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**Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an
International Legally Binding Instrument for
the Application of the Prior Informed Consent
Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and
Pesticides in International Trade**

Eleventh session

Geneva, 18 September 2004

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

**Presentation of the study on technical
assistance needs**

Study on technical assistance needs

Note by the secretariat

1. At its tenth session, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee requested the secretariat to conduct a study on the capacity-building and technical assistance needs of countries in relation to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, on the basis of a questionnaire sent to all countries, regional economic integration organizations and participating observers. The Committee also requested the secretariat to provide the results of that study to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at its eleventh session.
2. The questionnaire was drafted, translated into all the official languages of the United Nations, and circulated to all countries, regional economic integration organizations and participating observers on 10 April 2004 for their response. Responses were received from 71 countries, two intergovernmental organizations and two non-governmental organizations. The respondents are listed in annex I to the present note under the seven Rotterdam Convention interim regions, with a separate listing for the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Information contained in the individual questionnaires was analysed, edited and compiled into tabular form for each group in annex I, and the information in the tables was used to prepare a summary of the responses for each region (except for North America where there was only one response). Given the small number of responses from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, a summary was not prepared for that group. The six regional reports and all of the tabular summaries have been posted on the Convention web site for information purposes.
3. A comprehensive summary of the information contained in the 71 country responses entitled Study on technical needs (UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.11/INF/1/Add.1) will be available, in English only, at the eleventh session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. An executive summary of that document is attached to the present note as annex I.

* UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.11/1.

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Annex I

Executive summary of information provided by countries in response to a questionnaire on capacity-building and technical assistance needs in relation to the Rotterdam Convention

1. The present document provides an executive summary of the information contained in the study on technical assistance needs (UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.11/INF/1/Add.1), which is a comprehensive summary of the responses submitted by 71 countries (listed below) to a questionnaire distributed by the secretariat on 10 April 2004. Given the small number of responses from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, a summary was not prepared for them. The present document provides a general overview of the views expressed by the country respondents and a summary of the main issues raised by them. Throughout this report, the term "Convention" refers to the Rotterdam Convention.

List of countries (organized by Rotterdam Convention interim regions) and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that submitted responses to the questionnaire			
Africa (19)	Algeria Benin Botswana Burundi Cape Verde Central African Republic Côte d'Ivoire	Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Kenya Lesotho Madagascar	Malawi United Republic of Tanzania Togo Uganda Zimbabwe
Asia (12)	Bangladesh China Indonesia Japan	Malaysia Mongolia Philippines Republic of Korea	Singapore Sri Lanka Thailand Viet Nam
Europe (18)	Armenia Bulgaria Cyprus Czech Republic Germany Greece	Hungary Ireland Italy Latvia Lithuania Netherlands	Norway Poland Romania Russian Federation Slovenia Spain
Latin America and Caribbean (9)	Bolivia Brazil Chile	Cuba Dominican Republic Ecuador	Grenada Jamaica Peru
Near East (seven)	Egypt Islamic Republic of Iran Jordan	Kyrgyzstan Lebanon Syrian Arab Republic	United Arab Emirates
North America (one)	Canada		
Southwest Pacific (five)	Australia Cook Islands	New Zealand Papua New Guinea	Solomon Islands
Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (four)	Asian Development Bank Environment Watch (Botswana)	European Commission Brazilian Forum of Non-governmental Organizations and Social Movements for Environment and Development (FBOMS)	

2. The questionnaire solicited input on six areas related to implementation of the Convention, as follows:

- (a) National plans and strategies;
- (b) Communication and information management;
- (c) Risk assessment and risk evaluation;

- (d) Bilateral technical assistance;
- (e) Regional cooperation;
- (f) Training.

3. It also invited input under the final section entitled “Other relevant information” for additional information on technical assistance needs or capacity-building activities that would be useful for implementation of the Convention and for other comments regarding technical assistance or capacity-building. Information in the responses was of two types: matters of fact or opinion, in response to yes or no questions, and narrative information in response to questions relating to barriers to be overcome by, or requirements for, countries to implement the Convention, and requests for assistance. Chapter I of the present report includes information on the responses relating to matters of fact or opinion. The number of countries referred to is out of 71 respondents unless otherwise indicated and the survey results are presented under headings corresponding to the six areas related to implementation of the Convention. Chapter II of the report addresses the large number of narrative responses that were received.

