

Workshop
on
Effective Implementation of Chemicals and Waste Related Multilateral
Environmental Agreements in West Asia

14 July 2021

CONCEPT NOTE AND PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Background

Chemicals nowadays are used on a large scale and in various aspects of life, particularly in the industrial and agricultural sector. The increasing use of chemicals can have devastating effect on human health and the environment. The unsound management of chemicals during production, handling, use and disposal can have disastrous consequences. In addition, increasing generation of waste is a major environmental and public health challenge in West Asia as in the other parts of the world.

Since the late 1980s four major multilateral environmental agreements related to chemicals and waste have been negotiated and adopted: (1) Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, (2) Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, (3) Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and (4) Minamata Convention on Mercury. The general objective of these multilateral environmental agreements is to ensure global sustainability and address the possible harm that the unsound management of waste and chemicals poses on human health and the environment. The multilateral environmental agreements offer the opportunities as the main instruments for Member States to collaborate and cooperate on the different health and environmental challenges posed by chemicals and waste.

Most of the West Asian countries are party to the above chemicals and waste related Multilateral Environmental Agreements. However, there are many gaps within the region in the institutional, technical and legal framework to manage chemicals covered under the multilateral environmental agreements.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) West Asia Office in collaboration with the Basel Convention Regional Center for Training & Technology Transfer for the Arab States in Egypt (BCRC Egypt) conducted a situation analysis on the implementation of the chemicals and waste related multilateral environmental agreements in West Asia and derived draft strategy for further implementation of the agreements. The situation analysis and the draft strategy were developed through conducting two surveys and a consultation among the focal points of the multilateral environmental agreements.

Objectives of the Workshop

The overall objective of the workshop is to strengthen the capacity of countries in the West Asia region in the implementation of the different multilateral environmental agreements related to chemicals and waste. Specific objectives of the workshop include:

- share the outcome of the surveys, conducted by UNEP and the BCRC Egypt, on the current status of the implementation of the chemicals and waste related multilateral environmental agreements in West Asia
- derive strategy for further implementation of the chemicals and waste related multilateral environmental agreements in West Asia

Participants

The workshop is designed for policy makers from line ministries and national agencies who are involved in the sound management of chemicals and waste throughout their lifecycle.

Tentative Agenda

14 July 2021	
OPENING	
9:45-10:00	Opening of meeting room for connection and testing of audio and screen connections
OPENING	
10:00-10:30	Welcome & Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome remarks from UNEP West Asia Office• Introduction to the workshop (Iyngararasan Mylvakanam, UNEP West Asia Office)
Agenda item 1: Current implementation status of chemicals and waste related MEAs in West Asia	
10:30-11:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recent developments related to the BRS Conventions (Suman Sharma, BRS Secretariat)• Status of chemicals and waste related MEAs implementation in West Asia (Mostafa Kamel, Basel Convention Regional Center for Training and Technology Transfer for the Arab States)• Facilitated Discussion – Questions & Answers <p><i>Description: This agenda item deals with the current implementation status of the chemicals and waste related multilateral environmental agreements in the West Asia Region. An overview on the different related MEAs will be presented as well as their importance for the region. In addition, a detailed explanation will be provided on the assessment conducted on the state of affairs in the region in the chemicals and waste management sector. Furthermore, an analysis of the implementation status as well as the gaps and challenges that the countries face in their compliance with the related multilateral environmental agreements.</i></p>
Agenda item 2: Strategy for effective implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in West Asia	

11:15-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for effective implementation of chemicals and waste related MEAs in West Asia (Iyngararasan Mylvakanam, UNEP West Asia Office) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing legislative arrangements - Improving technical capacity and awareness - Strengthening institutional structure - Development of sustainable financing mechanism - Establishment of coordination mechanism at the national/regional level - Facilitated Discussion – Questions & Answers <p><i>Description: This agenda item provides the draft strategy for further implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements in West Asia followed by a facilitated discussion. The draft strategy is developed based on the analysis of the current state of affairs in the West Asia region as elaborated in the agenda item 1. An intake on the further proposals of the participants to enhance the strengthening of multilateral environmental agreement implementation in the region will be taken into consideration to be cooperated within the reports that are developed.</i></p>
12:00-12:15	Conclusions and closing of the workshop