



Book - Unit 2 - Main Provisions of the Stockholm Convention

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Course: Introductory Course to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

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1. Annex A - Elimination

Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention (Article 3)

Annex A allows for the registration of specific exemptions for the production and/or use of listed POPs, in accordance with that Annex and Article 4, as well as decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties. The import and export of chemicals listed in Annex A can take place under specific restrictive conditions, as set out in paragraph 2 of Article 3.

2. Annex B - Restriction

Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention (Article 3)

Annex B allows for the registration of acceptable purposes for the production and use of the listed POPs, in accordance with that Annex, and for the registration of specific exemptions for the production and use of the listed POPs, in accordance with that Annex and Article 4.

The import and export of chemicals listed in Annex B can take place under specific restrictive conditions, as set out in paragraph 2 of Article 3.

3. Annex C - Unintentional Production

Reduce and, where feasible, ultimately eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention (Article 5)

The Convention promotes the use of best available techniques and best environmental practices for preventing releases of POPs into the environment.

4. Stockpiles and Wastes

Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs, including products and articles upon becoming wastes, are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner (Article 6)

The Convention requires that such stockpiles and wastes be identified and managed to reduce or eliminate POPs releases from these sources. The Convention also requires that wastes containing POPs are not transported across international boundaries without taking into account relevant international rules, standards and guidelines.

According to Article 6, Parties to the Stockholm Convention are required to:

- Develop appropriate strategies for identifying stockpiles, products and articles in use that contain or are contaminated with POPs;
- Identify and manage stockpiles and wastes in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner;
- Take appropriate measures so that wastes, including products and articles on becoming wastes, are handled, collected, transported and stored in an environmentally sound manner; disposed of so that the POPs content is destroyed or irreversibly transformed; not permitted to be subject to disposal operation that may lead to recovery, recycling, reclamation, direct reuse or alternative uses of POPs; and not transported across international boundaries without taking into account relevant international rules, standards and guidelines;
- Endeavour to develop appropriate strategies for identifying contaminated sites and undertake eventual remediation of sites in an environmentally sound manner.

The Stockholm Convention and the Basel Convention have a joint mandate on POPs wastes and cooperate closely on, among other issues, establishing levels of destruction and irreversible transformation necessary to ensure that POPs characteristics are not exhibited. Additionally, the Conferences of the Parties of the two Conventions determine cooperatively what methods should constitute environmentally sound disposal.

The Basel Convention has developed technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of POPs wastes. Parties to the Stockholm Convention are invited to take these guidelines into account when implementing their obligations under Article 6 of the Convention.

5. Additional POPs

To target additional POPs (Article 8):

The Convention provides for detailed procedures for the listing of new POPs in Annexes A, B and/or C. A Committee composed of government-designated experts in chemical assessment or management - the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC) – is established to examine proposals for the listing of chemicals, in accordance with the process set out in Article 8 and the information requirements specified in Annexes D, E and F of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties has decided on the terms of reference, organization and operation of the Committee.

Listing of POPs in Annexes A, B and C to the Convention

Any Party may submit a proposal for listing a new chemical in Annex A, B or C of the Convention. The POPRC evaluates the proposals and makes recommendations to the Conference of the Parties on such listing in accordance with Article 8 of the Convention.

The POPRC follows the process outlined below:

(1) Submission of proposal for listing a chemical:

Any Party may submit a proposal to the Secretariat for listing a chemical in Annex A, Annex B and/or Annex C to the Convention. The Secretariat verifies whether the proposal contains the information specified in Annex D and, if so, forwards it to the POPRC for consideration.

(2) Screening phase:

The POPRC examines the proposal and applies the screening criteria specified in Annex D.

(3) Risk profile

If the POPRC decides that it is satisfied that the screening criteria have been fulfilled, it shall, through the Secretariat, make the proposal available to all Parties and observers and invite them to submit the information specified in Annex E, and prepares a risk profile. The POPRC, through the Secretariat, makes a draft available to Parties and observers, collects technical comments from them and, taking those comments into account, completes the risk profile.

Based on the risk profile, the POPRC makes a decision on whether the chemical is likely, as a result of its long-range environmental transport, to lead to significant adverse human health and/or environmental effect such that global action is warranted.

(4) Risk management evaluation

If the POPRC decides that the proposal shall proceed, it invites Parties and observers to submit information related to the socio-economic considerations specified in Annex F and develops a risk management evaluation.

On the basis of the risk profile and the risk management evaluation, the POPRC recommends whether the chemical should be considered by the Conference of the Parties for listing in Annexes A, B and/or C.

(5) Decision on listing of the chemical in Annex A, B and/or C

The Conference of the Parties, taking due account of the recommendations of the POPRC, including any scientific uncertainty, in a precautionary manner, whether to list the chemical, and specify its related control measures, in Annex A, B and/or C.

6. Best available techniques and best environmental practices (BAT and BEP)

Under the Stockholm Convention, Best Available Techniques (BAT) are defined under Article 5 as “the most effective and advanced stage in the development of activities and their methods of operation which indicate the practical suitability of particular techniques for providing in principle the basis for release limitations designed to prevent and, where that is not practicable, generally to reduce releases of chemicals listed in Part I of Annex C and their impact on the environment as a whole”.

Best Environmental Practices (BEP) are also defined under Article 5 as “the application of the most appropriate combination of environmental control measures and strategies.”

Each Party to the Convention is as a minimum to take various measures detailed in Article 5 to reduce the total releases derived from anthropogenic sources of each of the chemicals listed in Annex C, with the goal of their continuing minimization and, where feasible, ultimate elimination. These measures include the promotion of the use of best available techniques and best environmental practices.

To facilitate implementation of Article 5, Parties recognized the need for a harmonized framework for elaboration of comparable release inventories of Annex C chemicals, and for detailed state-of-the-art guidelines on best available techniques and guidance on best environmental practices. The Conference of the Parties has adopted three sets of Guidelines on Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices.

In addition, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties reminded Parties to take into consideration the guidelines and guidance adopted by the Conference of the Parties when applying best available techniques and best environmental practices and to assist decision-making in the implementation of action plans and other actions related to the obligations under various articles of the Convention.

7. Other provisions

Other provisions of the Convention relate to:

- the development of national implementation plans (Article 7)
- information exchange (Article 9)
- public information, awareness and education (Article 10)
- research, development and monitoring (Article 11)
- technical assistance (Article 12)
- financial resources and mechanisms (Article 13)
- reporting (Article 15)
- effectiveness evaluation (Article 16) and
- non-compliance (Article 17)