I. Information on national plans, programmes and activities

A. National plans and strategies

4. With regard to the development and implementation of national plans and strategies, the survey revealed that:

(a) Of 42 countries that had already developed a national chemicals profile, 37 found them to be useful in developing and maintaining chemicals management structures within the country, 36 had used them to set priorities in addressing chemicals management needs, and 23 had already updated their profiles;

(b) Of 24 countries that had not developed a national chemicals profile, 19 intended to do so;

(c) In all, 49 countries had an existing mechanism to promote national cooperation between ministries, departments or agencies in taking decisions on chemicals management;

(d) A total of 63 countries were developing, or intended to develop, a national implementation plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and 58 of those planned to consider elements of the Rotterdam Convention that would assist in implementing the Stockholm Convention;

(e) Eighteen countries were participating in the Chemical Information Exchange Network programme (13 of which were in Africa where the programme began) and they offered the following comments on the utility of the network in developing the sound management of chemicals:

- (i) Key institutions involved in chemicals management had been provided with computers, networking had improved among stakeholders, and staff had received training in internet access to relevant information;
- (ii) There had been some improvements in pesticide registration, the sound management of existing chemicals and in sending and receiving chemical information;
- (iii) Several countries reported little or no results as some were still in the start-up phase, others had acquired informatics equipment but not all had internet access, and in a few cases the programme had been interrupted due to lack of finances or failure to follow-up on implementation; and
- (iv) The network was starting to be used for defining the objectives and priorities in the area of Stockholm Convention national implementation plan elaboration.

5. Of 17 countries that did not have an existing mechanism to promote national cooperation between ministries, departments or agencies, 16 agreed that such a mechanism would be likely to facilitate work on chemicals management and they identified several main barriers to establishing cooperation and the related assistance required to establish cooperation. That information is discussed in

chapter II of the present report, together with additional input on those topics gathered in response to questions in other parts of the questionnaire.

B. Communication and information management:

6. Concerning communication and information management for hazardous chemicals and pesticides, the survey revealed that:

(a) Forty-nine countries had mechanisms in place to organize information that was received and 24 of those had difficulties in organizing or finding such information;

(b) Forty-three of the 49 countries identified methods that were used to identify and gather such information, including:

- (i) Structured literature searches;
- (ii) Electronic and print media;
- (iii) internet searches, national and international databases;
- (iv) National programmes (such as information on imported and exported chemicals; registration of pesticides);
- (v) Notification or registration of pesticides and chemicals;
- (vi) Issuing permits, permissions, audits; cooperation with inspectors from various ministries and customs authorities;
- (vii) Poisoning incident reports;
- (viii) Contact with colleagues including in governments, academia, and industry at the national and international levels;
- (ix) Contact with other Convention designated national authorities and with intergovernmental organizations and convention secretariats, including the Rotterdam Convention secretariat;

(c) Forty-four countries normally disseminated information on hazardous chemicals and pesticides to all agencies or organizations involved in chemicals management activities;

(d) Forty-seven countries sought the views of stakeholders on information on hazardous chemicals and pesticides;

(e) Thirty-seven countries had mechanisms to communicate to potential exporters and other stakeholders the import decisions of other countries concerning hazardous chemicals and pesticides; and

(f) Thirty-six countries had mechanisms to ensure that exporters were aware of their responsibilities under the Convention.

7. Of the 49 countries that have mechanisms in place to organize information, 35 requested assistance to manage such information and 58 countries had requirements at national level to improve communication and information management. That information is discussed in chapter II of the present report together with additional input on the topic gathered in response to questions in other parts of the questionnaire.

C. Risk assessment and risk evaluation

8. With regard to national capabilities to assess information related to making import decisions under the Convention and to regulate pesticides and industrial chemicals, survey responses indicated that;

(a) For import decisions under the Convention:

- (i) Thirty-seven countries had sufficient expertise, ability and resources to undertake the assessment of information such as that provided in decision guidance documents in order to make import decisions as required under the Convention; and

- (ii) Fifty-one countries specified requirements for additional material, training or expertise to make decisions on the future import of chemicals notified under the Convention;
- (b) For pesticides:
 - (i) Sixty-four countries regulate the manufacture, import, export, sale, use and disposal of pesticides;
 - (ii) Sixty-two countries ban and severely restrict pesticides and 55 of those based such actions on a form of risk evaluation within the country and an assessment of the exposure likely to occur during use in each country followed by a conclusion as to whether the risk is acceptable or not;
 - (iii) All three of the countries that do not regulate pesticides considered it important to do so; and
 - (iv) The three countries that do not regulate pesticides, and six countries that do so, identified needs in order to be able to regulate pesticides and their requirements for capacity-building, financial and technical assistance to develop a suitable regulatory structure;
- (c) For industrial chemicals:
 - (i) Fifty countries regulate the manufacture, import, export, sale, use and disposal of industrial chemicals;
 - (ii) Forty-nine countries ban and severely restrict industrial chemicals and 43 of those base such actions on a form of risk evaluation within the country and an assessment of the exposure likely to occur during use in each country, followed by a conclusion as to whether the risk is acceptable or not;
 - (iii) Of 14 countries that do not regulate industrial chemicals, 12 considered it important to do so; and
 - (iv) Thirteen countries that do not regulate industrial chemicals, and seven countries that do so, identified needs in order to be able to regulate them and specified their requirements for assistance to develop a suitable regulatory structure.

9. In addition to the requests for assistance in making decisions on the future import of chemicals notified under the Convention and in developing regulatory structures for pesticides and industrial chemicals, 44 countries made specific requests for secretariat assistance related to the assessment of industrial chemicals or pesticides. Those requests for assistance are discussed in chapter II of this report, together with additional input on the topic gathered in response to questions in other parts of the questionnaire.

