



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

Regional Workshop for Promoting the Sound Management of Hazardous Wastes within the Context of the Basel Convention Among Regions NGOs

Cairo, 29-30 April, 2008

Workshop Report



May 2008

1- Background

The workshop was proposed and approved during the Second Meeting of the Project Steering Committee Meeting (PSC-2) held in March 2007 among other issues, and due to delay in implementation was again presented to the PSC-3 Meeting in January 16th, 2008 and approved. The activity was proposed by one of the oldest and most active NGO in the region; the Day of Hospital for Environment and Development. The observation made by the NGO was that very few NGOs at the National and regional levels are interested in the Hazardous waste Management, and a lot of effort is needed to raise the awareness and encourage potential NGOs to do so. Due to the limited fund allocated for the workshop; invitation sent out to six NGOs at the regional level and to 15 NGOs at the National level. Those NGOs invited to the workshop were known to the BC focal points as active and interested in environmental and human health protection. Also, the invitation was extended to the NGOs governing body in Egypt and to the Arab NGOs Network for Youth and Environment. About 30 participants participated in the workshop activities over the two days (see list of participants Annex 1). The workshop was held in Cairo 29-30 April, 2008, where the concepts of sound management of hazardous wastes under the Basel Convention and the possible role and initiatives that could be shared with the NGOs were introduced and discussed. Also, concepts for mobilizing public participation in monitoring, reporting and supporting sound management of hazardous wastes was presented and shared with participants. Hazardous wastes awareness message and action was developed with the NGOs during the workshop and the BCRC-Egypt was requested to pursue its implementation within a Public-Private- Civil Society partnership context.

2- Workshop Objectives

The main objective of the workshop was to raise the awareness among the National and Regional NGOs regarding the Basel Convention and the sound management of hazardous wastes and to encourage those NGOs to actively participate in National and regional hazardous wastes management programs. Other objectives included

- Provide participating NGOs with basic knowledge regarding hazardous wastes and their sound management.
- Strengthen the role of the NGOs in important environmental issues
- Link active NGOs from the region and encourage information and experience exchange.
- Facilitate and publicize National and Regional Hazardous waste management programs through officials among NGOs.

3- Workshop Program

The program of the workshop was designed to give time for officials and experts to present their knowledge and expertise regarding the Basel Convention and the Management of Hazardous wastes and to highlight the role of the NGOs in the different aspects of hazardous wastes management. Also, basic information regarding the notion of hazardous wastes was introduced during the program. Hot topics, like Electric and Electronic Equipment Waste (EEEW) was raised and highlighted and discussed.

The following table (table-1) depicts the adopted program of the workshop.

Tuesday, 29/4/2008	
9:00 – 9:30	Registration
9:30– 10:00	Opening speeches Dr. Abdel Salam Al Banna, Chairman, Day of Hospitals NGO Prof. Dr. Mortada Murad El Aref, Director, BCRC-Egypt
10:00 – 11:00	BCRC-Egypt, an Overview Prof. Dr. Mortada Murad El Aref, Director, BCRC-Egypt
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 12:30	Basel Convention, Initiatives and Strategic Plan, Synergies with sister conventions Chem. Adel El Shafie, EEAA, representative of the BC Focal Point.
12:30 – 13:30	National Obligations Under The Basel Convention, and role of NGOs Dr. Khaled El Sayed, BCRC-Egypt Legislation Consultant
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 15:30	Sound Management of Hazardous wastes under the Basel Convention, and role of NGOs ; an overview. Prof Nefesa Abu El Seoud, National Planning Institute.
16:30 –15:30	Hazardous wastes impact and the role of the civil society. Dr. Abdel Salam Al Banna, Chairman, Day of Hospitals NGO.
16:30 – 17:30	Open Discussion.
Wednesday, 2008/4/30	
9:00 – 9:45	Sound Management of Clinical Wastes, and role of NGOs Dr. Mohamaed Ismael, EEAA.
9:45-10:30	Egyptian Ministry of Health Strategy for Clinical Waste Management. Dr. Afdal Abdel Ghafar Hassan, Director; General department for Environment and Health, Ministry of Health, Egypt.
10:30 – 11:15	Arab Network for Environment and Development:

	small grants program Dr. Emad Adely, Coordinator
11:15 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 - 12:15	Sound Management of e-wastes, and role of NGOs Dr. Said Dahroug, BCRC-Egypt Consultant
12:15 – 13:00	Role of NGOs in Hazardous wastes Management. Ms. Hala El Rashidy, research fellow, BCRC-Egypt
13:00 – 14:00	Presentations of the Participating NGOs.
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch
15:00 – 16:00	Persistent organic Pollutants Dr. Amani Nadim, Environics ; Environnemental Systems Management
16:00 – 17:00	Open Discussions and brain storm session.
16:30 – 17:00	Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

