



**United Nations  
Environment  
Programme**

Distr.: General  
16 December 2005

Original: English

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

Geneva, 1–5 May 2006

Item 5 (e) of the provisional agenda\*

**Matters for consideration or action by  
the Conference of the Parties: listing chemicals  
in Annexes A, B or C of the Convention**

**Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee: relevant  
developments for action by the Conference of the Parties\*\***

**Note by the Secretariat**

1. At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants adopted decision SC-1/7,<sup>1</sup> by which it established, pursuant to paragraph 6 of Article 19 of the Convention, the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee, which would perform the functions assigned to it by the Convention.
2. The first meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee was held in Geneva from 7 to 11 November 2005. The report of the meeting is contained in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10.
3. The terms of reference for the Committee were set out in the annex to decision SC-1/7. They contain three items, described in more detail below, for the consideration of the Conference: formal confirmation of the appointment of members of the Committee; approval of criteria for the selection of experts from the roster of experts; and receipt of work plans for each chemical under consideration by the Committee. In addition, the Committee, at its first meeting, identified some other issues for possible consideration by the Conference, as discussed below.

\* UNEP/POPS/COP.2/1.

\*\* Stockholm Convention, article 8 and paragraph 6; Report of the Conference of the Parties on the work of its first meeting (UNEP/POPS/COP.1/31), annex I, decision SC-1/7.

<sup>1</sup> UNEP/POPS/COP.1/31, annex I.

## **A. Confirmation of Committee members**

4. Paragraphs 2 to 6 of its terms of reference indicate that the Committee shall consist of 31 Government-designated experts in chemical assessment or management drawn from Parties from all the regions identified in appendix I to the terms of reference. The members shall be appointed by the Conference on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, taking into account gender and the need for a balance between different types of expertise. Each of the 31 Governments listed in appendix II to the terms of reference were required under paragraph 6 of the terms of reference to designate one expert and through the Secretariat provide their names and relevant qualifications to the Conference by 1 August 2005.

5. All of the Governments listed in appendix II nominated their experts and provided the necessary information, including the experts' curricula vitae. That information is contained in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/INF/12. All the experts so nominated participated in the first meeting of the Committee. The full list of participants for the meeting is contained in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/INF/14/rev.1.

## **B. Criteria for the selection of experts from the roster**

6. Paragraphs 10 to 12 of the terms of reference indicate that the Committee may invite no more than 30 experts who are not members of the Committee, with due consideration to the balance between developed and developing countries, to support it in its work and that a roster of such experts should be established to which Parties may designate experts. The Committee shall establish and apply criteria, approved by the Conference of the Parties, for the selection of experts from the roster to provide needed expertise. If no expert on the roster has the specific expertise needed, the Committee may designate other experts to participate in the work of the Committee in accordance with the criteria established for selecting experts from the roster.

7. In decision POPRC-1/2, the Committee established the following criteria to be taken into account when selecting experts pursuant to paragraphs 10 to 12 of its terms of reference:

- (a) The need for areas of expertise or specific knowledge to support its work;
- (b) The need to achieve an appropriate balance between developed and developing countries.

8. In the decision, the Committee decided to forward these criteria to the Conference of the Parties for consideration and possible approval at its second meeting.

9. In paragraph 3 of decision POPRC-1/2, the Committee agreed on a process for identifying and inviting experts, which is set out in the annex to the decision.

## **C. Work plans for chemicals under consideration by the Committee**

10. Paragraph 24 of the terms of reference indicates that the Committee will establish work plans with timetables for each of the chemicals under its consideration, i.e., those chemicals which meet the screening criteria set out in Annex D of the Convention. Furthermore, the Committee shall submit its work plans to each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

11. At its first meeting, the Committee considered five chemicals that had been proposed by Parties for listing in Annex A of the Convention:

- (a) Pentabromodiphenyl ether (proposed by Norway);
- (b) Chlordecone (proposed by the European Community and its Member States that are Parties to the Convention);
- (c) Hexabromobiphenyl (proposed by the European Community and its Member States that are Parties to the Convention);
- (d) Lindane (proposed by Mexico);
- (e) Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) (proposed by Sweden).