10. When asked whether they accessed hazard or risk evaluations produced by other countries, 53 countries replied that they did, and:

- (a) Fifty-one used them in making decisions on chemicals;
- (b) Forty-seven accessed evaluations through:
 - (i) Internet web sites and databases;
 - (ii) Research;
 - (iii) Evaluation of international literature and scientific data and reviews;
 - (iv) National institutions and experts;
 - (v) Information submitted on chemicals and pesticides in national pre-manufacturing and pre-importation notification processes;
 - (vi) Correspondence with users, industries or service providers dealing with specific chemicals;
 - (vii) Through embassies abroad;

- (viii) Cooperation and participation in different regional and international programmes;
 - (ix) International training courses and workshops;
 - (x) Information distributed under the PIC procedure by the Convention secretariat and obtained from the Convention web site;
 - (xi) From international convention secretariats;
 - (xii) From other countries or international organizations and programmes; and
 - (xiii) Pursuant to bilateral or multilateral agreements on technical cooperation.
- (c) Forty-six countries used this information:
- (i) To analyse situations in relation to national conditions;
 - (ii) To inform users of the hazards presented by chemicals or pesticides;
 - (iii) To support policy on chemicals and pesticides management; or
 - (iv) To provide information to decision makers concerning actions to register, ban, prevent or restrict the use of hazardous chemicals or pesticides.
- (d) Forty-seven countries commented on the usefulness of such assessments, with one indicating 'not useful', nine 'useful', 24 'very useful', one 'extremely useful', while 12 noted the general applications for such information.

11. With regard to hazard or risk evaluations produced by international organizations or programmes, 50 countries replied that they had accessed them and:

- (a) Forty-five had used them:
- (i) To make decisions on chemicals; analyse situations in relation to national conditions;
 - (ii) To make risk evaluations or identify the risks of chemicals; inform users of the hazards presented by chemicals or pesticides;
 - (iii) To orient detailed studies performed within national research institutions;
 - (iv) To support policy on chemicals and pesticides management;
 - (v) To re-evaluate available data;
 - (vi) To propose amendments to legislation and regulations;
 - (vii) To determine the latest status of pesticides in the world;
 - (viii) To identify contacts in other organizations; or
 - (ix) To provide information to decision makers concerning actions to register, ban, prevent or restrict the use of hazardous chemicals or pesticides.
- (b) Forty-four commented on the utility of such assessments, with one indicating 'not useful', 11 'useful', 25 'very useful', and seven identifying the general applications for such information.

D. Bilateral technical assistance

12. Countries provided the following information in response to questions concerning bilateral technical assistance:

- (a) Sixty were aware of the provisions of article 16 of the Convention for bilateral technical assistance;
- (b) Twenty-nine participated in bilateral technical assistance either as a provider or recipient of assistance;
- (c) Fifteen assisted another country with chemicals management or with implementing the Convention and:

- (i) All 15 said that the other country made the initial approach;
 - (ii) Thirteen were able to assist in developing solutions for the problems identified;
 - (iii) Fourteen were willing to assist in bilateral assistance programmes in the future; and
 - (iv) Fourteen provided information on individual experiences in providing bilateral technical assistance, which indicated that some projects are continuing, some successes were achieved, and in some cases the intended results were not achieved or took longer than anticipated.
- (d) Twenty-two received bilateral assistance in implementing the Convention or in general chemicals management directly from another country or from an organization and:
- (i) Nineteen replied that it was easy to obtain;
 - (ii) Twenty had solicited the assistance;
 - (iii) Eighteen said that it met the needs as initially defined;
 - (iv) Thirteen said that it was directly relevant to the Convention;
 - (v) Twenty replied that it was relevant to general chemicals management; and
 - (vi) Twenty would consider using bilateral assistance in the future.
- (e) Forty countries that had not participated in such assistance and four others provided the following comments including concerning possible main reasons for their non-participation:
- (i) Twenty-one did need assistance;
 - (ii) Fourteen were not aware of assistance needs of other countries;
 - (iii) Twenty were not aware of providers;
 - (iv) Eleven were unable or reluctant to contact providers; and
 - (v) Thirty-nine would consider providing or receiving bilateral technical assistance in the future.

13. Forty-five countries made specific requests to the secretariat relating to assistance in establishing a system to receive support in chemicals management from, or to provide support to, another country. Those requests for assistance are discussed in chapter II of the present report, together with additional input on the topic gathered in response to questions in other parts of the questionnaire.

E. Regional cooperation

14. Based on input received concerning regional cooperative activities that assist in implementing national chemicals management, the survey revealed that:

- (a) Forty countries participate in regional cooperative programmes in all seven regions, and 34 replied that those were helpful in implementing the Convention;
- (b) Twenty-four countries participate in regional cooperative networks in six regions, and 21 replied that they were helpful in implementing the Convention; and
- (c) Twenty-six countries participate in other networks in seven regions, and 22 replied that they were helpful in implementing the Convention.

