



**United Nations  
Environment Programme**

Distr.: General  
4 July 2005



**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**

Original: English

**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 (f) of the provisional agenda\*

**Issues arising from the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties:  
secretariat arrangements**

**Arrangements by the Executive Director of the United Nations  
Environment Programme and the Director-General of the Food  
and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for  
performance of the secretariat functions for the Convention**

**Note by the secretariat**

1. Article 19, paragraph 3, the Rotterdam Convention provides:  
“The secretariat functions for this Convention shall be performed jointly by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, subject to such arrangements as shall be agreed between them and approved by the Conference of the Parties.”
2. Two decisions relevant to this paragraph were adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting: decision RC 1/9 on arrangements by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the performance of the secretariat functions for the Convention; and decision RC.1/12 on the physical location of the secretariat. Copies of the full text of these decisions are included in the annex to the present note.
3. In the period since the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, FAO and UNEP have continued to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention based on existing arrangements. The detailed staff arrangements are set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.2/18. These arrangements have involved two co-Executive Secretaries: one in UNEP, and one in FAO, each contributing 25 per cent of their time to the operation of the secretariat for a total of 0.5 person years. The 25 per cent

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

of staff time for both of the co-Executive Secretaries is reflected in the budget of the secretariat. In the case of FAO, the remaining 75 per cent of staff time is devoted to plant protection issues. The position is fully funded by FAO. In UNEP, it is proposed that the co-Executive Secretary position should be shared with the Stockholm Convention, so that 25 per cent of the post is funded from the general trust fund established under the Rotterdam Convention while the remaining 75 per cent is funded from the budget of the Stockholm Convention.

4. The Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General of FAO have agreed on a memorandum of understanding concerning the arrangements to perform jointly the secretariat functions for the Rotterdam Convention. The arrangements build on the same elements that formed the basis of the long-standing and excellent cooperation between FAO and UNEP and on the effective and efficient secretariat arrangements for the joint programme for the operation of the prior informed consent procedure, the intergovernmental negotiation process and during the interim period between the adoption of the Convention and its entry into force. A copy of the memorandum of understanding will be circulated as an addendum to the present note.

5. The role of co-Executive Secretary in FAO continues to be performed by the Chief of the Plant Protection Service. Action has been initiated within UNEP to recruit a new co-Executive Secretary.

6. The acceptance of the offer of the Governments of Italy and Switzerland to host jointly the secretariat included provisions for financial contributions to the establishment of the secretariat. The details of the contributions are reflected in the budget paper (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.2/18). The confirmation of the status quo regarding the location of the secretariat meant that there was no need to consider practical arrangements for the transfer and hosting of the secretariat.

7. A review of the existing host agreements between FAO and the Government of Italy and UNEP and the Government of Switzerland confirmed that the elements included in the offer to host the permanent secretariat to the Rotterdam Convention were covered under the existing arrangements.

### **Possible action by the Conference of the Parties**

8. The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider and approve the memorandum of understanding between FAO and UNEP on arrangements for the performance of the secretariat.

9. The Conference may also wish to note the action taken to recruit a new co-Executive Secretary in UNEP.

## Annex

### **Decisions of the Conference of the Parties on arrangements for the performance of the secretariat functions for the Convention and on the physical location of the secretariat**

#### **Decision RC-1/9**

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Noting with appreciation* the excellent cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the effective and efficient Secretariat arrangements for the joint programme for the operation of the prior informed consent procedure, the intergovernmental negotiation process and during the interim period between the adoption of the Convention and its entry into force,

*Aware* that its decision regarding the physical location of the secretariat will have a decisive impact on the arrangements for the provision of the secretariat that, as provided by paragraph 3 of article 19 of the Convention, are to be agreed on between the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and approved by the Conference of the Parties,

1. *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to make arrangements for the performance of the Secretariat functions, possibly based on the same elements as in the earlier arrangements, and to present it to the Conference of the Parties for consideration and approval, if possible, at its second meeting;

2. *Also invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to continue to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention based on the existing arrangements until the Conference of the Parties has approved the new arrangements;

3. *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to appoint an Executive Secretary in consultation with the Conference of the Parties through the Bureau.

#### **Decision RC-1/12**

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Noting* the agreement for the cities of Geneva and Rome to be the location of the secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention,

*Noting* paragraph 3 of article 19 of the Convention,

1. *Expresses* its sincere gratitude to the Governments of Germany, Italy and Switzerland for their generous offers to host the secretariat of the Convention;

2. *Also expresses* its appreciation to the Governments of Italy and Switzerland for their commitment to fulfilling the terms of their offer to host the secretariat;

3. *Decides* to accept the offer of the Governments of Italy and Switzerland to host jointly the secretariat;

4. *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to consult with the authorities of the host Governments regarding the practical arrangements for hosting the secretariat in Geneva and Rome;

5. *Notes* that the United Nations headquarters agreements already in force with Italy and Switzerland will continue to apply to the secretariat, and accepts the additional elements included in the offer of the Governments of Italy and Switzerland for inclusion in the framework of those practical arrangements;

6. *Requests* the secretariat to report on the implementation of this decision to the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting.

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