12. The Committee examined the proposals and applied the screening criteria in Annex D in a flexible and transparent way. Based on an evaluation of each chemical, the Committee decided that the screening criteria contained in Annex D of the Convention were fulfilled for all five of the chemicals proposed. The relevant decisions are POPRC-1/3, POPRC-1/4, POPRC-1/5, POPRC-1/6 and POPRC-1/7. The Committee's evaluations are contained in annexes to those decisions.
13. Pursuant to paragraph 4 (a) of Article 8 of the Convention, the next step for the Committee was to make the proposals and their respective evaluations available to all Parties and observers and invite them to submit the information specified in Annex E of the Convention. The proposals, evaluations and invitations to submit information were made available to Parties and observers on 18 November 2005 and can be found on the Convention website ([www.pops.int](http://www.pops.int)).
14. Pursuant to paragraph 6 of Article 8, the Committee will further review the proposals, take into account any relevant additional information received and prepare a draft risk profile in accordance with Annex E.
15. A standard work plan for the development of the five draft risk profiles was adopted by the Committee at its first meeting and is contained in annex II of the report of the meeting (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10).
16. The draft risk profiles are to be considered and completed by the Committee at its second meeting, which is scheduled to take place from 6 to 10 November 2006 in Geneva.

#### **D. Other issues identified by the Committee for possible consideration by the Conference**

17. During the Committee's discussion of its role and mandate, it considered briefly the full procedure for listing chemicals in Annexes A, B or C under Article 8 of the Convention. The Committee noted that its understanding of paragraph 8 of Article 8 of the Convention was that the risk management evaluation required by that paragraph was to be prepared in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraph 7 (a) of Article 8. Accordingly, the Committee would, through the Secretariat, invite all Parties and observers to provide information relating to the considerations specified in Annex F to the Convention prior to preparing such an evaluation. The Committee decided to request the Conference of the Parties to confirm that understanding at its next meeting, if possible in an interpretative guidance document<sup>2</sup>.
18. Paragraph 19 of its terms of reference requires the Committee to establish confidentiality arrangements as a matter of priority, while ensuring that paragraph 5 of Article 9 of the Convention is respected. In its decision POPRC-1/1, the Committee requested the Secretariat to develop such draft confidentiality arrangements for consideration at its next meeting. Recognizing that the Committee might receive confidential information prior to its next meeting, the Committee agreed on provisional arrangements for handling any confidential information that might be submitted to it pending the establishment of final arrangements. The provisional arrangements are set out in the decision and its annexes. The decision was adopted on the understanding that experts should be able to elect not to be sent confidential information; that confidential information submitted to the Secretariat would, where possible, be redrafted to render it non-confidential; and that experts could specify in which form of mail they wished the information to be sent to them. In addition, the Committee indicated that Parties should be encouraged not to submit confidential information. The Committee decided to establish an inter-sessional working group to discuss the matter of confidentiality further.<sup>3</sup>
19. During the Committee's discussion of the proposal on lindane, a question was raised as to whether the proposal covered only lindane – which by definition consists of at least 99 percent of the gamma isomer of hexacyclohexane – or also the alpha and beta isomers of hexacyclohexane. The alpha and beta isomers are contaminants of lindane and have similar properties to the gamma isomer. All three isomers are found in technical hexachlorocyclohexane (HCH). While the Committee decided for the time being that any final recommendation could only apply to the gamma isomer, it also decided to request clarification and guidance from the Conference of the Parties on how to deal with the issue of isomers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10, para 17.

<sup>3</sup> UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10, paras. 34 and 35.

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10, para. 65.

**E. Possible action by the Conference of the Parties**

20. The Conference of the Parties may wish to:
- (a) Welcome the report of the first meeting of the Committee (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10);
  - (b) Confirm the appointment of the members of the Committee, the names and relevant qualifications of whom are contained in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/INF/12;
  - (c) Pursuant to paragraphs 10 to 12 of the Committee's terms of reference, approve the criteria established by the Committee to be taken into consideration when selecting experts from the roster as set forth in decision POPRC-1/2;
  - (d) Take note of the standard work plan adopted by the Committee and contained in annex II to the report of the first meeting (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.1/10);
  - (e) Confirm the understanding of the Committee that the risk management evaluation required under paragraph 8 of Article 8 of the Convention is to be prepared in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraph 7 (a) of Article 8 of the Convention and, if appropriate, adopt an interpretative guidance on the issue;
  - (f) Take note of the provisional confidentiality arrangements of the Committee contained in decision POPRC-1/1 and give any necessary guidance for their further development, as appropriate;
  - (g) Provide clarification and guidance to the Committee on how to handle the issue of other isomers of chemicals proposed by Parties for inclusion in Annexes A, B or C of the Convention pursuant to Article 8.
-