



Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

**Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
Tenth meeting**

Geneva, 26–30 July 2021 and 6–17 June 2022*
Agenda item 5 (a) (iii)

**Matters related to the implementation of the Convention:
measures to reduce or eliminate releases from intentional
production and use: polychlorinated biphenyls**

United Nations Environment Programme report on the activities of the Polychlorinated Biphenyls Elimination Network

Note by the Secretariat

As is mentioned in the note by the Secretariat on polychlorinated biphenyls (UNEP/POPS/COP.10/6), the annex to the present note sets out a report on the activities of the Polychlorinated Biphenyls Elimination Network submitted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The present note, including its annex, has not been formally edited.

* In accordance with decisions BC-15/1, RC-10/2 and SC-10/2 of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the 2021/2022 meetings of the conferences of the Parties are being held in two segments: an online segment held from 26 to 30 July 2021 and a face-to-face segment to be held from 6 to 17 June 2022 in Geneva.

Annex

United Nations Environment Programme report the activities of the Polychlorinated Biphenyls Elimination Network

I. Executive summary

1. Pursuant to decision SC-9/3 on polychlorinated biphenyls adopted at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Chemicals and Health Branch has continued serving as the Polychlorinated Biphenyls Elimination Network (PEN) secretariat and undertaken activities to facilitate the implementation of the network works and assisting Parties to the Stockholm Convention towards fulfilling their obligations on this topic. By the same decision, the secretariat of the PEN Chemicals and Health Branch was invited to provide information to its next meeting on the activities of the PEN network. The following is an overview of the activities undertaken to date, including the current status of the PEN.

2. Since the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention held in Geneva from 29 April to 10 May 2019, the PEN has been active in providing tools to assist in PCB identification, inventories development, environmentally sound management and phase out.

3. During the last biennium, the PEN secretariat, hosted by UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch, has updated the membership of PEN and developed a template for a PCB National Phase Out Plan, within the framework of the technical assistance provided to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project “Disposal of PCB oils contained in transformers and disposal of capacitors containing PCB in Southern Africa”.

4. Moreover, the PEN secretariat and several PEN advisory committee members have actively participated in the small intersessional working group (SIWG) on PCB established by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, and coordinated by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions, with the objective to prepare a report on progress towards the elimination of PCB to be presented for consideration at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention.

5. Several GEF projects related to PCB and within the scope of PEN have been and are being implemented by UNEP and other agencies.

6. The PEN secretariat continued updating the UNEP webpages with PCB and PEN related information

II. Present Status of the PEN

A. Membership

7. In 2019, the secretariat of the PEN undertook the work of updating the database of PEN membership in an effort to enhance its profile and to better contribute towards elimination of PCB. For the updating of the database, a request was sent to each of the members to update their contact details or provide any update on other related information. As a result, the PEN secretariat created two databases, one including all the active members who have responded to the request and updated their contact details and information, and a second with those members who are yet to update their profile.

8. Since the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, four new members to the PEN were welcomed.

9. As of January 2022, the PEN has a total of 82 active members. The revised PEN membership form is available in all UN languages and can be found on UNEP website.¹

B. Advisory committee

10. Revision to the terms of reference² of the PEN advisory committee, adopted at the seventh meeting of the advisory committee was published.

¹ <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/persistent-organic-pollutants/pcb-elimination-network>.

² <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/27371>.

11. In accordance with the revised terms of reference, two seats remain vacant for Eastern European Group and the Western Europe and Other Groups.

12. See the table below for the full list of PEN advisory committee members.

Advisory Committee of the PCB Elimination Network (PEN)				
Party-Nominated Members			Other Stakeholders	
Region	Country	Name	Category	Name
Africa (2)	Nigeria	Stella Uchenna Mojekwu	Industry (1)	Hugues Levasseur, Hazardous Waste Europe Jacques Ledure, Suez PCB Decontamination
	Rwanda	Aloys Kamatari	PCB holders (1)	Claudia Cabal, Administración Nacional de Usinas y Transmisiones Eléctricas (UTE)
Asia and Pacific (2)	China	Jinhui Li	Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) (1)	Lee Bell, International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN)
	Iran	Sanaz Jafarzadeh	Experts (1)	Urs K. Wagner, Environmental Technology International (ETI)
Eastern European Group (2)	Moldova	Ion Barbarasa	Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions Secretariat (1)	Kei Ohno, BRS Secretariat
	Vacant		Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO) (2)	Alfredo Cueva, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Nelson Manda, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) (2)	Costa Rica	Anna Ortiz	Stockholm and/or Basel Conventions Regional Centres (SCRC/BCRC) (2)	Anton Purnomo, Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for South-East Asia in Indonesia (BCRC-SCRC Indonesia)
	Argentina	Agustin Harte		Abdelkader Fergui, National Centre for Cleaner Technologies Production (NCCTP), Algeria
Western Europe and Other Groups (WEOG) (2)	United Kingdom	Richard C. Hawkins		
	Vacant			
PEN Secretariat				
	UNEP		Gamini Manuweera	

