



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

17 June 2021

PROCEEDINGS

WORKSHOP ON EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHEMICALS AND WASTE RELATED MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS IN WEST ASIA

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C O N T E N T S

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Introduction

1. The Workshop on Effective Implementation of Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes Related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in West Asia was held on 17 June 2021. The workshop was organized within the framework of the cooperation agreement signed between the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Basel Convention Regional Center for Training & Technology Transfer for the Arab States in Egypt (BCRC Egypt) that will ultimately lead in the enhancement the capacity of the countries in the West Asia region to implement and comply with the chemicals and waste related MEA's.
2. The regional expert workshop on MEAs was organized with the objective to strengthen the capacity of countries in West Asia region in the implementation of the different MEAs related to chemicals and hazardous wastes. MEAs focal points from the West Asian countries, United Nations Environment Program, West Asia Office (UNEP West Asia Office) and BRCR-Egypt participated in the workshop. The workshop agenda and list of participants are attached as **Annexure 1** and **Annexure 2**, respectively.

Opening and introduction to the workshop

3. Dr. Mustafa H. Kamel, BCRC-Egypt Director, delivered his opening remarks. In his remark, he warmly welcomed all participants to the online workshop and highlighted the aim and results of the two surveys that were circulated to the West Asia countries. He informed the participants that the workshop is organized based on the agreement between UNEP West Asia office and BCRC Egypt whereas a situation analysis was conducted on the implementation of the chemicals and waste related MEAs in West Asia and derived draft strategy for further implementation of the agreements. The situation analysis and the draft strategy were developed through conducting the two surveys and a consultation among the focal points of the multilateral environmental agreements. He thanked the participants for their contributions as well as participating in this workshop.
4. Iyngararasan Mylvakanam, UNEP West Asia Office, delivered his opening remark as well and warmly welcome all the participants to the online workshop. He requested the participants to identify the current gaps in the implementation of the chemicals and hazardous wastes related MEAs including the challenges caused by the COVID-19.

Summary of Main Discussion

5. After the opening of the workshop, the countries in West Asia summarized the current implementation status of chemicals and hazardous wastes related MEAs in their countries.
6. The countries summarized the different activities that they have implemented within the framework of their commitments related to chemicals and waste related MEAs that can be noted as follow:
 - Developing the National Implementation Plan (NIP) as part of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) as well the Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) as part of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
 - Working on Post-Projects related to POPs management, open burning of solid waste management, treatment of medical waste and other related projects
 - Limiting hazardous waste to be imported in some countries
 - Developing electronic systems to manage hazardous waste
 - Having in place national strategies for chemicals management
 - Setting in place temporary storages for chemicals and waste as well recycling facilities
 - Adding new systems in place for the classification of hazardous chemicals, updating search permits as well as setting up a team for any unforeseen environmental emergency
7. The main challenges and difficulties faced by the countries that can be noted are as follow:
 - Limited financial, logistical and technical capacities
 - Lack of accurate data on estimated generated waste as well as weakness in monitoring the waste influx within the countries
 - Political and economic instability
 - Lack of inventory on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) as part of the Stockholm convention and inventory on Mercury as part of the Minamata Convention in some countries
 - Challenges in some countries in dealing with hazardous waste such as weak infrastructure in place.
 - Challenges in some countries in dealing with e-waste
 - Challenges in classification of the hazardous waste and other generated waste
 - Challenges in implementing the different MEAs in some countries
 - Weakness in the institutional structures that deal with chemical and waste management
 - Lack of application and law enforcement control in some countries
8. The main suggestions that countries raised during the workshop can be noted are as follow:

