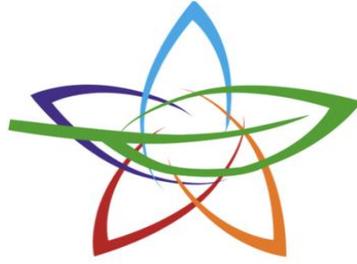




BASEL CONVENTION



National Follow-up Seminar Report on Industrial Chemicals under the Rotterdam Convention St. Vincent and the Grenadines



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UNEP

**National Follow-Up Seminar for the Sound Management of
Industrial Chemicals under the Rotterdam Convention**

Thursday 3rd September, 2015

Conference Room, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment,
Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.



3RD SEPTEMBER, 2015

**CONFERENCE ROOM, MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT,
KINGSTOWN, ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

BACKGROUND

The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (SRC) has funded, in collaboration with the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean Region (BCRC-Caribbean), a programme on the 'Sound Management of Industrial Chemicals under the Rotterdam Convention for the Caribbean Region'. The programme is expected to achieve the following objectives:

1. To facilitate capacity-development of developing country Parties to assess and manage risks, prepare and communicate import responses, and take decisions on final regulatory actions for hazardous industrial chemicals listed under the Rotterdam Convention in accordance with the PIC procedure;
2. To provide an opportunity for the promotion and coordination of integrated implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions;
3. To generate on-the-ground results and experiences that will also be fed as case studies into the electronic toolbox of the Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) that assists countries at differing levels of economic, technical and institutional development to manage industrial chemicals.

In order to achieve the objectives, the Programme involved three (3) core activities:

- holding an 'Introductory Workshop on Industrial Chemicals under the Rotterdam Convention for the Caribbean Sub-Region' for key stakeholders involved in industrial chemicals management at the national level for the Caribbean Parties and Signatories to the Rotterdam Convention;
- facilitation of a National Chemical Profile update in three (3) pilot countries in the Caribbean region: Belize, St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) and Trinidad and Tobago); and
- facilitation of a National Follow-up Seminar in the three (3) pilot countries to set up a national committee for chemicals management and refine the national frameworks for the management of industrial chemicals.

The entire Programme is expected to result in enhanced awareness of the importance of the Rotterdam Convention among the decision-makers at the national level involved in the management of industrial chemicals. It is also expected to improve the processes and tools used in the development and strengthening of national infrastructure for industrial chemicals management and its outputs.

In line with meeting the requirements of the Programme, the BCRC-Caribbean hosted a one-day national follow-up seminar at the Conference Room, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment (MOHWE), Kingstown, SVG, on the 3rd September 2015. The seminar focused on organizing a National Committee to address the Rotterdam Convention obligations on industrial chemicals and refine the

national framework for the management of industrial chemicals developed at the introductory sub-regional workshop for SVG. The National Follow-up Seminar also provided an opportunity to collect any outstanding data to finalize the National Chemical Profile update for SVG as well as to present the findings of the report. The seminar also provided the opportunity for the stakeholders to discuss the way forward for chemicals management in SVG.

SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS

Opening remarks were then made by Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) who acknowledged each participant and thanked them for their attendance. He expressed his gratitude to be present for the day's proceeding which represented a culmination of the work conducted to produce the updated National Chemical Profile for SVG. A brief overview of the project was also provided with mention being made to the other participating project countries (Belize and Trinidad and Tobago). Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) briefly informed the participants on another project which the BCRC-Caribbean and the Government of SVG would be collaborating on in the near future. He stated that this project would be based on persistent organic pollutants and emphasized its implications on future projects.

The participants then introduced themselves. They included representatives from the following ministries, agencies, private sector, and other organisations and associations:

- BCRC-Caribbean;
- Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment (MOHWE);
- Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry, Fisheries and Industry;
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning;
- Customs and Excise Department;
- Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA);
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines Port Authority; and
- St. Vincent Electricity Services (VINLEC).

Three (3) technical presentations were completed and they were based on the following:

- the programme overview;
- a summary of the national chemical profile update highlighting new findings as well as deficiencies and the recommendations to achieve the sound management of chemicals; and
- the development of a national chemical framework for SVG.

The final agenda and the official list of participants for the National Follow-up Seminar can be found in Annexes I and II respectively. The presentations are attached as separate documents to this report.

PRESENTATION 1: PROJECT OVERVIEW

“Sound Management of Industrial Chemicals: Programme Overview” by Dr. Ahmad Khan (Director, BCRC-Caribbean)

This presentation provided a brief overview of the Basel Convention, its operations and institutional framework. Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) spoke on the national implementation and compliance with the Convention as well as the linkages with other Conventions (Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata) with regards to chemicals and chemical wastes. The functions of the BCRC-Caribbean and other regional centres with similar portfolios were discussed in terms of training, technology transfer, information dissemination, awareness raising and consultancy to other countries within the region.

