



Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Arab States in Egypt

Minutes of the Project Steering Committee (PSC-2)

14-15 March 2007, Cairo

- Project: Capacity Building for the Implementation of the Basel Convention
- Sub-programme: “A Better Environment for Human Health and Well-Being”.
(Funded by the Government of Finland).
- Project Title: The Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Arab States in Cairo - Capacity Building for the Implementation of the Basel Convention
- Project Number: BD/6010-06-02- IMIS No: BDL-1514-2985-2661

Participants

Official Members

Member	Representative Name
Secretariat of the Basel Convention	Mr. Nelson Sabogal
Government of Finland (Donor Country)	Mr. Jouko Eskelinen Ms Sinikka Roos Dr. Martti Eirola
Egypt (Host Country)	Mr. Adel El Shafee Ms. Marwaa Lasheen
Algeria	Mr. Karim Baba
Jordan	Dr. Mohammed ElKhashashna
Tunisia	Mr. Khames Oueslati
United Arab Emirates	Eng. Adel Mohamed Abdallah
Bahrain	Mr. Abdel Mohsin Al Mohmoud
BCRC-Egypt	Prof. Dr. Mortada El-Aref Dr. Said Dahroug

Invited Observers

Affiliation	Representative Name
United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA)	Dr. Abdulelah Al Wadaee
Day of Hospital (NGO)	Dr. Mahmoud Diab
The Egyptian Humanitarian Relief and Rehabilitation Organization (NGO)	Dr. Ayman Moharm
Deputy Director, Barcelona Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (RAC/CP)	Mr. Frederic Borja

Wednesday, March 14th. 2007.

Opening Speechs

1- Dr. Mourtada Elaref Director of the BCRC Egypt, welcomed the participants and started to highlight major issues related to the work done by BCRC Egypt in 2006. He explained how 2006 plan focused on building the technical capacities of the member countries, and how the 2007 planned activities will focus on institutional capacities of the region. Dr. Elaref explained that more emphasise will be given on building partnerships with other sub regional organisations like, the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), the UNEP/ROWA, PERSGA, RAC/CP, in addition to national and regional NGOs. He also, strengthened on the continuation of efforts exerted by the BCRC-Egypt to serve all countries of the region. He concluded his speech thanking the government of Finland for their financial support and for interest in future collaboration.

2- **Mr. Nelson Sabogal** of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention (**SBC**) made his keynote emphasising the importance of this second meeting of the Steering Committee in reviewing the progress in the implementation of the agreed activities in 2006, review the work plan of 2007, and adjusting when necessary its budget allocations. He ascertained on the importance of guiding , monitoring, coordinating and evaluating the work of the Centre by the Steering Committee members. He highlighted the need to consider and discuss the strategy for the long-term financial self-sufficiency of the Centre including the new projects and the resource mobilization by the Centre. He also, expressed his thanks for the Finland government in contributing with 1,000,000 Euros in this project, in addition to all the participating members in the committee.

3- **Mr. Jouko Eskelinen**, the representative of Finland; the Donor Country, made a short speech focusing on the interest of the Finland government in the current world Environmental initiatives and in supporting BCRC-Egypt. He threw some lights as to the general policy of the Finland International cooperation and concluded with thanking the BCRC-Egypt staff for the effort reflected in implementing the project as manifested by the good organization of the meeting and the documents that covers all issues proposed for discussion during the meeting.

Prof. El Aref requested the members to approve the observers, then he presented the proposed agenda of the meeting. Under other issues, Mr. Nelson Sabogal proposed to discuss two important issues, the NEPAD project and the Mid term review of the project. The members approved the Agenda annexed at the end of this report.

BCRC-Egypt Presentations

4- Dr. Mortada Elaref began with some general remarks as to the origin of the project, reminded the members that the project duration is 36 months Commencing from January 2006 to be completed on December 2008. He also explained the project overall strategy in following the relevant decisions, recommendations , and specific needs of the Arab countries in addition to other activities .Also, he mentioned that the main objective of the project is a Regional Centre with capability to effectively build and strengthen the capacity of the region towards the sound management of hazardous wastes and towards the efficient implementation of the Basel Convention, he mentioned the following core activities that will be the vehicle to achieve the objective:

- Training workshops and seminars
- Special projects and studies to complement the workshops and seminars
- Assistance and advisory services for the countries of the region
- Promotion and public awareness about the Basel Convention and the work of the Centre.

Dr. El Aref then presented the year 2006 progress affirming that there was about 70% of the work was achieved, and a summary of the work progress including governance activities, inventories of hazardous wastes and waste producing activities, Legal Assistance on the implementation of the Basel Convention, progress for the public awareness programme, the maintenance of the BCRC website in addition , later, he presented the financial statement for the year 2006, explaining that the total expenditures by BCRC- Egypt reached 113,927 USD while the total cash advanced was 211,407. He indicated that the savings were 97,480 USD.

