the resource kit is designed to provide guidance on how the work of the Convention might be integrated with the activities carried out under other international agreements or programmes and includes references to selected sources of general information on chemicals that may be of interest or use to countries in implementing the Convention.

34. The progress made in the implementation of the specific cross cutting elements listed in paragraph 3 of the annex to decision RC-1/14 is reported here in the format in which they are set out in that annex (for the text of the decision, see appendix I).

1. Guide on the development of national laws for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention

35. In response to the needs of countries identified through the regional workshops, the secretariat prepared a guide on the development of national laws for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. The guide is not prescriptive, nor does it include model legislation. It is intended as a starting point for a national dialogue among stakeholders aimed at determining the relevant legal or administrative infrastructure appropriate to the needs of individual countries in the implementation of the Convention. In that regard, it is fully compatible with similar guidance developed under the Basel and Stockholm conventions. An initial draft of the guide was available at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties in September 2004. It is considered to be a working document that will be amended as experience is gained in its implementation. A copy of the guide is available on the Rotterdam Convention website and was included in the resource kit.

2. Development of plans for the implementation of chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements – development of supplementary guidance

36. Since 1996, more than 100 countries have developed national chemicals management profiles based on guidance developed by UNITAR. In discussions with UNITAR, it was recognized that the national profiles varied in their level of detail and on their own might not always be a sufficient basis on which countries could define gaps in their infrastructure relevant to the Rotterdam Convention. It has been proposed that, in developing such guidance, reference should also be made to the national implementation plans developed under the Stockholm Convention. Draft guidance is expected to be completed by the end of 2005. It is proposed that the draft guidance should be field tested in selected countries and revised if necessary on the basis of experience gained.

3. Cooperation with customs officials

37. To implement the provisions of the Rotterdam Convention, it is essential that adequate information is exchanged between designated national authorities and national customs officials. It is also necessary to ensure that adequate national legislation exists to provide customs officials with the appropriate authority to operate effectively. In the first instance, national and subregional meetings will stress the importance of including customs authorities in the development of national action plans for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention and the need for a mechanism to facilitate information flow between designated national authorities and customs authorities. As the relevant guidance documents provided to designated national authorities are updated, this aspect will be further highlighted. In the second instance, chemicals included in Annex III of the Convention and subject to the prior informed consent procedure are to be assigned harmonized customs codes by the World

Customs Organization (WCO). The assignment of these codes should facilitate the integration of the requirements of the Rotterdam Convention into training programmes for customs officials. WCO has been approached about how best to incorporate the Rotterdam Convention into existing training programmes and opportunities for cooperation have been discussed. In view of the fact that the customs codes will not enter into force before 2007, no formal training activities are planned by WCO at present. In the meantime, as a means of increasing awareness of the Rotterdam Convention, it was agreed that information on the Convention could be made available through WCO training centres, the organization's customs enforcement network and website, and other means.

38. The secretariat participated in the coordination meetings of the "green customs" initiative of UNEP and provided substantive support to a green customs initiative regional workshop on compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements, held in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, in May 2005. Information on the Rotterdam Convention will also be included in the green customs initiative manual that is under development. Work with the green customs initiative will continue within available staff resources.

39. The secretariat continues to cooperate with the secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm conventions to ensure that, when possible, synergies in customs training activities among the three conventions can be achieved.

4. Integration with activities under the Stockholm Convention

40. In order to encourage a consolidated approach at the national level between the implementation of the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, amendments were proposed to the interim guidance document on the development of national implementation plans under the Stockholm Convention. The interim guidance document, amended to reflect the requirements of the Rotterdam Convention, was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention at its first meeting, in May 2005.

41. Another guidance document, on the development of specific action plans as part of the national implementation plans developed under the Stockholm Convention, has also been drafted to include, where appropriate, references to the requirements of the Rotterdam Convention.