- Develop a clear program on how to be able to commit to MEAs
 - Capacity building workshops for personals dealing with waste and chemicals management
 - Capacity building trainings on the requirements of the different conventions
 - Establishment of a regional forum for information sharing on the implementation of the chemicals and waste related MEAs.
 - Unify the emergency environmental plan between the different countries by taking the different experiences of the countries.
 - Develop a holistic approach between different institutions and staff that work in chemicals and waste management
 - Define clearly the roles of different staff in different institutions that work on chemicals and waste management
 - Add program on chemical Lifecycle and emergency plan for chemical accidents
 - Assist countries in the development of chemicals and hazardous waste related projects.
9. BCRC summarized the outcome of the discussion. The situation analysis and strategy report will further be adjusted based on the workshop that took place by incorporating the additional comments and suggestions raised by the different countries in the West Asia region.
10. Through a second intervention, UNEP emphasized on the necessity to promote technical capacities, to share best practices between countries, especially the ones related to E-waste taking into consideration the good practices from the region in treating this kind of wastes. UNEP also highlighted the need for establishment of notification and registration system for chemicals at the national level.
11. Two interventions for the civic Lebanese society took place with Dr. Doumit KAMEL (World Environmental Party) and Dr. Hanna Al KHOURY (OSAD).
12. Dr. KAMEL, environmental expert shared with the audience the current severe environmental status all over the world, pollution, global warming, marine life, plastic and hazardous wastes and other relative issues. As a result, He called for emergent actions to be taken in order to save the rest of our planet and lives.
13. Dr. Al KHOURY from OSAD, shared with the audience OSAD's experience in Lebanon in the field of agricultural development and how the civic society and NGOs can handle their problems in the absence of any active role of the public sector and the competent authorities. During many years, OSAD established around 36 artificial lakes around the Lebanese villages to provide irrigation water for lands. A project that offers hundreds of job opportunities for the residents, thousands of cultivated lands, remarkable boost in the economic and social status of the farmers and so on.

14. The meeting ended with closing remarks from BCRC- Egypt and UNEP West Asia Office. During the closing remarks BCRC-Egypt and UNEP West Asia thanked all the participants for their active participation and emphasized the need for information sharing among the West Asian Countries on a regular basis.

Annexure 1: Agenda

17 June 2021	
OPENING	
11:30-11:45	Requesting Participants testing audio and screen connections
OPENING	
12:00-12:30	Welcome & Introducing Participants Overview about the project, (UNEP) Briefing about the steps of the project (questionnaires 1+2), (BCRC-Egypt)
Agenda item 1: Current implementation status of chemicals and waste related MEAs in West Asia	
12:30-13:30	5 minutes presentation/speech for each country includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The current status of ESM and MEAs implementation related to chemicals and Hazardous waste. b. Future implementation of MEAs in your country c. Challenges and Difficulties facing the country in implementing MEAs d. How BCRC and UNEP can help in solving the current challenges.
Agenda item 2: Sharing the results of Q1 + Q2	
13:30-14:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Results of Questionnaire 1: Difficulties and Challenges b. Results of Questionnaire 2: Proposed strategies by BCRC-Egypt c. Facilitated Discussion – Questions & Answers
14:00-14:15	Conclusions and closing of the workshop

Annexure 2: List of Participants

West Asia Countries

1.	H.E.Dr Mohammed Khashashne	Secretary-General of the Ministry of Environment of Jordan Mohamed.khashashneh@moenv.gov.jo, mkhashashneh@yahoo.com
2.	Eng.Hanadi Al Rabai'eh	Jordan haalrabaieh12@gmail.com, hanadi.rabaieh@moenv.gov.jo
3.	Eng. Ansam Hajeer	Jordan ansam.hajeer@hotmail.com
4.	Eng. Yazeed Al-Hafnawi	Jordan zdalhafnawi12@gmail.com
5.	Eng. Reema Al Hindi	Jordan reema.Al-Hindi@moenv.gov.jo
6.	Yaser Abu Shanab	Palestine yaser_shanab@hotmail.com
7.	Isra Albaker	Iraq
8.	Viviane Sassine	Lebanon viviane.sassine@gmail.com , V.Sassine@moe.gov.lb
9.	Eng. Rabaa Ibrahim Al Awar	UAE rialawar@moccae.gov.ae
10.	Othaibah Al-Kaidy	UAE
11.	Doumet Kamel	World Environmental Party, Lebanon
12.	Hanna el Khoury	OSAD, Lebanon hannakhoury7@gmail.com

BCRC-Egypt

1.	Moustafa H. Kamel	BCRC-Egypt Director
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UNEP West Asia Office

2.	Iyngararasan Mylvakanam	Program Officer
3.	Carla Ayoub	Chemicals Management Officer