15. Twenty-six countries participate in shared customs controls with neighbouring countries and 22 of those indicated that it helps in reducing the import of illegal chemicals, screening the entry of new chemicals and regulating the movement of hazardous chemicals. Twenty-eight of the 37 countries that do not participate in shared customs controls with neighbouring countries replied that such controls would assist in the national management of chemicals relating to implementation of the Convention.

16. Thirty-five countries replied that their Convention designated national authority does contact authorities in other countries in their region to discuss chemicals management issues. Sixty-three countries were interested in participating in a network of designated national authorities. Fifty-four felt that the network should be formal and 56 identified preferred characteristics for such a network. With

regard to format, most countries favoured electronic (internet-based) networks for information exchange that would be widely available. Countries also suggested:

- (a) Formal training;
- (b) Periodic workshops or meetings for exchange of experience;
- (c) Provision of information compact discs, booklets and guides;
- (d) Implementation of a voluntary scheme, pending ratification;
- (e) Beginning with an e-mail group;
- (f) Database in a regional centre; and
- (g) Information in official national languages.

17. Many countries expressed views on the geographic nature of the network, covering all combinations involving global, regional and subregional models. Several countries supported a global model that would include both developed and developing countries, and some suggested that the global network could be structured with regional and subregional nodes. Some proponents of the global model argued that developed countries should be involved in order to know which chemicals are prohibited and restricted, the reasons for their prohibition and alternatives available, to promote equality in opportunities and knowledge, and generate a culture of harmonization. Several other countries proposed a regional network between countries and suggested various models, including countries with similar levels of industrial development; common climatic conditions, agricultural practices and trade issues; and the same language of work. Other suggestions included starting the network at the subregional level and then pursuing it ultimately to a global level; housing regional and subregional nodes under existing institutions, such as Basel Convention regional centres; and providing regional and subregional meetings and workshops to improve organization of network members and then establishing electronic data sharing.

18. Numerous proposals were made concerning the nature of the information to be exchanged, including:

- (a) All information on all chemicals (pesticides and industrial chemicals);
- (b) National legislation and regulatory and administrative decisions concerning registered, banned and in-use chemicals;
- (c) Mechanisms of participation for private and public institutions and citizens;
- (d) Achievements and success stories;
- (e) National data and reports on risk assessment and risk management;
- (f) Databases on chemicals, eco-toxicological and hazard data, and risk evaluations and analysis;
- (g) Substitutes and other environmentally safe management alternatives;
- (h) Methods or alternatives for treatment and final chemical disposal, including pesticide wastes;
- (i) Incident reports on poisonings, major disasters, accidents and contaminated sites, and measures taken to limit their consequences;
- (j) Statistics on amounts used, produced, imported and exported; trading partners, patterns and history; movements of hazardous chemicals, pesticides and wastes within a region; and transboundary movement of illegal chemicals;
- (k) Accurate and correct translations into different languages when distributing information;
- (l) Needs and common problems encountered by designated national authorities in implementing the Convention; and
- (m) Decisions pertaining to implementation of the Convention and progress thereof.

19. Forty-five countries identified assistance required to establish a network. The requests for assistance are discussed in chapter II of the present report, together with additional input on the topic gathered in response to questions in other parts of the questionnaire.

20. Fifty-seven countries consult with stakeholders in taking decisions on chemicals management and 55 of those identified the types of stakeholders or the benefits of consulting with such groups. The stakeholder groups included:

- (a) A wide range of public institutions responsible for environment, public and occupational health, food and drugs, pesticides, agriculture, industry, commerce, defence, energy, interior, finance, justice, customs, natural resources, standards, labour, economic development and trade, and foreign affairs, amongst others;
- (b) National and state or provincial governments;
- (c) Inter-ministerial or national advisory or coordinating committees including on chemicals and pesticides;
- (d) Non-governmental organizations;
- (f) Environmental non-governmental organizations;
- (g) Academia, university and research and scientific institutions;
- (h) Public health groups;
- (i) Various industry associations and chambers;
- (j) Employer and labour unions;
- (k) Professional groups;
- (l) Main producers, users, importers and exporters of pesticides and chemicals;
- (m) Electricity companies;
- (n) Consumer groups, the concerned public and the community in general.

21. Many comments were submitted by countries concerning the benefits of using stakeholder consultations in making decisions on chemicals management, including the following:

- (a) Consultation provides a more wholesome approach and includes perspectives from different stakeholders;
- (b) It creates awareness among stakeholders and allows a better understanding by all parties of their responsibilities in dealing with chemicals management issues;
- (c) Stakeholder concerns are identified and taken into account in conducting risk and benefit analysis and making fair, objective, balanced and better decisions on chemicals management;
- (d) Decisions are respected by all stakeholders, with 'ownership' of the decisions made;
- (e) It minimizes the risks of error;
- (f) It allows adoption by consensus of chemicals management measures;
- (g) There is increased transparency and legitimacy of decisions taken;
- (h) It leads to collegial management of decisions;
- (i) It minimizes conflicts in developing regulations and action plans;
- (j) Dealers, importers and others cooperate in achieving compliance; and
- (k) Measures are implemented in a more timely manner.