5. Collecting information on severely hazardous pesticide formulations

42. Progress has been made in integrating the severely hazardous pesticide formulation incident report forms with the work of WHO on pesticide data management. As a first step, the human health incident report forms have been incorporated into a multi-level training course on the management of pesticide poisoning organized by WHO and the International Programme on Chemical Safety. Further consideration is needed as to how the community-based approach to monitoring pesticide poisoning, that is to be piloted in selected countries, can incorporate the incident report forms developed under the Rotterdam Convention. These approaches should assist countries in implementing article 6 of the Convention, by providing a means of identifying and reporting on pesticide poisoning incidents.

III. Elements of a work plan for 2006 on the regional delivery of technical assistance

43. In response to paragraph (b) (iv) of decision RC.1/14, this chapter sets out a proposed work plan for 2006 on the regional delivery of technical assistance based on the elements in the annex to the decision, identified gaps in the light of experience and further developments in the international context. Appendix II to the present report includes a tabular summary of a costs associated with the implementation of this work plan.

A. Elements unique to the Rotterdam Convention

1. National and subregional consultations on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention

44. A proposal has been made to continue the national and subregional consultations on assisting countries to prepare national strategies or action plans for the ratification and implementation of the Convention. The methodology and approach will be modified as necessary to reflect experience gained. Measures of the success of this programme will include an increase in the number of ratifications and the ability of countries to meet their obligations under the Convention, in particular with regard to the submission of notifications of final regulatory actions, proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations and import responses.

45. The initial phase of work in Latin America is expected to be completed with two subregional meetings for Central American countries funded from the 2005 budget, which will be held in the first

quarter of 2006 in cooperation with the Regional Plant Protection Officer at the FAO regional office in Santiago, Chile. The first meeting, involving Cuba and Costa Rica, will be focused on developing national plans for the implementation of the Convention and the second, involving the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, will be focused on training on the implementation of the Convention.

46. Two subregional meetings are proposed for countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, where possible cooperation is contemplated with regional initiatives such as the Africa Stockpiles Programme and partners such as the secretariat of the Economic Community of West African States, the Basel Convention regional centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the Regional Plant Protection Officer at the FAO Regional Office in Accra, Ghana. Participating countries have yet to be identified.

47. In cooperation with the secretariat of CSP, a proposal has been made to follow up on the work initiated in 2005. This would take the form of a one or two day meeting of designated national authorities in conjunction with a regularly scheduled CSP meeting. The purpose of this meeting between designated national authorities and the CSP will be to review progress in integrating the work of the Rotterdam Convention with that of the CSP, address questions on the role of CSP in assisting member countries to meet their obligations under the Rotterdam Convention, and encourage ratification by the CSP members that are not yet Parties to the Convention.

48. Further national or subregional consultations with two or three selected countries in Asia are foreseen in cooperation with the Regional Plant Protection Officer at the FAO regional office in Bangkok. Pakistan has been identified as one of those countries.

49. Provisions have also been made in the budget (in the order of \$90,000) for national and subregional consultations in other regions in 2006. Information on specific activities should be available at the time of the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

50. Consideration will also be given, on a case-by-case basis, to determining the most appropriate follow-up for countries participating in the national and subregional consultations convened in 2005. This will include working with regional experts and the Regional Plant Protection Officers of FAO in an effort to ensure that the most relevant assistance is provided. The countries for which such specific assistance is envisaged include Panama and El Salvador, in part based on a recommendation made at the first meeting of the Chemical Review Committee.

B. Cross-cutting elements

51. The resource kit will be revised to reflect experience gained in its use, especially regarding the development of new documents and the updating and reprinting of existing materials.

52. In particular, the guidance document for designated national authorities and the guide on how to become a Party to the Rotterdam Convention both need to be updated to reflect experience gained and feedback from countries.

53. Section D of the resource kit on training materials contains detailed technical information on the four key operational elements of the Convention (notifications of final regulatory action, proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations, import responses for chemicals in Annex III and obligations related to exports of chemicals). A proposal has been made to develop an interactive compact disk to facilitate continuous and self-directed training at the national level in order to try and meet the challenges that arise from frequent changes in designated national authorities in some countries. A prototype of the interactive training compact disk will be developed in English, and field testing will be initiated to determine its effectiveness.