The presentation continued with an overview of the Rotterdam Convention, its purpose and objectives. The scope of the programme “Sound Management of Industrial Chemicals under the Rotterdam Convention for the Caribbean sub-region” was explained together with the programme objectives, activities and outcomes. The guidelines used for the project was also explained.

Questions and Comments

- Dr. Khan (BCRC Caribbean) sought verification on whether Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) is still a member of the Bureau of Standards which serves the Conference of the Parties. Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated that he is unsure whether he is still a member and clarified that he is the physical focal point to the Convention. Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) also questioned the agency which sits on the post as the Component Authority. The Ministry of Health was identified as the responsible agency.
- Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) agreed with Dr. Khan’s statement about the need to move the chemical process forward. He continued that the Ministry of Health should not be the only entity embarking on this chemical process and encouraged other stakeholders to get on board and partner with them to move the process forward.

PRESENTATION 2: NATIONAL CHEMICAL PROFILE UPDATE

“National Chemical Profile Update for SVG” by Dr. Danelle Dhaniram (Research Analyst, BCRC-Caribbean)

This presentation began with an overview of the importance, purpose and benefits of having a national chemical profile document for a country. The methodology used to update the national chemical profile for SVG was discussed and a summary of the stakeholders’ contributions as well as the format of the updated national chemical profile document were outlined. The presentation then discussed the findings from the national chemical profile update for SVG with regards to the sound management of industrial chemicals throughout their life cycles, in term of the legislative, institutional and infrastructural capacities, data viability, emergency preparedness, international linkages, awareness and understanding, as well as availability of human resources in country. The presentation concluded with a summary of the chemicals management situation in SVG.

Questions/Comments

- Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated that farmers who attended the pesticides and safety training workshop hosted by the Fair Trade Organisation will be certified.
- Mr. Caine (SVG Port Authority) sought to correct a piece of information presented which pertained to the actual roles of the Customs and Excise Department and the Port Authority. It was clarified that the Customs and Excise Division only regulate the entry i.e. whether a chemical should be accepted into the country or not. The Port Authority is responsible for everything else.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) asked whether a specific piece of legislation exists which determines whether a chemical would be refused or entry or not. Mr. Caine (SVG Port Authority) stated that the Customs Act and the Port Authority Act are used to determine this. It was reiterated that the Port Authority is the first checking point for chemicals which arrive on the country's port.
- Mr. Anthony Patterson (VINLEC) stated that the company, Vingren Gas Co., produces acetylene in small quantities. Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) inquired whether they produced acetylene only to which Mr. Patterson (VINLEC) responded that he is almost certain that only acetylene is produced.
- Mr. Steve Millington (Pharmaceutical Services, MOHWE) clarified that St. Vincent and the Grenadines has 6 towns and 5 parishes. He also stated that there is an Occupational Health and Safety Policy in place and the responsibilities lie with the Department of Labour. Mr. Anthony Patterson (VINLEC) informed Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) that St. Vincent and the Grenadines has an Occupational Health and Safety month each year, which brings together national stakeholders.
- Mr. Caine (SVG Port Authority) promised to contact Ms. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) the following day to provide some information.
- Mr. Anthony Patterson (VINLEC) sought clarification on the proposed centralised laboratory and whether it would run through the Bureau of Standards. Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) stated that she hopes that the Bureau of Standards would take the main lead but is currently unsure if they would have the capacity to do so. She continued that Mr. Leger of the Bureau of Standards is interested in becoming involved in such activities and stated that he has started doing basic chemical testing for water and waste water as well as for faecal coliform. She explained however, that he is hoping to receive an intervention from the Government or external funding body in order to move forward.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) explained the importance of establishing a National Chemical Management Committee or a National Waste and Chemical Management Committee to contribute towards managing chemicals. He stated that since a similar committee is already established, the mechanisms by which it is strengthened and improved will be determined the waste chemicals committee to assist in chemical management.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) stated that the Bahamas has a Chemicals Management Committee which is functional. The Bahamas was used as an example of a country which has established a chemical committee that is efficient. He mentioned that a Chemicals Management Committee

may meet quarterly or annually and may have additional, extraordinary meetings in instances where an issue needs to be resolved. He added that the frequency of the meetings will be left to the discretion of the members.

- Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated that there is a draft Environmental Health and Management Act which contains regulations for effluent and waste discharge as well as air quality. He stated however that he is unaware of when it will be enacted. He continued by saying that there is an intention to create a committee in which its members can be summoned to transform the shipment of hazardous waste and manage chemicals. He stated that there are already some systems in place to track poisons and as such they are hoping to build its capacity to include all chemicals. He indicated that whenever there is a request, the services of the Maritime, Ministry of Health, Ministry of National Security, Police Services and the Customs and Excise Department would be sought to review the request and grant permission. He added that the eventual aim is to have an entity within the Government service to manage chemicals.
- Mr. Steve Millington (Pharmaceutical Services, MOHWE) stated that within recent years, discussions with the Pharmacy Council were conducted. He stated that the Council has some systems in place for the management of poisons and as such it is hoped that its capacity can be built upon in moving forward. This includes widening the scope to include all chemicals.
- Mr. Steve Millington (Pharmaceutical Services, MOHWE) mentioned that under the Pharmacy Act, the Pharmacy Council is responsible for certain levels of chemicals. He stated that there are some legislation which governs these chemicals and confirmed that recent review was conducted on poisons and chemicals which fall under the Act. He suggested therefore that the Pharmacy Council be contacted in order to obtain more information on the chemicals and poisons which fall under this Act.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) reiterated that one role of the BCRC-Caribbean is to assist countries (St. Vincent and the Grenadines) in its transition to discourage transboundary movement of chemicals and build their capacity to be able to handle chemical waste internally. Reference was made to the upcoming Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project which will allow countries to obtain technology to build capacity with respect to chemical management. He reminded the participants that OECS countries especially, will benefit from the investment which was made to modernize the organisation of the solid waste management capacity for the member states. As such it is hoped that they can build upon what has already been established. He stated that Caribbean countries do have limitations which prevent them from doing some things alone or at all, and provided the example of e-waste. Dr. Khan indicated that countries within the Caribbean may only be able to invest and establish a facility to dismantle these e-waste products to be either recycled or exported. He stated that wastes sent to the landfill are disposed of at a cost absorbed by the Solid Waste Management Authority, but if recycled, this initiative can generate money. As a result, he highlighted the impetus to recognise waste such as glass, paper and combustible waste, as a resource from which we could generate revenue.
- Mr. Raymond Victory (CWSA) asked how the upcoming GEF project will be able to assist countries which are not a part of this pilot projects. Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) responded that this project when completed, will serve as a template to other Caribbean countries which may

need a significant amount of assistance. He stated that funds for this project are obtained from the European Union.

- Dr. Khan informed the participants on the project which the BCRC-Caribbean collaborated with the CARICOM Secretariat to train Customs Officials in Grenada and Guyana. He added that the BRS Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Customs Organisation and the World Trade Organisation to integrate the organisations. One of the main initiatives for this was Green Customs Initiatives.
- Mr. Steve Millington (Pharmaceutical Services, MOHWE) stated that some pesticides and other chemicals fall under the Pharmacy Act and as such they are in the process of evaluating stocks as well as regularising and registering them. This gives the Pharmacy Council the authority to control these chemicals. He stated that some chemicals, as a result, do cross boundaries between the Pharmacy Act and the Pesticide Control Act. As a result there were some discussions between the two agencies in order to resolve this issue.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) stated that due to this cross-cutting of the classification of some of these chemicals, there is a concern of overlapping of the responsibilities. Mr. Steve Millington (Pharmaceutical Services, MOHWE) responded that efforts are being made to have the procedure more standardised. He continued that the Ministry of Agriculture is attempting to build on the platform established by the Pharmacy Act which already has the legal framework. As a result of a lack of a legal framework under the Ministry of Agriculture, some aspects of the registration process will be shared by the Pharmacy Council.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) questioned the number of medical universities on the island and whether there exist any control centres for chemicals, as is done in Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated that under the SAICM project, the issue did arise and there was commitment to provide assistance in terms of chemical response and establishing a control centre.
- Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated that as a result of SAICM, a chemical policy was drafted and a proposed change of the legislation from the Pesticides Control Act. However, this has not yet been approved by Cabinet.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) explained the term co-financing, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines' commitment to finance in kind. He further stated some of the ways in which the country's capacity will be built upon.

PRESENTATION 3: DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS

“National Framework development for the management of industrial chemicals” by Dr. Danelle Dhaniram (Research Analyst, BCRC-Caribbean)

This presentation began with a recap on the Rotterdam Convention and explained how the Convention works in terms of managing chemicals. The procedure for the implementation of a National Chemical Committee was highlighted, inclusive of the need for the establishment of an effective project planning and management structure. She stated that the proposed structure to manage chemicals in SVG took into consideration the deficiencies of the current system and made recommendations to be implemented for its refinement. This presentation also gave an overview on the way forward to manage

chemicals in SVG. Emphasis was placed on legislative reform, the strengthening of the National Coordination Committee for chemicals management and, information transfer and educational awareness.