22. Thirty-eight countries made specific requests relating to assistance that would be required and most useful to set up consultations with stakeholders. The requests for assistance are discussed in chapter II of the present report, together with additional input on this topic gathered in response to questions in other parts of the questionnaire.

F. Training

23. Forty-nine countries had participated in regional or subregional training workshops that the Convention secretariat had arranged and they offered the following comments:

- (a) Of 47 countries, 46 felt that the workshops had addressed needs for implementing the Convention;
- (b) Of 47 countries, 40 felt that the workshops had provided sufficient information to implement practical aspects of the Convention;
- (c) Of 45 countries, 39 felt that, following training, their designated national authority had sufficient information to fulfil the administrative obligations under the Convention;
- (d) Of 48 countries, 33 indicated that the workshops provided sufficient training for appropriate individuals;
- (e) Of 43 countries, 34 had taken additional actions to implement the Convention after the workshop and 32 provided the following information:
 - (i) Steps had been initiated (one);
 - (ii) Several answers had been provided concerning chemical imports under evaluation (one);
 - (iii) A national action plan for chemical safety had been organized and implemented (one);
 - (iv) Information and training sessions or workshops on the Convention had been organized (two);
 - (v) Arrangements had been made for a designated national authority (three);
 - (vi) Consultations had been undertaken on problems with another country's designated national authority (one);
 - (vii) Chemicals management systems had been improved (one);
 - (viii) An existing system to process export applications had been enhanced (one);
 - (ix) There had been an increase in the quantity of, and reduction in time taken to make, import country decisions (one);
 - (x) The secretariat had been informed of all pesticides prohibited or restricted (one);
 - (xi) Final regulatory actions had been submitted or notified (12);
 - (xii) Importing country responses had been submitted (ten);
 - (xiii) There had been progress in ratification (15) of or accession (six) to the Convention.

24. Six of the nine countries that had not taken additional actions to implement the Convention after the workshop indicated that mechanisms for training to facilitate additional actions would include:

- (a) Technical support;
- (b) Training customs officers;
- (c) Awareness-raising;
- (d) Workshop or briefing on the implementation of the Convention to the members of a national steering committee on PIC and stakeholders, with the assistance of resource persons from the Convention secretariat;
- (e) Preparation of technical guidance documents in national languages;
- (f) Continuous participation in courses presented by persons involved directly with the Convention; and

(g) Training of a regulatory affairs officer as part of a project to set up the mechanism of control.

25. Seven countries that had not participated in a regional or subregional training workshop arranged by the secretariat replied that mechanisms for training to facilitate additional actions could include:

- (a) Web site;
- (b) Training courses;
- (c) Training in practical aspects for implementing the Convention; appropriate workshops, seminars, manuals, guidelines;
- (d) Workshop or briefing on the implementation of the Convention to the members of its national steering committee on PIC and stakeholders, with the assistance of resource persons from the Convention secretariat;
- (e) Regional training workshop for Arab countries.

26. Twenty-eight countries had participated in a regional or subregional training workshop arranged by other groups and 21 of those felt that they had addressed needs for implementing the Convention. Twenty-four of the countries from five regions identified workshops they had attended but few made any remarks concerning the key elements that were well addressed in the workshops.

27. Forty countries preferred training methods other than workshops and 36 of those specified the following preferences: training manuals (22); interactive programs on CD-ROM (21); national workshops, seminars and training courses (six); distance learning programmes and internet training (three); online interactive training (two); study tours (two); CD-videos, videos (two); guidelines (one); printed material (one); displays (one); PowerPoint presentations (one); capacity-building in pesticides (one); secretariat courses (servicing notifications) in countries where the procedure is well mastered (one); hands-on training at relevant institutions (one); database on hazardous chemicals and their wastes (one); database on contingency measures (chemical emergencies) (one); training documents should be translated into Portuguese, to facilitate their accessibility to all national stakeholders (one). Three countries that did not respond to this question observed that another option might be a combination of training methods, such as workshops where the above-mentioned materials would be distributed, followed by interactive programs.

28. The following Convention materials that are currently available have been available and used as noted: Convention text (by 66 of 67 countries); Convention brochure (by 48 of 67 countries); poster (by 20 of 66 countries); decision guidance documents on all chemicals in Annex III and in the interim procedure (by 54 of 64 countries); PIC Circular (by 58 of 66 countries); and PIC web site (by 59 of 66 countries). Sixty-two countries agreed that it would be useful to have training materials to increase the profile and knowledge of the Convention and 61 of those identified their preferences as follows: training manuals (57 of 61 countries), PowerPoint presentations (53 of 61 countries), and posters (45 of 61 countries). Twenty-five countries identified other formats, including: interactive programs on CD-ROM (ten); CD-videos, videos, cassettes, films (nine); printed material, brochures, handouts (six); mass media, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles (two); workshops, seminars, training courses (one); online interactive training and information (one); simulation software (one); displays (one); posters adapted to the specific country (one); computer, digital camera (one); database on hazardous chemicals and their wastes (one); database on contingency measures for chemical emergencies (one); materials for distribution in Russian (one).