54. Section E of the resource kit on cross-cutting issues requires further work in order to develop more complete coverage of the relevant information that is available and to determine how it might be best reflected in the resource kit.

1. Guide on the development of national laws to implement the Rotterdam Convention

55. As a complement to the guide on the development of national laws to implement the Rotterdam Convention, a proposal has been made to develop a set of case studies based on the experience of a limited number of countries in revising their national laws or administrative arrangements to meet the requirements of the Rotterdam Convention. The countries have yet to be identified and the full scope of case studies needs further consideration.

2. Development of plans for the implementation of chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements – development of supplementary guidance

56. The supplementary guidance developed in association with UNITAR to assist countries in using their national profiles or national implementation plans under the Stockholm Convention as a basis on which to define gaps in their infrastructure for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention will be field tested in 2006 through national and subregional meetings on the implementation of the Convention.

57. A new proposal involves a series of national meetings in countries that have participated in the UNITAR project, “Action plan training/Skills building for 25 least developed countries to assist with National Implementation Plan Development under the Stockholm Convention”. The goal of this initiative is to determine the extent to which the UNITAR training might be applied to the preparation of national plans for the ratification and implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. Steps will be taken to assess the feasibility of this approach through a series of follow-up meetings in five pilot countries. The project would be undertaken in cooperation with UNITAR, which would take the lead in developing the relevant training materials and in organizing the five meetings.

3. Cooperation with customs officials

58. Opportunities for cooperative or collaborative activities with customs officials will continue to be explored with the World Customs Organization, the secretariats of other multilateral environmental agreements and relevant organizations.

59. At the same time, relevant information materials in the resource kit, including the guidance document for designated national authorities, will be updated to reflect the importance of information flow between designated national authorities and customs officials. The presentations made during the national and regional meetings will also be updated.

4. Integration with activities under the Stockholm Convention

60. In order to strengthen the links between national implementation plans and associated action plans under the Stockholm Convention and the obligations of countries under the Rotterdam Convention, further work is needed to determine the effectiveness of relevant guidance documents. The secretariat, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Stockholm Convention, will undertake a review of a number of completed national implementation plans for the Stockholm Convention and will consider whether there is a need to revise the relevant guidance documents.

61. Pilot country projects to develop plans with UNITAR and national and subregional meetings may also provide opportunities to field test these guidance materials.

5. Collecting information on severely hazardous pesticide formulations

62. The secretariat will continue its efforts to integrate the severely hazardous pesticide formulation incident report forms with the work of the WHO pesticide data management system, possibly through cooperation with WHO regional offices.

63. Since January 2005, the European Union has been funding a three-year project with the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) to strengthen community health monitoring capabilities relevant to pesticide poisonings in six African countries. The lack of a process for collecting reliable information on pesticide poisoning incidents and a lack of adequate mechanisms for communicating this information to designated national authorities have been identified as major challenges by countries. A proposal has been made to collaborate with this project with a view to establishing appropriate links between designated national authorities and community health monitoring activities in the six pilot countries and a process for the preparation and submission of proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations under article 6 of the Convention.

Appendix I

Decision RC-1/14: Regional delivery of technical assistance

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the targets for chemicals agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Noting that hazardous chemicals and pesticides covered by the Rotterdam Convention can contribute to poverty through their adverse effects on human health and environmental resources,

Recalling the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, in particular its decision INC-10/7 on the regional delivery of technical assistance to Parties,

Also recalling the provisions of the Convention on technical assistance, especially its article 16,

Stressing the importance of technical assistance in enabling Parties, especially developing countries, and in particular the least developed among them, and countries with economies in transition, to implement the Convention,

Emphasizing the need to promote coordination and cooperation among international organizations, Parties and others in the provision of technical assistance,

Recalling the role of the secretariat of the Convention as laid down in its article 19,

Emphasizing also the need to achieve effective and coordinated delivery of technical assistance,

Noting with appreciation the work of the secretariat in producing a comprehensive proposal for the regional delivery of technical assistance to Parties,³

Decides:

- (a) To invite countries, donors and other stakeholders to promote chemicals and waste management regional cooperation programmes within existing regional cooperation frameworks;
- (b) To invite developed countries, other donors and international organizations to ensure the better integration of chemicals management in their development cooperation policies and programmes and to take account of the needs and interest of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their chemicals and pesticides strategies;
- (c) To request the secretariat to take the following initial steps to operationalize the regional delivery of technical assistance to the Parties of the Convention:
 - (i) To facilitate coordination of regional activities using existing bodies such as the regional offices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme;
 - (ii) To implement the activities contained in the annex to the present decision subject to available resources;
 - (iii) To invite other regional entities, in particular the Basel Convention regional centres and regional coordinating centres, international organizations and multilateral environmental agreements to participate in the regional delivery system to make full use of synergies among those entities, organizations and multilateral environmental agreements;
 - (iv) To prepare a detailed costed programme of activities based on the elements in the annex to the present decision, identified gaps in the light of experience and further developments in the international context for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting;
 - (v) To report to the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting on the experience gained in implementing these actions;

³ See document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.1/28.

(d) To welcome World Bank and Global Environment Facility support for chemicals management and encourage synergies between those activities and actions necessary to enable developing countries to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention;

(e) To request the secretariat to provide to the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and to the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management information on options to enable developing countries to implement adequately the provisions of the Convention;

(f) To review at its second meeting the operation of the regional delivery system and the progress in its implementation, based also on input from Parties and other actors.

Annex

Initial technical assistance actions

A. Elements unique to the Rotterdam Convention

1. The following initial topics for technical assistance actions are identified for priority attention:

(a) Upon request, assistance will be provided to support national efforts to ratify the Convention by countries seeking to do so. To assist in the initiation of these actions, interested countries should contact the secretariat to request action within their region. It is anticipated that these actions will be further defined at the level of actual delivery.

(b) Articles 6, 7, 10 and 14 of the Convention contain important functions of the Secretariat in respect of which facilitation of assistance may be required, in particular:

- (i) Preparation and submission of notifications of final regulatory action to ban or severely restrict a chemical;
- (ii) Preparation and submission of proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations (based on adverse human health effects or adverse environmental effects);
- (iii) Procedure for making decisions on future imports of chemicals in Annex III to the Convention and for reporting those decisions to the Secretariat;
- (iv) Export notification, indicating to exporters how to develop and implement a programme of export notification and export notification and, to importers, how to use the information provided through export notifications;
- (v) Exchange of information with Parties on transit movements of chemicals through their territory.

B. Cross-cutting elements

2. In addition to actions identified under section A above, the secretariat should systematically explore synergies with and contribute, where possible and feasible, to other international processes, programmes, activities dealing with chemicals management such as the strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM), other multilateral environmental agreements related to chemicals management and the intergovernmental strategic plan on technology support and capacity-building, in particular for the following cross-cutting elements:

(a) National legislation with regard to chemicals management in general and on the implementation of the international conventions in particular;

(b) Development of plans for the implementation of chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements (e.g., the Stockholm Convention);

(c) Customs procedures to combat illegal traffic in chemicals;

(d) Collection of information on pesticide poisoning incidents (human health and the environment);

(e) Regulatory decision-making on chemicals; and

(f) Notification, at the national level, of all stakeholders associated with implementation of the Convention.

3. For those aspects of the Convention that are relevant to a broader programme of chemicals management – the cross-cutting issues – consideration will be given to contributing to the updating of already existing materials relevant to the Convention that might be integrated with the existing technical assistance activities of other organizations. The following opportunities and recommended actions are highlighted:

(a) The guide under development by the Rotterdam Convention secretariat on the appropriate legal or administrative infrastructure for the implementation of the Convention should be compatible with similar guidance in preparation by the secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm conventions;

(b) National profiles on chemicals management have been developed or are under development in a broad range of countries. Such profiles are a good starting point in assessing the needs of countries and for the development of national plans for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. Supplementary guidance should be developed that would assist countries to use their national profile as a basis on which to define gaps in their chemicals management infrastructure for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention;