Questions/Comments

- Mr. Caine (SVG Port Authority) reiterated the role of the Port Authority as the first form of contact on the port.
- Mr. Caine (SVG Port Authority) suggested that the Ministry of National Security be included as a member in the proposed National Committee. Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) asked about the Ministry's role if included. He replied that the Ministry of National Security is in charge of the port, the police and the paramedical units. He continued that depending on what is being imported the Ministry can make the necessary arrangements with the police as well as other relevant personnel in the event of a disaster. He stated that more than one agency shares the responsibilities because the Customs and Excise Division does not have sufficient man power.
- Dr. Khan asked whether the Customs and Excise Division fall under the Asycuda system. Mr. Caine (SVG Port Authority) responded that it does. Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) continued that this system will be expanded to create the database for chemicals in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
- Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) asked for further discussion on the proposed National Committee for chemical management and to suggest what they think would work best for the country. She assured the participants that she would include the Pharmaceutical Council as a member of the committee as a result of their involvement in dealing with agricultural chemicals. Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) asked whether this Council will be a part of the core committee. Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) mentioned some of the members which would form part of the core committee. She identified the lead agency as the MOHWE, who would be working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) assured the participants that as the lead agency, the MOHWE will ensure that the right members will form the core committee.
- Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated the need to include persons who were previously involved in chemical management initiatives as members of the committee. He also advised that each member be specifically identified in order to make the process easier and to use the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Disaster Management Plan as a guide. He also cautioned against having a committee which is too large. Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) stated that the intention is to have a core committee and use the other participants as a sub-committee as needed. She reiterated that the stakeholders mentioned are suggestions and can be modified as they see fit.
- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) assured the participants that the National Chemical Profile can be expanded as needed when they receive the final version. He also reiterated the need for the core to meet periodically to discuss issues related to chemical management and suggested having sub-committees to handle specific issues such as industrial chemicals, e-waste.

- Dr. Khan (BCRC-Caribbean) encouraged participants to share any suggestions or inputs they may have on the report. Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stated that the proposed committee may look very similar to NEMO's and as such that component agencies could realistically be used.
- Dr. Dhaniram (BCRC-Caribbean) promised to revise the structure of the committee based on the feedback provided.
- Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) stressed the need to increase public awareness among citizens with respect to the importance of chemical management because citizens are continuously exposed to chemicals, even as the Government waits to have systems synchronised.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Wilson (MOHWE) gave a very brief overview of the seminar making mention of the importance of managing chemicals in SVG. He then thanked the participants for attending the National Follow-up Seminar and for their contributing towards the project.

NEXT STEP FORWARD

In accordance with the small scale funding agreement, upon completion of the national follow-up seminar, the next steps forward include:

- the designation of responsibilities to personnel within each country in order to continue the activities initiated by the project and to develop ideas for future tools and mechanisms for the improvement of industrial chemicals management infrastructure and activities;
- the development of strategies to raise awareness on risks and issues associated with industrial chemicals;
- the design and implementation of adequate legal and administrative frameworks and institutions for the improvement of industrial chemicals management within each country so as to satisfy the obligations of the Rotterdam Convention and other MEAs;
- the networking among peers in the region to facilitate the sustainability of discussion post workshop; and
- the submission of progress, financial and final reports on the workshop and the follow-up seminar based on the activities of the Programme for each of the pilot countries as indicated in clause no. 7 of the Agreement.

ANNEX I

NATIONAL FOLLOW-UP SEMINAR

FINAL AGENDA



National Follow-Up Seminar on Industrial Chemicals under the Rotterdam Convention for the Caribbean Sub-Region

3rd September 2015

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

FINAL AGENDA		
8:30 – 9:00	Registration of Participants	
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome and Call to Order	Mr. Carlos Wilson Sr. Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Division, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, SVG
9:10 – 9:20	Opening Remarks	Mrs. Janeel Miller-Findlay Director Environmental Management Department, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, SVG
9:20-9:30	Opening Remarks	Dr. Ahmad Khan, Director, BCRC-Caribbean
9:30 – 9:40	Introduction of Participants	Participants
9:40 – 10:00	Sound Management of Industrial Chemicals Programme Overview	Dr. Ahmad Khan, Director, BCRC-Caribbean
10:00 – 10:45	National Chemical Profile Update SVG - Findings	Dr. Danelle Dhaniram, Research Analyst, BCRC-Caribbean
10:45 – 11:00	National Framework Development for the Management of Industrial Chemicals	
11:00 – 12:00	Open Forum Discussion	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	

ANNEX II

NATIONAL FOLLOW-UP SEMINAR

OFFICIAL PARTICIPANT LIST



**National Follow-up Seminar on Industrial Chemicals under the
Rotterdam Convention**

Thursday 3rd September 2015

**Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment Conference Room,
Kingstown,
St. Vincent and the Grenadines.**

OFFICIAL PARTICIPANT LIST

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