13. As agreed at seventh meeting of the advisory committee, Ms. Anna Ortiz continue would serve as chair including at its eighth meeting.

C. Thematic groups

14. During the reporting period the leads and co-leads of the thematic groups of the PEN have remained unchanged as follows:

Thematic groups on:	Lead by:	Co-leads:
Inventories	Mr. Jinhui Li	Mr. Ion Barbarasa Mr. Aloys Kamatari
Maintenance, Handling, and Interim Storage of Equipment Containing PCB	Ms. Anna Ortiz	WEOG representative invited
Disposal of PCB and Remediation of Contaminated Sites	Lead - Mr. Hugues Levasseur	Ms. Sanaz Jafarzadeh
Open Applications of PCB	Vacant	Mr. Urs K. Wagner

D. Financial matters and workplan

15. The financial basis for the operation of the PEN and the implementation of the workplan continues to remain weak. No specific contributions to the work on PCB and PEN have been received since May 2013.

16. UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch, the BRS Secretariat and the members of the advisory committee have supported the PEN with substantial in-kind contributions.

III. PEN related activities

A. Overview of past activities: awareness raising

17. A brochure and a video on PCB are available through the UNEP webpage.³

18. The brochure contains an introduction to the major PCB related issues, information on specific themes such as PCB in open applications, efforts made towards elimination of PCB and case studies.

19. The video provides a general introduction into the global issue of PCB and the progress made toward elimination of PCB. The video is in English language.



B. PCB and PEN pages on UNEP website

20. The two webpages⁴ dedicated for PCB and PEN under the UNEP website have been regularly updated to include new information and improve the visual outlook to facilitate enhanced communication.

C. Technical assistance and development of national phase-out plan

21. In the frame of the Southern African countries (SADC) PCB project (see section IV below) the secretariat of the PEN has provided technical assistance to the GEF/UNEP project entitled "Disposal of PCB oils contained in transformers and disposal of capacitors containing PCB in Southern Africa" (see section 4 below).

22. Among other activities, the technical assistance included the drafting of a template for a PCB national phase-out plan. The draft developed by the UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch was submitted for comments and inputs by the PEN advisory committee and the members of the SIWG on PCB established by the Conference of Parties of the Stockholm Convention. The template as updated by the inputs provided through the above process was presented to the project countries for the development of national phase out plans. As part of targeted technical assistance, the project countries were also supported the assessment costs and economics associated with decommissioning PCB contaminated electrical equipment and replace them with energy efficient products. Furthermore, communications plan and materials are currently being developed.

³ <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/video/polychlorinated-biphenyls-forgotten-legacy>.

⁴ <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/persistent-organic-pollutants/pcb-forgotten-legacy>; <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/persistent-organic-pollutants/pcb-elimination-network>.

IV. Other PCB related activities

23. In addition to its functions as the secretariat of the PEN, the UNEP through its other chemicals and waste related activities has contributed towards meeting the objectives of the PEN and related Convention objectives.

A. GEF projects on PCB implemented by UNEP

24. Several projects (e.g. Chile and Peru PCB mining project, PCB Reduction in Cameroon Through the use of Local Expertise and the Development of National Capacities) have been implemented and already reported to the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention by UNEP in former reports.⁵

25. UNEP recently completed the project on Capacity Strengthening and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans in African Least Developed Countries of the Economic Community of West African States Member states subregion.⁶ This project successfully disposed of almost 1,200 tonnes of PCB-contaminated waste from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The project also developed a Regional Guideline on the Environmentally Sound Management of PCB wastes which was instituted into legislation in nine countries, including development of PCB management elements into utilities' quality and environmental management systems.