4- Workshop Activities

The workshop activities started with opening and introductory speeches made by Prof. Mortada El Aref on behalf of BCRC-Egypt and by Dr. Abdel Salam El Banna on behalf of the Day of Hospitals NGO. They both highlighted the objectives of the workshop and the need to activate the NGOs role in the sound management of the hazardous wastes. They stressed on the current and possible impacts of the hazardous wastes in the absence of a collaborative effort and sense of partnership among all stakeholders. They highlighted opportunities to work with industrial associations and with the Arab Network for environment and development through the GEF small grants program which mainly focused on persistent organic pollutants. They concluded their speeches with a request to all participants not to hesitate to raise any related issue during the workshop activities and to seek the advice of the resource experts participating in the workshop.

4.1 Activities of the First Day

The activities of the first day concentrated on providing the participants with a general background regarding the Basel Convention, its Regional Centers, strategic plan and other sister conventions (Rotterdam and Stockholm) and related concerns. The first day presentations also provided an overview regarding the national obligations under the Basel Convention and the role of the NGOs, and provided an outline regarding the aspects of sound management of hazardous wastes and their environmental and health impacts. The presentations of the experts are copied to the CD attached to the report. The following highlights major issues raised during the presentations.

Prof. El Aref started his presentation with a very short background regarding the history of establishment of the BCRC-Egypt and went into presenting the role of the center in building the capacities of the Arab countries towards efficient implementation of the Basel convention and the adoption of the sound management of Hazardous wastes. He raised several issues during his presentation connected with the need to bring onboard industrial NGOs to work with the BCRC-Egypt and the Basel Convention Competent

authorities as the sound management of hazardous wastes being a big challenge that needs the integration of all efforts. **Prof. El Aref** then introduced **Dr. Said Dahroug** to give an overview regarding the workshop objectives and the mode of executing its sessions. **Dr. Said Dahroug** briefly explained the objectives of the workshop indicating that all participants should actively participate in the discussions and should not hesitate to raise issues of concerns and share with the experts and consultants provided by the Basel Convention Regional Center (BCRC-Egypt) and the Day of Hospitals NGO.

Following a short break, **Eng. Adel El Shafii**, the General Director of the Department for Hazardous substances and wastes and the representative of the BC focal point and the coordinator of several environmental related conventions in the Egyptian Ministry of States for Environmental Affairs, gave a thorough presentation regarding the origin of the Basel Convention and its development to the present status. He highlighted the mechanism of implementation of the convention and situation regarding the Ban amendment and the Protocol on liability and compensation. He also explained the common goals of between the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam convention and reflected the current synergies issues. He also mentioned the priority waste streams in the Basel convention strategic plan up to 2010. He concluded with how international conventions see and respect the work and contributions of the NGOs, emphasizing that maximizing and empowering the civil societies in development planning and environmental protection is a key and a common interest.

Discussions followed the presentation of **Eng. Adel** mainly focused on more details and opportunities regarding the activities supported by the secretariats of the chemical conventions that can be utilized/implemented by the NGOs and on means for getting financial supports through these secretariats.

The second presentation by **Dr. Khaled Al Sayed Metwaly**, the legal consultant with the BCRC-Egypt focused on the national obligations under the Basel convention. He indicated that one of the most important aspects for these obligations is the hazardous waste legislation which should clearly define and distinguish between hazardous wastes and other wastes, and should direct the national institute towards the sound management and control over hazardous wastes generation and manipulation. He also pointed out the important role of the NGOs in monitoring and reporting and in putting pressure on generators and local administration to provide hazardous waste facilities and to treat and dispose generated hazardous wastes in compliance with the legislation.

Discussions followed the presentation of **Dr. Khaled** focused on the specific role of NGOs in case of violation incidents and how they should report violations so that the enforcement of the law becomes effective.

Following the lunch break, **Prof. Nafesa Abu Elseoud**, Prof. of Environmental engineering in the Egyptian National Planning Institute and the ex-director of the department of hazardous substances and wastes in the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), made an exhaustive presentation on the sound management of hazardous wastes under the Basel Convention starting from the definition and

classification of hazardous wastes passing through storage, and disposal options. She also, highlighted the role of the civil society from the governmental institutes' perspective and from the international organizations perspective. She concluded with an important note about the need to have technical experts within the NGOs to work voluntarily in assessing the vulnerability and risk from the diffuse of hazardous wastes into the environment and to propose lines of actions for the NGO.

