



**Basel Convention on the Control of
Transboundary Movements of
Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal**

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**Rotterdam Convention on the Prior
Informed Consent Procedure for
Certain Hazardous Chemicals and
Pesticides in International Trade**



**Stockholm Convention on
Persistent Organic Pollutants**

**Ad hoc joint working group on enhancing cooperation and
coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

Second meeting

Vienna, 10–13 December 2007

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

**Consideration of the intersessional work undertaken by the
members of the ad hoc joint working group and by the
Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention**

Coordination for the national level

Note by the secretariats

Addendum

Belgian national coordination: cooperation structures as an instrument for coherence between a multitude of institutional actors

The attached annex II is a submission by Belgium on “Belgian national coordination: cooperation structures as an instrument for coherence between a multitude of institutional actors” for consideration by the meeting. It is presented as received and has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.2/1.

Annex II

Belgian national coordination: cooperation structures as an instrument for coherence between a multitude of institutional actors

In Belgium, the institutional division of powers is a complex issue. Several state reforms have transformed Belgium into a federal country in which the federal level, the 3 regions and the 3 communities each were attributed with exclusive competencies. There is no question of a hierarchy between the federal, regional and community actors and each entity has its own law making and executing powers. Environmental policy is in this constitution an issue of shared competencies with the regions responsible for the majority of its aspects.

Given this complex national situation a coherent and a coordinated participation at the international environmental policy is a real challenge.

In 1995 the federal government and the regional governments concluded a distinct cooperation agreement concerning international environmental policy with the objectives of the definition of national positions, participation at the international meetings and the reporting to the international level.

This cooperation agreement created the Coordination Committee for International Environmental Policy (in short the CCIEP) which is composed of representatives of the regional and federal level. The representation is not limited to the environmental authorities but also the departments for Foreign affairs and Development cooperation are fully included. Furthermore, on an ad hoc basis the CCIEP is also extended to other interested departments (Economy, Energy, Scientific policy, ...).

The CCIEP is the most important political body in Belgium for coordinating policy in the area of international environment. The CCIEP has a plenary meeting (monthly), a bureau and specific issue groups (see organigram on the next page).

In practice the plenary meeting overviews and steers the structure, while the issue groups prepare the different aspects of the international environmental policy making.

These specific issue groups have a very extensive and open composition with experts and representatives participating from all the entities who consider themselves involved in a certain issue. The steering group on chemicals for instance has more than 50 correspondents included waste experts and representative of the departments of Development cooperation and Economy.

The CCIEP also appoints for each international dossier in discussion (such as European draft directives and multilateral negotiations) a dossier 'pilot'. This system of pilots has to avoid that dossiers might get lost in working groups and thus clearly identifies the responsible official for the individual dossier.

Furthermore, the CCIEP has opened on a regular basis its meetings to the different stakeholders. Before the beginning of a new semester the plenary CCIEP discusses the objectives and the program of the incoming EU presidency with all the stakeholders. Also the issue groups organize consultations with the stakeholders. Participation of stakeholders both improves the quality of the positions and strengthens their legitimacy.

The advantages of the coordination structure are the following:

- The CCIEP structure is a strong instrument to participate at the international level and corresponds with a genuine priority of the authorities for international environmental policy responses.
- The federal government and the regions can speak with one voice at the international level.
- There is a clear identification of the responsibilities and the coordination forum for each international process.
- There is a clear recognition of the rules in place for the definition of a position, the composition of a delegation on the reporting.
- From the start of an international discussion, there is a transparent coordination process with participation of the different departments having interests in the issue at stake.
- There is a consultation network in place that is also of use for implementation of the international decisions taken.

The particular coordination structure has been designed to respond to the needs of a country with a federal structure. So the Belgian coordination model certainly does not pretend to be a model with a universal applicability.

ORGANIGRAM

