

SBC: Environmental Mandate & Activities

Secretariat of the Basel Convention

Environmental mandate

The main goal of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects which may result from handling, transporting and disposing of hazardous and other wastes. To achieve this, the Convention pursues four objectives: to reduce transboundary movements of hazardous wastes to a minimum consistent with their environmentally sound management; to treat and dispose of such wastes as close as possible to their source of generation; to promote the environmentally sound management (ESM) of hazardous wastes; and to minimise the generation of hazardous wastes.

The Convention provides for a Conference of Parties (COP), as the supreme decision-making body, and for a Secretariat. The seventh COP was held from 25 to 29 October 2004. The Subsidiary Bodies of the Conference of the Parties are: the Expanded Bureau; the Open-ended Working Group; and the Compliance Committee.

Pursuant to article 14 of the Basel Convention, fourteen Regional Centres for Training and Technology Transfer have been established: in Latin America and the Caribbean (Argentina, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay), Asia and the Pacific (China, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme – SPREP), Africa (Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa) and Central and Eastern Europe (Russian Federation and Slovakia).

Environmental activities

SBC with the Parties:

- Preparing a number of Technical guidelines, training and guidance manuals and other publications on environmentally sound management (ESM) of hazardous wastes.
- Operating a system for controlling the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and following up the reduction of transboundary movements.
- Developing and carrying out capacity building activities, including training programmes at the national and regional level.
- Developing the Basel Convention Partnership Programme.
- Promoting information exchange, education and awareness-raising of the Convention.

Regional Centres are conducting training programmes, workshops, seminars and pilot projects in the field of:

- ESM of hazardous wastes.
- Transfer of environmentally sound technology and minimization of the generation of hazardous wastes.
- Promotion of public awareness.
- Networking at the national and regional levels.

Since 2003 the Regional Centres have been carrying out 20 pilot projects to implement the Strategic Plan with funding from the Basel Convention Trust Fund and bilateral donors. The Regional Centres have carried out activities on POPs, with co-funding from the Basel Convention, and together with the Stockholm Convention and the Rotterdam Convention Secretariats and the UNEP Geneva Environment Network the Regional Centres, have organized meetings and training workshops on recognizing the synergies between the three Conventions.