

The Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres At A Glance...





The Basel Convention

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal is the most comprehensive global environmental treaty on hazardous and other wastes.

The Convention has 170 members (Parties) and aims to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects resulting from the generation, management, transboundary movements and disposal of hazardous and other wastes.

The Basel Convention has two pillars. First, it regulates the transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes applying the "Prior Informed Consent" procedure (shipments made without consent are illegal).

Second, the Convention obliges its Parties to ensure that hazardous and other wastes are managed and disposed of in an environmentally sound manner (ESM). To this end, Parties are expected to minimize the quantities that are moved across borders, to treat and dispose of wastes as close as possible to their place of generation, and to prevent or minimize the generation of wastes at source.

Examples of wastes regulated by the Basel Convention...

Biomedical and healthcare wastes, used oils, used lead acid batteries, Persistent Organic Pollutant wastes (POPs wastes), chemicals and pesticides that persist for many years in the environment, Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), compounds used in industry as heat exchange fluids, in electric transformers and capacitors, and as additives in paint, carbonless copy paper, sealants and plastics, thousands of chemical wastes generated by industries and other consumers, electronic and electrical waste (e-waste) such as mobile phones or computers, ships destined for dismantling and mercury and asbestos waste.



The Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres

The Basel Convention benefits from a network of fourteen Regional and Coordinating Centres for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer (BCRCs). The Basel Convention is unique in setting up a regional network of autonomous institutions which operates under the authority of the Conference of the Parties, the decision-making organ of the Convention, composed of all the countries party to the Convention.

The BCRCs are established under two types of agreement: by being hosted in an inter-governmental institution or by vesting a national institution with a regional role to support countries within a region in their implementation of the Convention.

Why were the BCRCs created?

The BCRCs were established in accordance with Article 14 of the Basel Convention. In Article 14, the Parties to the Convention agreed to establish regional or sub-regional Centres for training and technology transfer regarding the management of hazardous and other wastes and the minimization of their generation. The BCRCs were created to address specific regional or sub-regional needs.

What do the BCRCs do?

The BCRCs deliver training, dissemination of information, consulting, awareness raising activities and technology transfer on matters relevant to the implementation of the Basel Convention and to the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other wastes in the countries they serve. The specific activities are training workshops, seminars, pilot projects on the management of priority waste streams, the production of information material and guidelines.

How are the BCRCs administered?

Each Centre has a Steering Committee which is composed of members of the Centre's host country and of the countries served by the Centre. The director of the Centre, as well as representatives from the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, are ex officio members of each Steering Committee. The work programme of each BCRC is developed by the Steering Committee in accordance with the priority needs of the countries and region served by the Centre, and based upon the priority areas identified by the Conference of the Parties.

Where are the BCRCs located?

The Centres are located in Argentina, China, Egypt, El Salvador, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovak Republic, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (Samoa), South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay. Each Centre services several countries in its respective region.

How are the BCRCs funded?

The Centres are funded by their host countries, through project-related funding and through voluntary contributions.

Examples of activities organized by the BCRCs:

- Training workshops on reporting and inventories of hazardous wastes
- Reviews of existing national and international legislation on monitoring and control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their environmentally sound management
- National workshops on the monitoring and control of hazardous waste
- Regional workshops on the prevention and monitoring of illegal traffic of hazardous and other wastes
- Pilot projects on inventories of hazardous wastes
- Training seminars for port enforcement officers
- Projects on the assessment and recycling of used oils in Africa
- Regional projects on the environmentally sound management of used lead-acid batteries
- Development of regional technical guidelines and tools (such as e-waste inventories)





Africa and West Asia

1. Basel Convention Regional Centre for the Arab States (Cairo)
2. Basel Convention Regional Co-ordinating Centre for the African Region (Ibadan)
3. Basel Convention Regional Centre for French-speaking countries in Africa (Dakar)
4. Basel Convention Regional Centre for English-speaking countries in Africa (Pretoria)

Asia and Pacific Region

5. Basel Convention Regional Centre for the Asia and Pacific Region in China (Beijing)
6. Basel Convention Regional Centre for Southeast Asia (Jakarta)
7. Basel Convention Regional Centre in Tehran
8. Pacific Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Joint Implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions in the South Pacific Region (Apia)

Central and Eastern Europe

9. Basel Convention Regional Centre for Countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (Moscow)
10. Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central Europe (Bratislava)

Latin America and the Caribbean

11. Basel Convention Centre for the South American Region (Buenos Aires)
12. Basel Convention Regional Centre for Central America and Mexico (San Salvador)
13. Basel Convention Regional Centre for the Caribbean Region (Port of Spain)
14. Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for Latin America and Caribbean Region (Montevideo)



For more information about the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres,
please go to:

<http://www.basel.int/centers/centers.html>

or contact:

Secretariat of the Basel Convention
International Environment House
UNEP/SBC

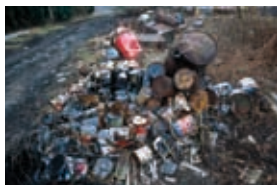
13-15 chemin des Anémones
1219 Châtelaine (Geneva)
Switzerland

Tel. +41 22 917 82 18

Fax +41 22 917 34 54

Email: sbc@unep.ch

www.basel.int



© Stillpictures

Other pictures: © UNEP/SBC