Dr. Abdelsalam El Banna started his presentation commending BCRC-Egypt for the support of organizing the workshop and went on describing the practical aspects of the civil society activities emphasizing the example of the Day of Hospitals NGO. The historical development of the Day of Hospitals NGO was presented for the sake of depicting how difficult the civil society work at the beginning until you gain the right experience and credit among the public and then comes the enjoy every support and success. Dr. Abdelsalam mentioned different projects implemented by his NGO but focused more on the POPs awareness project through which more than 250 awareness activities are planned throughout Egypt to educate and encourage National NGOs towards the safe use of pesticides and the impacts of the persistent organic pollutants (POPs). He, at the end, stressed that educating the NGOs is a crucial part to enable NGOs play their civil role effectively.

Following **Dr. Abdelsalam El Banna** presentation, the discussion session started with a reaction from a lady representative of an Egyptian NGO claiming that NGOs resources are very limited and most of the time experts do not volunteer and ask for fees that can not be secured by the NGO. **Dr. Said Dahroug** responded reminding that the capital of any civil society activity is voluntary work of their members and each NGO should seek and encourage specialists and educated people within their geographical scope to join and contribute to the community well being. **Prof. El Aref** added that the BCRC-Egypt will be happy to consider contributing expertise to give training and share evaluation of hazardous waste problems upon the request by any NGO. Finally, **Dr. Abdel Salam El Banna**, noted that there are other mechanisms to secure funds for minor activities through his NGO and through the GEF small grants program managed by the Arab Network for Development and environment.

Another issue raised by one Egyptian NGO focused on difficulty to identify hazardous wastes other than medical and some industrial scraps and that the National Legislation did not give enough details regarding the lists of hazardous wastes, and also, there are not much facilities or service companies that deal with hazardous waste management and disposal and that these information should be publicized to all stakeholders if efficient protection from hazardous wastes impacts are pursued. The participants agreed to the statement and the discussion closed.

4.2 Activities of the Second Day

The second day activities opened with very important presentations on health care waste by government officials from both the Ministry of Health and EEAA.

Dr. Mohamed Ismael, Head of the Hazardous Wastes Section in EEAA, started with presenting the different stages for health care waste management and the different aspects for their sound management. He highlighted the current health care waste management in most of the Egyptian public hospitals and gave examples for bad practices and for good practices. He indicated and highlighted the efforts done jointly with the ministry of health with support from some donors to rectify bad practices and to control their impacts. Problems faced by his department during the assessment phase were also highlighted and reflective photographed depicted to approximate the situation status to the participants. He concluded his presentation with the good example for health care waste management in the biggest educational hospital and urged the NGOs to seek a role in the system for sound management for health care wastes.

In the second part of presenting health care waste management; **Dr. Afdal Abdelghafar**, the general director of the General Department for Environment and Health within the Ministry of Health, introduced the national strategy for health care waste management. She explained the basic pillars of the strategy and noted the contributions from both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Environmental Affairs, indicating that more facilities will be erected including 60 new incinerators, rehabilitation of 100 incinerator, so that a total of 192 incinerator along with 40 autoclaving units are working during the year 2008, and another 50 autoclave units will be added in 2009. She also explained numerous problems associated with the lack of awareness among hospital personnel responsible for waste management and that a lot of efforts and resources are needed to raise the awareness among transporters and all health care waste dealers and stakeholders.

Dr. Emad Adly, the GEF's small grants program coordinator and the executive director of the Arab Network for development and Environment, introduced to both the small grants program and his Arab net work. He then noted the major activities of the Arab Network and the activities liable for finance through the small grants mechanism and on how to prepare and submit a proposal, and indicated the eligible countries from the region with the conditions for finance. He concluded with commending the Chemicals (especially POPs) hazards awareness project currently under implementation by the Day of Hospitals NGO and encouraged participating NGOs to apply for funds to implement similar project in their countries and/or their geographic area.

Following a short coffee break, **Dr. Said Dahroug** made a short presentation on e-waste where he defined e-waste, and its escalating problem and the current international efforts to limit the impact of improper e-waste handling. He referred to the efforts of the BCRC-Egypt to limit the inflow of used electronics into the countries of the region and raised the issue of environmental and economic benefits for the sound management of electronic wastes. He also urged the NGOs to consider participating actively in limiting the problem of e-waste generation and improper disposal by considering recycling of accepting used electric and electronic equipment for reuse by others who need them. He concluded giving some examples of the economic value of the materials contained in both end of life mobile phones and end of life personal computers.