II. Barriers, requirements and assistance needs

29. This part of the report summarizes information in responses concerning the barriers to be overcome by, or requirements for, countries to implement the Convention, and related requests for assistance, including secretariat assistance. As previously noted, this information was solicited in the questionnaire in the six areas related to implementation of the Convention and in the final section (Other relevant information), which invited additional information on technical assistance needs or capacity-building activities that would be useful in implementing the Convention, or any other comments regarding technical assistance or capacity-building. A representative number of the responses received

on those questions is included in the comprehensive summary report entitled Study on technical assistance needs (UNEP/FAO/PIC/INC.11/INF/1/Add.1). In analysing the responses, it became apparent that very similar responses were submitted to questions in several areas related to implementation of the Convention and that the responses, including those made under the final section (Other relevant information), could be presented under the following seven themes:

- (a) National priorities;
- (b) Legislation;
- (c) National coordination;
- (d) Information and communication;
- (e) Risk assessment and risk evaluation;
- (f) Laboratory and technical support; and
- (g) Resources and assistance.

30. The following summaries integrate, therefore, the main points relating to each heading regardless of where the points were raised in the responses.

A. National priorities

31. A few countries raised this topic in response to questions concerning national cooperation and the regulation of industrial chemicals. Some countries noted, as a barrier to setting up mechanisms to promote national cooperation, that chemicals management issues are not considered a priority area and political support for developing and implementing controls on industrial chemicals was lacking. As a consequence, resources are not made available to address chemicals issues. Those countries requested assistance to encourage policy makers to support the need for such regulation and to provide the resources required.

B. Legislation

32. Several countries noted the need to establish or strengthen legislation and regulations and to provide adequate resources for their implementation in order to implement measures relating to national plans and strategies, communication and information management, risk assessment and risk evaluation, bilateral technical assistance and regional cooperation. This interest was especially noted in relation to the regulation of industrial chemicals, where considerably fewer countries have regulatory programmes for industrial chemicals than for pesticides, and countries from six regions raised this as a requirement to implement the Convention fully.

33. Financial, technical and secretariat assistance was requested in the development, strengthening and implementation of national laws on pesticides, industrial chemicals and related wastes, including:

- (a) Capacity-building and training for the development of relevant legislation and regulatory schemes;
- (b) Provision of model regulatory structures;
- (c) Provision of expertise in developing and drafting industrial chemicals policy; making use of expertise and experience of developed countries in the area of chemicals lifecycle management;
- (d) Developing or strengthening and implementing effective national chemicals management strategies; and
- (e) Funding consultations with stakeholders on legislation and regulations.

C. National coordination

34. The need to establish or strengthen national coordination was noted in responses to questions concerning national plans and strategies, communication and information management, risk assessment and risk evaluation, bilateral technical assistance and regional cooperation. Some countries noted as a barrier that the management of chemicals is fragmented among government agencies and different levels of government, resulting in gaps and overlapping functions. Others noted a lack of or inadequate coordination of chemicals management activities by government agencies and industrial stakeholders,

the lack of an identified role for each organization, the lack of an organized strategy, system or structure and the need to develop or update national chemical profiles.

35. In responses in all five areas related to implementation of the Convention, countries noted the need to establish or strengthen a national coordinating body comprising all stakeholders in chemicals management and requested assistance to meet this need, to define competencies of each ministry and improve cooperation between them, and to coordinate development and implementation of a national strategy for the management of hazardous chemicals and pesticides, including related activities of government agencies and stakeholders.

36. Several countries noted the need for technical, financial or secretariat assistance to:

- (a) Create or update a national chemical profile;
- (b) Provide guidance on sources of working models for dealing with hazardous chemicals;
- (c) Strengthen and support institution-building in the official bodies concerned with chemicals management;
- (d) Promote and establish the environmentally sound management of chemicals and pesticides;
- (e) Conduct stakeholder consultations on options for institutional mechanisms for chemicals management to develop a national cooperation mechanism;
- (f) Inform stakeholders of their responsibilities under and benefits of the Convention through awareness-raising workshops and creation of specialized networks for each group (such as importers, exporters, manufacturers);
- (g) Involve regional and local authorities in the development and supervision of management and contingency plans; and
- (h) Participate in national and regional cooperation activities, meetings, workshops, networks, among other things.