5- Dr. Sherif Hanafy, BCRC-Egypt's Web-page consultant introduced a presentation about the launch of BCRC website; www.baselegypt.org, he explained that the website reflects the mission and objectives of the Centre, in addition to important information about ongoing and planned activities in both Arabic and English languages. He also mentioned that the site includes some useful and related links to the Basel Conventional Regional Centres. In addition, Dr. Hanafy introduced some interesting statistics for the year 2006 regarding the web page visitors.

6- Dr. Fatma Ashour, Prof. of Chemical Engineering, Cairo University, covered some points related to the updated guidelines concerning the used mineral oils, waste oil and used vegetable oils, she elaborated on the effects of used mineral oils on health and environment, the used oil collection systems, the various operations of waste oils and its environmental impact, and the recycling of used vegetable oil. She concluded that the guidelines emphasize the importance of the reuse of used vegetable oils as well as their economic benefits.

7- Dr. Khaled Metwally, the Hazardous waste Legislation consultant, made a presentation covering the different Arab regulations in managing the hazardous waste materials, he elaborated that the study report (among the meeting documents) includes 3 chapters, introductory then another core one and the recommendations. He then highlighted the contents of each chapter. He emphasized the fact that most environmental legislations of the member Arab countries are of framework nature when compared to the model National legislation of the Basel Convention. He also mentioned some hazardous wastes bylaws issued in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Morocco to complement the framework legislations, and that these bylaws are more or less covering most of the hazardous waste management provisions appeared in the hazardous waste national legislation model issued by the technical working group of the SBC. He emphasized that the bylaws of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are good examples to propagate to the Arab countries along with the Arabic version of the HW national legislation models so that countries who are updating or developing their legislations can use as references. Dr. Khaled also mentioned that he was not able to gather detailed information about the legislation status in some Arab countries like Kuwait and Libya

Participants advised that Dr. Metwally should complete/update his study with the assistance of BCRC-Egypt and UNEP/ROWA by facilitating accessing all the information related to the legislations, executive regulations covering the control of hazardous wastes they keep in their records. Also the outcome of his report should be published on the BCRC-Egypt web site and communicated to all the focal points in the Arab region for comments.

8- Dr. Saied Dahroug, the project facilitator, made two successive presentations. The first focused on outcomes of the workshops conducted during the year 2006, and the second presentation focused on the work plan for the year 2007.

In his first presentation, he indicated that two workshops were convened. The first workshop was connected with the promotion of the Basel Convention Protocol on the Liability and compensation, while the second workshop was on the environmental management of used oils and hazardous wastes from the oil and gas sector. The main outcome of the first workshop is that there is a lack of reinsurance companies in the Arab countries and that the liability in most of the national legislation is not clearly specified. As for the workshop on the Sound management of used oils, Dr. Dahroug emphasized the rationale for conducting the used oil management workshop in Yemen, and highlighted the main recommendations which mainly focused on the need to introduce and promote integrated environmental management systems for used oils to replace the individual/improper activities/practices that deals with used oils in many of the countries of the region and that the experience of Tunisia and Egypt should be propagated to the rest of the Arab countries.

In his second presentation, Dr. Dahroug emphasized how the activities proposed for 2007 fit with the overall objectives of the project and the needs of the Arab countries. He listed and explained the concepts of the proposed activities including the workshops, the pilot projects and the public awareness programme. In addition, he presented and explained the proposed budget. (Attached).

At the end of his presentation Dr. Dahroug raised two important issues experienced from year 2006 activities; the first is the lack or difficulty of accessing information or reliable data by most of the focal point, he attributed this to the fact that environment/hazardous wastes is a cross cutting issue among different governmental sectors and that the culture of government officials in the region is that do not release information unless approved by the head of the sector; which is very difficult and time consuming to obtain. The other issue he raised was related to the lengthy process for recruiting international experts combined with the slow response and low participation from the Arab countries in the BCRC- Egypt activities which result in delay in the implementation of activities.

He finally concluded with a quick update about the e-waste training session held just before the PSC-2 meeting for the national consultants from beneficiary countries and that there was a difficulty for the Algerian national consultant to show up in the training session in spite of the arrangements made for him by the Centre, including sending a prepaid ticket for his travel. He indicated that all communications failed to reach him, and the Algerian Focal Point kept silent and did not respond to BCRC-Egypt related correspondences. This absence of the Algerian National consultant during the first day of the training session let the Egyptian Focal point who attended to benefit from the training session, to request that Egypt replaces Algeria in benefiting from the project support.