(c) Guidance should be developed for national customs authorities on matters relevant to the Rotterdam Convention to supplement that developed by other multilateral environmental agreements or programmes and with a view to developing fully integrated guidance on relevant chemicals conventions in the future;

(d) Under the Stockholm Convention substantial progress has been made in developing national implementation plans. In view of the close relationship with the Rotterdam Convention, it would be useful to examine the extent to which the Rotterdam Convention has been incorporated in those plans and to consider what guidance might be needed to help ensure that relevant aspects of the Rotterdam Convention are considered by countries in developing or implementing their national implementation plans;

(e) Opportunities should be explored for the integration of the severely hazardous pesticide formulation reporting requirements of the Rotterdam Convention with the WHO pesticide data management system and community-based approach to pesticide poisonings piloted in selected countries.

Appendix II

Summary of the costs of the individual elements of a proposed work plan on the regional delivery of technical assistance for 2006

A. Elements unique to the Rotterdam Convention	Cost (US \$)
<i>National and subregional consultations on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention</i>	
Two subregional meetings between countries of Southern Africa and East Africa (paragraph 47)	60,000
Meeting with CSP and DNAs to further integration of the RC with the work of the Committee (paragraph 48)	15,000
National meetings Asia region, in cooperation with the FAO Regional Office (Pakistan + one to two others) (paragraph 49)	40,000
National and subregional meetings (paragraph 50)	90,000
Follow-up to previous sub regional and national meetings – individual country visits (paragraph 51)	15,000
B. Cross-cutting issues	
<i>Resource Kit</i>	
Updating language versions and reprinting existing documents (paragraphs 51–52)	20,000
Prototype of interactive compact disk for self-directed training on the four key operational elements of the Convention (paragraph 53)	20,000
Further developing and expanding Section E on cross-cutting issues (paragraph 54)	10,000
Case studies to supplement the guide on the development of national laws (paragraph 55)	15,000
<i>Development of supplementary guidance</i> (paragraph 57)	90,000
Collaboration with UNITAR: action plan development – preparation of training materials and delivery of pilot project in five countries	
<i>Integration with activities under the Stockholm Convention</i> (paragraphs 60–61)	5,000
Review completed national implementation plans (NIPs) to determine whether the references to the Rotterdam Convention in the Guidance on the development of NIPs need strengthening.	
<i>Collecting information on severely hazardous pesticide formulations</i> (paragraphs 62–63)	20,000
Within the context of the PAN-EU project on strengthening community health monitoring of pesticide poisoning incidents strengthen links between DNAs and community health monitoring activities in six pilot countries	
Total	400,000

Appendix III

Proposed draft decision on the regional delivery of technical assistance

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the work of the secretariat in producing a comprehensive proposal for the regional delivery of technical assistance for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties⁴,

Also recalling the provisions of the Convention on technical assistance, especially its article 16,

Noting that the hazardous chemicals and pesticides covered by the Rotterdam Convention contribute to poverty through their adverse effects on human health and environmental resources,

Stressing the importance of technical assistance in enabling Parties, especially developing countries, and in particular the least developed among them, and countries with economies in transition, to implement the Convention,

Emphasizing the need to promote coordination and cooperation among international organizations, Conventions, Parties and others in the provision of technical assistance,

Recalling the role of the secretariat of the Convention as laid down in its article 19,

Emphasizing also the need to achieve effective and coordinated delivery of technical assistance,

Noting with appreciation the work of the secretariat in the implementation of decision RC.1/14 on the regional delivery of technical assistance⁵,

- (a) Requests Parties that are in a position to do so to contribute to the voluntary trust fund in support of technical assistance activities;
- (b) Adopts the work plan for the regional delivery of technical assistance for 2006;
- (c) Requests the secretariat to report to the Conference of the Parties at its third session on the experience gained in the regional delivery of technical assistance;
- (d) Requests the secretariat to prepare a detailed costed programme of activities for the regional delivery of technical assistance for the biennium 2007–2008 for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its third session.

⁴ See document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.1/28.

⁵ document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.2/14.