D. Information and communication

37. A great deal of input was received on this subject in response to questions on the areas of national plans and strategies, communication and information management, risk assessment and risk evaluation, bilateral technical assistance and regional cooperation. A main barrier identified in this area was the absence of or inadequate national systems and mechanisms for the acquisition, storage and distribution of pertinent information to relevant players. Other identified barriers related to the lack of or inadequacies in: national databases and inventories or registers of industrial chemicals, pesticides and wastes; access to internet and related facilities; access to hazard and risk information on pesticides and industrial chemicals; awareness-raising and training in the area of chemicals management; and operational aspects of designated national authorities.

38. Many countries requested technical and financial assistance to create a system or centre for information acquisition, management and dissemination and for communication and awareness-raising on hazardous chemicals and pesticides that would include links to various institutions and stakeholders at the national and international levels. Specific requests for financial and technical assistance were made to provide for:

- (a) Establishing and updating electronic systems for registers or databases on pesticides and industrial chemicals used in the country;
- (b) Access to risk and hazard information for chemicals and pesticides, including information from other countries and international organizations and programmes;
- (c) Access to all related chemicals legislation and import and export decisions;
- (d) Computers, informatics materials, training and internet access to ensure that such systems could create and reinforce existing national infrastructure to facilitate electronic access and information exchange, be easily accessed by all pertinent institutions and parties, and enable exchange of information on chemicals at the national, regional and international levels;
- (e) Awareness-raising measures for all relevant stakeholders and countries, including:

- (i) Preparation of information materials on the sound management of chemicals;
 - (ii) Informing all stakeholders of their responsibilities under, and benefits of implementing, the Convention;
 - (iii) Setting up national web sites about the Convention;
 - (iv) Organizing national information and awareness-raising seminars and workshops;
 - (v) Training in the area of chemicals management for PIC chemical users, exporters and customs agents; and
 - (vi) Creating specialized networks for relevant groups (such as importers, exporters, manufacturers).
- (f) Development of networks among all relevant parties, including:
- (i) Providing information on existing relevant networks;
 - (ii) Supervising the establishment of networks between interested parties;
 - (iii) Identifying the focal points and commitment for such networking;
 - (iv) Allocating responsibilities to each link in the network;
 - (v) Encouraging joint participation and contributions of all network participants;
 - (vi) Identifying sources of information available to the networks and mechanisms for sharing such information;
 - (vii) Harmonizing and providing support to computer systems of different countries; and
 - (viii) Providing access to the Chemicals Information Exchange Network (CIEN) programme.
- (g) Broad-based stakeholder consultations, including:
- (i) Providing examples of successful models and approaches in other countries;
 - (ii) Establishing suitable consultation procedures and guidance;
 - (iii) Developing communication materials and information-sharing mechanisms for consultations;
 - (iv) Disseminating information to stakeholders;
 - (v) Translation of materials into local languages;
 - (vi) Identification of the actors and encouraging joint participation and contributions of all stakeholders;
 - (vii) Organizing consultative meetings and workshops;
 - (viii) Providing experts to facilitate meetings and workshops;
 - (ix) Providing guidance on mechanisms for establishing and maintaining stakeholder networks;
 - (x) Developing mechanisms in negotiation and consensus-building with industry;
 - (xi) Training on the conduct of sensitization seminars for executive decision makers;
 - (xii) Training for representatives of stakeholder groups;
 - (xiii) Capacity-building for all stakeholders; and
 - (xiv) Creation of cooperative groups through national workshops and seminars.
- (h) Support to designated national authorities, including:
- (i) Adapting Convention obligations to national situations;
 - (ii) Developing formal national mechanisms;

- (iii) Improving communication and coordination between designated national authorities and relevant national authorities and sectors involved in managing notifications;
 - (iv) Establishing an information system at the customs level to allow improved use of notifications;
 - (v) Use of the globally harmonized system of customs codes and identification of hazardous chemicals and wastes;
 - (vi) Providing information from the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), IPCS INTOX programme, among others;
 - (vii) Regional and subregional workshops for human resources training on chemicals management for a network of Convention-designated national authorities; and
 - (viii) Provision of international coordination by the secretariat.
- (i) Training and capacity-building, including:
- (i) Training on best practices in countries with efficient methods of information exchange between national and international institutions;
 - (ii) Staff exchange programmes involving countries with excellent management or similar national conditions;
 - (iii) Capacity-building in information generation and communication relating to chemicals management;
 - (iv) Training for national experts, customs agents and personnel in institutions involved in the collection, treatment, storage and distribution of information (for example, statistical services in agriculture, health, industry; customs service; phytosanitary service; environmental services); and
 - (v) Building technical capacity for data management.

E. Risk assessment and risk evaluation

39. Responses on this topic were limited to questions concerning risk assessment and risk evaluation, bilateral assistance and regional cooperation. Some countries noted as a barrier the absence of national systems for evaluating risks related to the use of industrial chemicals.

