

Fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, Geneva, Switzerland, 28 September-2 October 2015

Interventions by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on Emerging policy issues and other issues of concern: Existing emerging policy issues (agenda item 5(b)(iii))

Hazardous substances within the life-cycle of electrical and electronic products

On hazardous substances within the life-cycle of electrical and electronic products, we provided a report in INF/18 on the activities implemented under the Basel Convention that are relevant to the objectives of this issue under SAICM.

As reported in our intervention yesterday, in May this year, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention adopted, on an interim basis, the technical guidelines concerning the transboundary movement of e-waste and used electronic and electrical equipment. They provide much-needed guidance on how to distinguish e-waste from used electronic and electrical equipment and on the rules applicable to their transboundary movement, including with the aim of preventing illegal traffic. In this regard, we look forward to receiving feedback from all stakeholders on the experiences in the implementation of these technical guidelines.

On partnerships, the Basel Convention COP extended the mandate of the Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment (PACE) until 2017. This multi-stakeholder public-private partnership provides a forum to relevant actors to tackle environmentally sound refurbishment, repair, recovery, recycling and disposal of used and end-of-life computing equipment. PACE is currently implementing several pilot projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, particularly on involving the informal sector into the e-waste management schemes.

Endocrine-Disrupting-Chemicals (EDCs)

On endocrine-disrupting chemicals, the Stockholm Convention covers a number of EDCs such as PCBs and DDT. One of the five criteria of persistent organic pollutants under the Stockholm Convention is adverse effects. Endocrine disruption is one of the adverse effects that justify consideration of the chemical within the scope of the Stockholm Convention. Thus the work of the ICCM on this matter is very important to the work of the Convention and vice versa, and we fully support the continuous collaboration with the BRS Secretariat, involving national experts, civil society and industry groups in the spirit of SAICM.

Perfluorinated chemicals

In relation to the work on perfluorinated chemicals, the BRS Secretariat implements activities pertinent to PFOS, its salts and PFOS-F listed in Annex B to the Stockholm Convention. Every four years, the COP evaluates the continued need for certain uses of PFOS, its salts and PFOSF. One of the key elements of the evaluation is the availability and suitability of alternatives to those chemicals. The Secretariat actively participates in the Global PFC Group, exchanging and sharing information on the alternatives to those chemicals. The collaboration contributed to the identification and assessment of alternatives to PFOS that are listed under the Stockholm Convention. This constitutes an important contribution to the identification of gaps that need to be addressed to support the achievement of the 2020 goals under the Strategic Approach.