

SC-2/9: Technical assistance

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Invites* Parties and relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide information to the Secretariat on their experiences in the provision of technical assistance and transfer of technology according to the guidance on technical assistance in decision SC-1/15 to developing countries in order to assist implementation of their respective national implementation plans and other obligations under the Convention;
2. *Requests* the Secretariat to submit a report, based on the information to be provided pursuant to paragraph 1 above and any other pertinent information, on progress in the application of the guidance on technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technology;
3. *Adopts* the terms of reference for regional and subregional centres for capacity-building and transfer of technology under the Stockholm Convention set forth in annex I to the present decision;
4. *Requests* the Secretariat to develop draft terms of reference for the process of selecting regional and subregional centres for capacity-building and transfer of technology for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its third meeting. In undertaking this task, the Secretariat should consult with Convention focal points and with existing regional and subregional centres and their host organizations providing technical assistance and technology transfer for chemicals and chemical waste issues;
5. *Adopts* the criteria for evaluating the performance of regional and subregional centres for capacity-building and technology transfer set forth in annex II to the present decision.

Annex I to decision SC-2/9

Terms of reference for regional and subregional centres for capacity-building and transfer of technology under the Stockholm Convention

Mandate

1. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of Article 12 of the Convention, a regional or subregional centre is to provide capacity-building and promote the transfer of technology to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to fulfil their obligations under the Stockholm Convention.

Identified areas of technical assistance and technology transfer needs

2. Activities to be undertaken by the centres shall be in accordance with the guidance on technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies set out in the annex to decision SC 1/15 of the Conference of the Parties. Priority consideration should be given to the provision of technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies relevant to the areas listed in paragraph 10 of the guidance on technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies set forth in the annex to decision SC-1/15.
3. Each centre, in accordance with its area of expertise, may be entrusted by the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention with the implementation of specific tasks related to priorities identified in a particular region or subregion being served by the centre.
4. Centres should take into account existing or ongoing work in areas of relevance to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention, in the context of existing cooperation with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and institutions such as the Basel Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and the cleaner production centres under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

Objectives and work plans

5. Recognizing that the rendering of timely and appropriate technical assistance in response to requests from developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition is essential to the successful implementation of the Convention, each centre, when establishing its objectives and work plans in relation to the Convention, must ensure consistency with the eligibility criteria, policy and strategy for technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies set forth in the annex to decision SC-1/15.
6. Particular attention should be given to addressing technical assistance needs identified by Parties with the objective of enabling them to implement their obligations under the Convention. The provision of technical assistance and promotion of the transfer of technology by centres are driven by the implementation of Convention obligations and informed by the country receiving assistance, in particular the priorities set out in their national implementation plans.
7. To minimize duplication of efforts and ensure timely delivery of adequate capacity-building and technology transfer, centres should operate within their areas of expertise and comparative advantage, synergies should be identified and promoted between regional and subregional centres serving the Convention, and also with other relevant centres, including the regional centres of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.
8. Each centre will therefore have to establish objectives and a concrete work plan taking into consideration the availability of resources. An analysis of national implementation plans of the Parties in the region should serve as the primary basis of the work plan, which should be kept continuously under review.
9. The work plans should be subject to review and approval by the Parties served by the Centre and should be communicated to all entities relevant to the implementation of the Convention. To avoid duplication of effort and to ensure the optimal use of available resources, work plans should take into account the activities planned, completed and under implementation by other entities, including the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies. In addition, whenever appropriate and beneficial, specific projects and activities may be proposed and implemented jointly with other entities.

Geographical location, premises and other institutional arrangements

10. Regional and subregional centres wishing to serve under the auspices of the Convention by assisting developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition should be so located as to allow for easy access by the Parties being served by it. Also, it must be supported by institutional arrangements which facilitate its serving the needs of Parties across a wide range of activities.
11. Institutional arrangements should improve collaborative efforts at the regional level with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and institutions and should minimize costs in implementation of the Convention by coordinating activities with other regional or subregional centres in areas of common interest.
12. Regional and subregional centres must be able to demonstrate expertise in capacity-building or technology transfer in one or more of the areas listed in paragraph 10 of the guidance on technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies set forth in the annex to decision SC-1/15. The centres should have adequate support in this regard in accordance with paragraph 31 below.
13. Regional and subregional centres must have highly qualified technical personnel with recognized competence in capacity-building or technology transfer in one or more of the areas listed in paragraph 10 of the guidance on technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies set forth in the annex to decision SC-1/15.
14. Premises of the regional and subregional centres must be fully equipped with the necessary personal computers, with installed updated software, and must have installed and operational communication facilities including telephone and fax lines and reliable internet connections. In addition, they should have adequate meeting facilities or easy access to them.

