



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



## BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS

**Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and  
Stockholm Conventions**

United Nations Environment Programme  
International Environment House 1  
11-13, Chemin des Anémones  
CH 1219 Châtelaine,  
Geneva, Switzerland  
Tel: +41 (0) 22 917 8218  
Fax: +41 (0) 22 917 8098  
E-mail: [brs@brsmeas.org](mailto:brs@brsmeas.org)

**Secretariat of the Rotterdam  
Convention**

Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla  
00153 Rome, Italy  
Tel: +39 06 5705 2061  
Fax: +39 06 5705 3224  
E-mail: [pic@fao.org](mailto:pic@fao.org)

Geneva, 9 February 2015

**Subject: Contribution of the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to the first part of the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, pursuant to General Assembly draft resolution A/69/L.29**

Dear Madam/Sir,

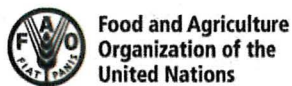
I am writing with reference to Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares's letter dated 10 December 2014 inviting the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to make a contribution in view of the preparation of the Part I of the report providing information on the topic of focus of the sixteenth meeting of Informal Consultative Process ("*Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic*"). You will find attached the contribution of the Secretariat.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for involving our organization in this process.

Yours sincerely,

Rolph Payet  
Executive Secretary of the  
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares  
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs  
and United Nations Legal Counsel  
Division for Oceans Affairs and the Law of the Sea  
Office of Legal Affairs  
Email: [doalos@un.org](mailto:doalos@un.org)



## BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS

---

### **Contribution of the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to the first part of the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, pursuant to General Assembly draft resolution A/69/L.29**

Reference is made to the invitation to provide contributions on the topic of the sixteenth meeting of the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process, namely "*Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely environmental social and economic*" for the part related to: (i) information regarding the relevant activities of your Organization fostering an integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development with regard to oceans:

#### **(i) Information regarding the relevant activities of the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention:**

##### **Background information:**

The concern of countries that the health of oceans and marine biodiversity are negatively affected by marine pollution, including marine debris, especially plastic, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals and nitrogen-based compounds, from numerous marine and land-based sources, was expressed in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want".

Marine litter, including plastics stemming from land and sea-based sources, is in particular of great concern because of its impact on the marine environment, marine ecosystem services, marine natural resources, fisheries, tourism and the economy. Microplastics may also contribute to the transfer in the marine ecosystems of persistent organic pollutants, other persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances and other contaminants which are in or adhere to the particles.

The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions are part of the international action being taken to promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and waste in ways that lead to the prevention and minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, including oceans and marine biodiversity.

The Conventions contribute to making consumption and production patterns and waste management more sustainable and hence reduce direct discharge or land runoff of hazardous pollutants or wastes into the marine and coastal environments. This is of extreme importance to Small Island Developing States that have identified waste management among their priorities for action.

Below is a summary of relevant activities of the Secretariat fostering an integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development with regard to oceans:

##### **Improved wastes management practices:**

- Under the Basel Convention's Indonesian-Swiss Country-led Initiative, Parties have adopted decisions to improve the effectiveness of the Convention and reaffirm the objectives of the Ban Amendment and to explore means by which its objectives might be achieved. These include the facilitation of entry into force of the Ban Amendment, developing guidelines for environmentally sound management (ESM) and providing legal clarity with respect to the interpretation of certain terminology used in the Convention.
- A number of technical guidelines for the ESM of the wastes streams and disposal operations under the scope of the Basel Convention (e.g. plastics, municipal wastes, POPs wastes, e-wastes, mercury wastes) are available to countries. Although not legally-binding, technical

guidelines provide for the foundation upon which countries can operate at a standard that is not less environmentally sound than that required by the Basel Convention. Some Parties have also transposed certain technical guidelines into their national legislation and regulations.

- A number of projects have been or are being implemented within the framework of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions to build the capacity of developing States to improve chemicals and waste management. Several African countries participated in projects aiming at strengthening monitoring and control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and enhancing wastes management at ports.

This cluster of activities contributes to prevent pollution to the marine environment, marine ecosystem services, marine natural resources and help maintain sustainable fisheries, tourism and other natural resources upon which the economy of countries may depend.

#### **Cooperation with the International Maritime Organization on ship dismantling and prevention of pollution from ships**

- The Secretariat of the Basel Convention is collaborating with the IMO on a project, which is intended to assist the Government of Bangladesh to achieve the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships. The Secretariat is also supporting the development of inventories of hazardous wastes in the Gadani ship recycling region in Pakistan.
- The Secretariat of the Basel Convention is collaborating with the IMO on activities aiming at improving the sea-land interface to ensure that wastes generated on board ships falling within the scope of MARPOL, once offloaded from a ship, are managed in an environmentally sound manner. An assessment of how far the current Basel Convention technical guidelines cover wastes covered by MARPOL as well as a guidance manual on the sea-land interface are currently being developed. By undertaking these activities, further clarity is provided to countries with regards to the relationships between the Basel Convention and other treaties regulating maritime affairs. This work aims at assisting countries to provide adequate port reception facilities for the disposal of ship-generated wastes in an environmentally sound manner to the needs of ships entering their ports which will decrease the risk of illegal discharges from ships.

This cluster of activities contributes to prevent pollution to the marine environment, marine ecosystem services, marine natural resources from ships. It helps maintain sustainable fisheries, tourism and other natural resources upon which the economy of countries may depend.

#### **Description of the work on the Secretariat to mainstream chemicals and wastes into sustainable development goals in particular for the goal on oceans**

One of the main outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was the agreement by member States to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will build upon the Millennium Development Goals and converge with the post 2015 development agenda. The Secretariat in close cooperation with the Chemicals Branch of the United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and others made a number of efforts to ensure that the chemicals and wastes management issues are integrated into the sustainable development goals. This includes outreach activities targeting stakeholders outside of chemicals and waste on various inter-linkages between chemicals and wastes and thematic areas, including water and oceans and provision of technical input into the development of SDGs, targets and, more recently indicators through the UN Technical Support Team.

---