An active discussion followed Dr. Dahroug presentations, and the following recommendations were concluded:

- Basel Convention Focal Points in the Arab countries are encouraged to increase their cooperation, follow up, participation with the BCRC-Egypt activities.
- Appealing to the decision makers to be aware of the importance of the work done by the BCRC. i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Raising the DSA to UNEP rate when implementing workshops or meetings by the BCRC-Egypt and to adjust budgets for these activities accordingly.
- The need to hire a national/regional consultant (if needed) instead of international ones for logistics and sustainability reasons.
- The need to propagate success stories and lessons learned in roving workshops and meetings or via the BCRC-Egypt web page.
- Link BCRC-Egypt website with other concerned parties, like the Arab League Web site, the UNEP/ROWA in Asia, GCC (Gulf Cooperation Committee)...etc, and to change the name of the website to become BCRC-Egypt instead of baselegypt.
- The need to disseminate the guidelines and reports produced by the Centre to all the Arab countries. It was also suggested to provide at the beginning of each technical guidelines a few pages on whom should use the guidelines and how to use it. In this respect it was requested that the Sound Management of Used Oils guidelines should contain high lights as to the best practice and/or experiences within the Arab countries. It was also recommended to include a section on the way to control ash and oil sludge in the guidelines.
- There is a need to approach potential donors with projects to secure the sustainability of financing the activity of the Centre, and in connection with this there was a recommendation to allocate from the project budget about US\$ 10,000 to 15,000 to finance the projects development activities.

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9- Two important issues; the NEPAD project and mid-term evaluation in addition to the decisions of the meeting were discussed during morning and afternoon sessions.

10- Mr. Nelson Sabogal gave a brief overview of the NEPAD project and the opportunities under this project to enhance linkage, coordination and collaboration among the participating countries. He then gave a background of the process made for developing that project and how early communications with potential donors proved the interest to finance the project and he concluded that there was a misunderstanding or a mistake in communication regarding who should submit the project to the donor and how we missed the opportunity to get financial support for this project. He concluded by encouraging the BCRC-Egypt to take a leading role in updating the NEPAD project document and to try to get the endorsement from the member countries before presenting it to the donor communities.

11- Mr. Nelson Sabogal raised the issue of mid term evaluation as a responsibility of the PSC. He proposed to form a team to do this review. Dr. Dahroug proposed a team of the donor country, the SBC and the host country. Jordan and Bahrain indicated their interest to participate in this review mission. The suggested date was just before the proposed next steering committee meeting in late November 2007. BCRC-Egypt will update the budget for 2007 to include the cost of this mid term review mission, and will develop and share the terms of reference with the proposed team. It was agreed that the Mid Term review team will consist of the Rep. from Finland government, Rep. from the Secretariat, representative of Egypt, in addition to the members of the Steering Committee from Jordan and Bahrain.

12- Dr. Dahroug prepared and distributed a list of decisions proposed to the steering committee members who reviewed and provided valuable comments.

The following represent the **Decisions Approved by the Steering Committee meeting PSC-2:**

- 1- The meeting endorses the progress report of 2006 and financial statement.
- 2- The meeting approves and acknowledges a contribution of US\$ 5,000 for a follow up activities for management of used oils proposed by the Yemen Focal Point once the Yemen party present their updated project proposal with budget details.
- 3- The meeting approves the allocation of US\$ 10,000 – to 15,000 for project proposal development in the 2007 workplan.

4- The meeting approves the adoption of the DSA policy applied by UNEP in the BCRC-Egypt Meetings and workshops.

5- The meeting approves providing Algeria the benefit from the contribution of the BCRC-Egypt to the e-waste management pending the confirmation of the name of the consultant and the involvement in follow up activities with the Centre and the international expert.

6- The meeting approves considering the representative of Egypt request to participate in the e-waste activity and to allocate the national consultant budget.

7- The meeting approves the 2007 work plan with a request to the Centre to amend to include the additional activities proposed and approved by the meeting (include Egypt in the E-waste activities, contribute to the used oil project in Yemeni, and allocate the requested budget to finance project proposal development) .

8- The meeting approves delegating the authority to the Director of the BCRC–Egypt in consultation with SBC to take decisions to manage, transfer of up to 20 per cent from one main appropriation line of the approved budget to other main appropriation lines as per implementation progress to achieve optimum results and to inform the SBC and the Steering Committee members on the amendments.

9- The meeting approves delegating the authority to the Director of the BCRC–Egypt in consultation with SBC to directly recruit and contract consultants for contracts less than US\$ 15,000 to allow for smooth operation and to avoid the delay in implementing proposed activities, in case of time constraints and in case that normal procedures failed to achieve in proper time. The BCRC–Egypt should inform the SBC and the Steering Committee members on the above.

10- BCRC-Egypt to follow up with the recommendations raised by the members during the meeting, including the collaboration with the NGOs in organizing a regional awareness event on the Basel Convention and the sound management of hazardous wastes, and keep the SBC updated with the relevant progress.

11- The meeting approves the allocation of US\$ 10,000 to cosponsor the NGO proposed regional awareness activity.

Final remarks

Dr. El Aref thanked all the observers and participants for their participation which added a great value to the discussions, while Mr. Jouko

representative of the Finland Government thanked the BCRC-Egypt and all the participants for their positive and valuable participation

At the end Mr. Nelson Sabogal expressed his appreciation for the commitment of the BCRC-Egypt acknowledging that it is one of the best centres around the world.

The meeting was closed at 4:15 pm.