Dr. Said Dahroug then introduced *Ms. Hala El Rashidy*, a researcher with BCRC-Egypt to present an overview for role of the civil society in environmental management and protection. She reviewed the various forms and modules for the civil society work and the advantages of being a civil society. She then introduced to mechanisms for strengthening the civil society existence and bring its activities to the efficiency level. She conclude with recommendations to improve the current civil society performance in the region. Following the presentation of *Ms. Hala El Rashidy*, some of the participant NGOs were given the chance to present their experience in the environment sector focusing on hazardous waste experience; if any.

Mr Hekmat Abo Hemdan, the representative of the unique Syrian NGO that works on environment, called :'' Pioneers of the Environment '', has showed their organization experience in the field of environmental protection, mentioning the fact that the obstacles faced by NGOs and civil society are the same allover the Arab region. The main obstacle, in this regard, is the State intervention in defining the functions and the mechanisms of their work; missing the main vision of the NGO; and the lack of finance. He discussed, also, the different ways they follow to attract the Syrian people in this regard, like : designing posters, distributing brochures, organizing competitions on the most effective caricature that can change the peoples' manners towards protecting the environment and its resources and the severe harms of polluting it. In addition, *Mr Abo Hemdan*, discussed some of their ways in enriching their resources and saving additional ones, by cooperating with Giant private companies as sponsors and donors to their activities, where they make use of in making good reputation for their commercial names. At last, *Mr Abo Hemdan*, ended his presentation by highlighting the fact that most of the Arab NGOs that work in the field of environment has no knowledge about hazardous wastes and its harmful impacts on both environment and public health , or about Basel Convention and its goals, asking BCRC-Egypt to exert more efforts in this regard.

Following these brief presentations and the lunch break, *Ms. Amani Nadim*, a consultant with ENVIRONICS consulting firm, made a brief presentation on the POPs convention (Stockholm Convention). She made a brief introduction to the origin of the convention, to the persistent organic pollutants and their common sources, to the impact of POPs and the basics for its sound management. At the end of her presentation she highlighted the possible role of the NGOs in dealing with the POPs problem stressing their monitoring, reporting and awareness raising roles.

5- Discussions and Recommendations

Following the presentation of *Ms. Amani Nadim*, there was an open session where related problems were discussed, among which were the problem of financing the NGOs activities, obstacles faced and NGO-government partnership dilemma. The participants delivered their recommendations as follows :

1. The importance of repeating this workshop on both national and regional levels, also, it's important to allow more Arab NGOs to participate within its activities.

2. Giving more concern to the issue of spreading the awareness of the hazardous wastes' impacts on both environment and public health by making use of the educational process to encourage the norms and manners of sound management of these wastes.
3. Organizing a public speech, for an hour, about hazardous wastes, its impacts, characteristics, different ways of getting rid of it, .. etc. In this regard, Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Arab States in Egypt (BCRC-Egypt) expressed its willingness to coordinate with related NGOs and promote and technically support the initiative.
4. NGOs should largely build upon the voluntary input, and also, on the main reason behind founding these NGOs, its messages, visions and missions, beside their focusing on how to get more Funds from the governments and donor communities. In case one of these NGOs succeed in pressuring on the executive authorities regarding the problem of polluting the environment with hazardous wastes, BCRC-Egypt can assist these NGOs.
5. Practicing pressure on the executives to keep committed to the undertakings of related Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and also to design policies, programs, and action plans to implement it. In addition, the successful case of practicing pressure in facing pollution issues as in the case of "Agrium" factory for fertilizers in the Egyptian Governorate " Damietta ".
6. Strengthening the NGOs networking for exchanging experiences and information coordinating among them to achieve sound management of hazardous wastes and protect the human health and environment.
7. Regarding achieving the environmentally sound management of E-Wastes, NGOs can design a "Poster", for example, depicting the life cycle of a mobile phone and its accessories including the battery. The poster should reflect the impact of irresponsible disposal and the benefits of sound management. Also, it will be suitable to adopt a "Collecting E-Wastes" slogan and communicating with competent authorities; importers, mobile phone operators, .. etc, to promote the campaign taking into consideration that BCRC-Egypt can coordinate between NGOs and these authorities and can provide related awareness lectures and meetings.

6- Closing remarks.

At the end of the event Prof. El Aref and Dr. El Banna thanked the participants and the guest lecturerers and asked the participants to follow up with the BCRC-Egypt website for updated information and links towards the activities of the center and the sound management of hazardous wastes.

7- Photo Gallery









Annex (1)
List of Participants with contact details.

email	Telefax	Telephone	Name	country	Serial
Participants from Arab Countries					
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