Parties served by a regional or subregional centre

15. Regional and subregional centres should be identified to serve a definite group of Parties in a specific region or subregion. For centres with particular areas of expertise, the list of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition served by the centre may extend beyond the region in which the centre is located.
16. Collaboration with other multilateral environmental agreements and their regional centres will be necessary to avoid redundancy, duplication or overlapping in terms of services to be provided by a regional or subregional centre to member countries served by other regional or coordinating centres.
17. Regional and subregional centres may serve developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition from other geographical regions, upon request by the interested Party.

Languages

18. The working language(s) should be determined prior to the designation of the centre.
19. All centres must be capable of communicating in English.

Cooperation

20. To promote coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in the field of capacity-building and technology transfer for the reduction and elimination of persistent organic pollutants, regional and subregional centres serving the Stockholm Convention must seek to collaborate effectively among themselves and with other relevant intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, and also with the Parties served by the centre, other relevant stakeholders in the region, the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention and other relevant regional training centres, including the Basel Convention regional centres.
21. The regional and subregional centres are encouraged to exchange information on persistent organic pollutants through the clearing-house mechanism referred to in paragraph 4 of Article 9 of the Convention.

Legal status

22. Taking into account national legislation, centres should be perceived as independent legal entities from the hosting institution and Government and operate, to the extent permissible by national laws, as separate legal entities.

Relation to the Conference of the Parties and the Secretariat of the Convention

23. Each centre shall be accountable to the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention for those activities which it has undertaken to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in the implementation of their obligations under the Convention, and which have been funded through the financial mechanism established under Article 13 of the Convention.
24. Each centre shall provide reports to ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties on the activities which it has undertaken to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in the implementation of their obligations under the Convention.
25. The Conference of the Parties shall provide regional and subregional centres with specific guidance relating to its activities and mode of operation.
26. The centres should keep the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention informed concerning major developments and events inasmuch as they relate to their activities under the auspices of the Stockholm Convention, and also of any planned or unplanned deviations from their agreed work plans.
27. Whenever appropriate, an inter-secretariat mechanism could be set up among the multilateral environmental agreements to review the commonalities between the work of the respective centres to improve coordination and avoid redundancy.

Coordinator and other staff

28. Centres selected to serve as regional or subregional centres for capacity-building and the transfer of technology under the Stockholm Convention must designate a liaison staff member for the purpose of communicating with the Secretariat of the Convention on relevant issues.

29. The coordinator should preferably have a technical background and project management competences and experience in technical assistance and capacity-building. The coordinator should keep under review the objectives and the work plan of the centre, including the budget and the foreseen financing for it. He or she would be accountable for the activities of the centre and should submit an annual report to each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties through the Secretariat of the Convention.

Evaluation of performance

30. The performance of centres would be evaluated by the Conference of the Parties at intervals to be decided and against the criteria set forth in annex II of the present document.

Funding of activities undertaken by regional and subregional centres for capacity-building and the transfer of technology under the auspices of the Stockholm Convention

31. Activities in the area of capacity-building and the promotion of transfer of technology undertaken by regional and subregional centres to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in the implementation of the Convention according to Article 12 of the Convention may be funded as appropriate and as mutually agreed through the financial mechanism of the Convention which was established under Article 13 and consequently must be consistent with the guidance to the financial mechanism adopted by the Conference of the Parties in its decision SC-1/9 and set forth in the annex to that decision.

32. Each regional or subregional centre must prepare and submit annual financial reports to the Conference of the Parties on its work to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in the implementation of their obligations under the Convention, in accordance with specific guidance to be provided by the Conference of the Parties. In addition, centres should produce such financial reports as may be required by any other donor, including bilateral donors.

33. An external financial review of each centre's performance shall be carried out at regular intervals, to be decided prior to the designation of the centre by the Conference of the Parties.