

APPPC Sub-regional Training Workshop for the Designated National Authorities on the Rotterdam Convention Focusing on Increasing Notifications

Concept note

Introduction: The technical assistance programme of the Rotterdam Convention covers a range of activities that addresses the needs of individual countries or regions in order to assist them to fully implement the Convention.

This programme includes practical training workshops to the Designated National Authorities (DNAs), targeting countries that have ratified the Convention only recently, or have recently appointed new or additional DNAs, or are experiencing difficulties in meeting their basic obligations under the Convention. Further, the Conference of the Parties urged parties to submit notifications of final regulatory action for banned or severely restricted chemicals and requests the Secretariat to provide assistance in order to facilitate an increase in the number of notifications.

As a regional partner to the Rotterdam Convention, the 29th meeting of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC), included a regional training workshop on the Rotterdam Convention in its programme of work for 2016 and 2017, to be jointly organized by the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat, the Secretariat of APPPC and the Government of Indonesia.

Overall Objective: The overall objective is to improve countries' capacity in the implementation of the Convention, in particular in submission of notifications of final regulatory action.

The specific objectives are:

- To strengthen the capacity of DNAs to implement the Rotterdam Convention by providing practical training on the operational elements of the Convention;
- To assist DNAs in preparing notifications in order to increase the number of submission and the improve the completeness of information provided;
- To facilitate exchange and forester cooperation among DNAs in the region ;
- To promote the FAO Pesticide Registration Toolkit. To raise awareness of the linkages between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention, as well as with other relevant regional initiatives, and how they can assist countries to strengthen pesticides and chemicals management.

Programme: In order to facilitate efficient delivery of the meeting participation will be limited to 25 participants from a maximum of eight countries. The meeting will operate through a series of plenary sessions and smaller breakout groups and be convened for up to four days.

Before coming the workshop, participants will be requested to undertake the online e-learning course on the Rotterdam Convention which has been prepared by the secretariat (<http://www.pic.int/Implementation/ELearningTool/tabid/1065/language/en-US/Default.aspx>). In addition, they will be requested to prepare a brief country report including the list of banned and severely restricted pesticides and industrial chemicals, the status of implementation of the Convention, pesticides and chemicals management in their country. They will also be requested to bring with them an example of their national final regulatory action, so that they can use the information for practical exercise during the workshop.

During the plenary sessions, the secretariat will provide brief introductions on the key elements of the Convention and selected participants will share their national experience in implementing individual elements.

Through case studies in breakout groups (BOGs) participants will have opportunity to gain practical experience on the operation of the key obligations of the Convention. Participants will receive hands on training in preparing notifications of final regulatory action, import responses, proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulation and export notifications. Experience from the individual BOGs will be shared in Plenary.

Outputs of the meeting: The expected outputs of the meeting is that participants will fully understand the objectives, provisions and obligations of the Rotterdam Convention. They will have gained an increased knowledge on the operation of the Convention, in particular with regard to the notification of final regulatory action. They will be familiar with the forms and tools available to facilitate the implementation of the Convention.

By the end of each practical session, participants will identify what needs to be done by their country with regard to import response, notification, proposal for SHPF and export notification. Based on this, towards the end of the workshop, each country will identify a list of actions.

Overall, participants will have an increased awareness of how the Rotterdam Convention might be integrated with the Basel and Stockholm Conventions and other relevant regional initiatives, and how they might be used to strengthen pesticides and chemicals management at the national level.

Next steps: The meeting report will include a list of actions for each participating country. This list of actions, in conjunction with the practical training received, will assist participants in following up, with an expected improvement on the level of implementation of the Convention. The DNAs will have received hands on training and prepared draft import responses, notifications etc, during the workshop and will follow up with finalization and submission after the workshop. The meeting report may also identifying specific needs for future technical assistance activities.