1. SADC PCB project⁷

26. UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch is currently implementing project in Southern African countries (SADC) for the disposal of PCB oils contained in transformers and disposal of capacitors containing PCB. The project is executed by the Stockholm Convention Regional Centre hosted by Africa Institute. It aims to manage over 4,000 tonnes of PCB-contaminated waste in an environmentally sound manner, covering 12 countries. Since May 2017, partners have inventoried PCB-containing equipment in the electrical utilities and started developing disposal plans. The project has also provided training for customs and inspection services for POPs identification and control.

2. PCB reduction in Cameroon⁸

27. UNEP is implementing a similar project in Cameroon with direct execution from the Ministry of Environment Protection and Sustainable Development. This project aims to manage 1,800 tonnes of PCB-contaminated equipment. Since 2016, have inventoried PCB-containing equipment in the electrical utilities and started developing disposal plans. The project has also provided training for customs and inspection services for POPs identification and control.

3. POPs global monitoring plan

28. UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch executes the implementation of POPs global monitoring plan projects, in 43 countries, to strengthen the capacities to monitor POPs, including PCB in selected metrics. More information about the global monitoring plan is available at UNEP website.⁹

4. Contributions by PEN secretariat other PCB related activities

29. UNEP participated at the SIWG on PCB first meeting (online), 8 July 2020 and contributed to the work towards finalizing its report to the tenth meeting of Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, whose online segment was held from 26 to 30 July 2021, and the face-to-face is to be held from 6 to 17 June 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland.

B. GEF projects on PCB implemented by other agencies¹⁰

30. A number of PCBs related projects are implemented by other agencies, as follows:

⁵ UNEP/POPS/COP.8/INF/11.

⁶ <https://www.thegef.org/project/afldc-capacity-strengthening-and-technical-assistance-implementation-stockholm-convention-1>.

⁷ <https://www.thegef.org/project/disposal-pcb-oils-contained-transformers-and-disposal-capacitors-containing-pcb-southern>.

⁸ <https://www.thegef.org/project/pcb-reduction-cameroon-through-use-local-expertise-and-development-national-capacities>.

⁹ <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/persistent-organic-pollutants/global-monitoring>.

¹⁰ <https://www.thegef.org/projects>.

- (a) Strengthening national capacity to manage industrial POPs (UNDP);
 - (b) PCB Management in Ethiopia to Meet the 2025 SC Deadline - Phase 1 (UNDP);
 - (c) Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) and disposal of (PCBs) in the Republic of South Africa (Development Bank of Southern Africa);
 - (d) Capacity Building for PCBs and U-POPs in The Gambia (UNDP);
 - (e) Strengthening the ESM and Final Disposal of PCBs in Paraguay (UNIDO);
 - (f) Environmentally Sound Management and Disposal of PCBs in Nigeria (UNDP);
 - (g) PCB-Free Electricity Distribution in Georgia (UNIDO);
 - (h) ESM and Destruction of PCBs in Mexico: Second Phase (UNDP);
 - (i) PCB Management in Philippines (UNIDO);
 - (j) Comprehensive Environmentally Sound Management of PCBs in Montenegro (UNDP);
 - (k) ESM and Disposal of PCB - DDT Wastes, and Upgrade Expertise in Guatemala (UNIDO);
 - (l) ESM of Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) - Containing Equipment and Wastes and Upgrade of Technical Expertise in Bolivia (UNIDO);
 - (m) Disposal of PCB Oils Contained in Transformers and Disposal of Capacitors Containing PCB in Southern Africa (UNDP);
 - (n) ESM and Disposal of PCBs Wastes and PCB Contaminated Equipment in Sri Lanka (UNIDO);
 - (o) ESM and Disposal of PCBs in the Power and Non-Power Sector in Iran (UNDP);
 - (p) ESM and Final Disposal of PCBs at the Russian Railroad Network and Other PCB Owners (UNIDO);
 - (q) PCB Management and Disposal at the Energy Sector in Lao PDR (UNIDO);
 - (r) Integrated PCB Management in Costa Rica (UNDP);
 - (s) Introduction of an ESM and Disposal System for PCBs Wastes and PCB Contaminated Equipment in Indonesia (UNIDO).
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