40. Many countries requested financial and technical assistance from the secretariat:

- (a) To establish or strengthen national risk assessment systems for making import decisions under the Convention and for evaluating and managing the hazards and risks of industrial chemicals and pesticides;
- (b) To provide training and capacity-building to develop staff and modern infrastructure, including laboratories, for such systems;
- (c) To support national authorities in carrying out such assessments;
- (d) To provide advice on procedures and sources of methods and data to assess the risks of pesticides and industrial chemicals;
- (e) To generate common risk assessment models which may be applied under similar conditions (for example, climate, culture) to predict effects in other countries;
- (f) To provide an information exchange network including developed countries;
- (g) To provide programmes for benchmarking risk and hazard assessments with a developed country;
- (h) To establish monitoring systems or programmes that could assist with national risk assessment, be extended to the regional level and include mechanisms for exchange of information on risk assessment;

(i) To enable participation in technical meetings concerning risk assessment and risk management;

(j) To make information available in Russian on the Convention web site to guide decision-making; and

(k) To establish a mechanism for developing countries to request assistance from international organizations in conducting risk and hazard evaluations.

41. In addition to those requests, countries made general requests for financial and technical assistance:

(a) To provide detailed training on all aspects of risk assessment, targeting all stakeholders;

(b) To establish direct links with all national leads for assessment;

(c) To generate risk evaluation models and provide access to them and to relevant and important databases;

(d) To conduct research on the fate of chemicals in the environment and the risks of chemicals to human health and the environment; and

(e) To assess the health and socio-economic effects of chemicals on human health and the environment.

F. Laboratories and technical support

42. A few countries made requests for laboratories and technical support in response to questions posed in the areas of communication and information management, bilateral technical assistance and regional cooperation. Many other requests were made in response to questions related to risk assessment and risk evaluation, pertaining to import decisions under the Convention and regulatory measures for industrial chemicals and pesticides, and several countries noted the need to establish or strengthen the capacity of laboratories, to provide adequate resources for training and technical support, and to establish or strengthen an inspectorate.

43. By far the most frequent requests on this topic for financial and technical assistance from the secretariat and other sources concerned establishing or strengthening national laboratories, staff training and providing equipment for the analysis of chemical, physical, toxicological and eco-toxicological properties of chemicals and pesticides and their residues in food and environmental media. Other requests related to:

(a) Accreditation of national laboratory quality standards to meet international requirements;

(b) Establishing or strengthening an inspection force;

(c) Training law enforcement officers;

(d) Computers and software;

(e) Improvement in field infrastructure for surveillance of health effects due to pesticide exposure;

(f) Establishment of a monitoring system; and

(g) Experience exchange and training, involving countries with a functioning legislative base.

G. Resources and assistance

44. A large number of requests was received for resources, technical and financial assistance and capacity-building in all areas related to implementation of the Convention. Main barriers, needs and requirements were identified relating to national plans and strategies, communication and information management, and risk assessment and risk evaluation. The main issues identified included the lack of resources to establish or support national institutional frameworks, coordination mechanisms, programmes and action plans for effective chemicals management; the lack of adequately trained human resources; the difficulty in accessing international expertise; and the needs for technical and financial assistance, capacity-building and training in almost all aspects of planning, risk assessment and risk

management, development of legislation and regulations, monitoring and enforcement, and establishing or strengthening laboratories and infrastructure for information management and communication. Many of those needs were identified in previous summaries in chapter II of the present report. The following warrant inclusion in the discussion of resource and assistance needs that are additional to those that were covered previously.

45. Many countries feel that there is a general need to address the lack of adequately trained personnel. In this regard, support for designated national authorities was mentioned many times, as was the value of establishing and supporting a designated national authorities network. Technical and financial assistance, capacity-building and training were requested to meet the need for specialized staff in all aspects of a national programme for the sound management of chemicals. This would include training in risk assessment, in order to meet the basic requirement to assess notifications on imported chemicals to implement the Convention, and in planning, risk management, development of legislation and regulations, monitoring and enforcement, customs inspections, and establishing and strengthening laboratories and infrastructure for information management and communication. Also mentioned was the need for training of trainers in countries and regions. Several countries requested international staff exchanges or other training methods, such as manuals of best practices, to gain access to the expertise of countries that are experienced in implementing the Convention in order to assist development of national mechanisms. Some countries requested development of a model for small island states with limited human resources based on similar countries that had initiated and implemented the Convention successfully.

46. Several countries made specific requests for secretariat assistance in the areas of bilateral and multilateral cooperation including:

- (a) Consultations to provide guidance and advice at the initial stage of establishing a system to receive bilateral support;
 - (b) Developing proposals for specific country needs;
 - (c) Formulating requests for assistance from donor countries;
 - (d) Assistance in project proposal writing and project management;
 - (e) Supporting country applications and facilitating acceptance of projects by providers;
 - (f) Identifying sponsors from agencies or developed country Parties to provide assistance in implementing Convention activities;
 - (g) Elaborating, developing and implementing common projects and programmes for countries on information exchange, to improve chances of identifying and accessing funding;
 - (h) Setting up regional projects for assistance for countries with similar needs;
 - (i) Maintaining a continuously updated summary on all country-related technical assistance activities to use synergies and avoid duplication and parallel support; and
 - (j) Establish a mechanism for the coordinated implementation of the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions.
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