

Evaluation of the project “Support to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants” (GF/4030-01-03)

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31 January 2004

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A. Executive summary

The logical framework of this project lists the following as achievement indicators for the objectives:

- i) Increased number of signatories to the Stockholm Convention;
- ii) Better understanding by GEF-eligible countries of their commitments under the Stockholm Convention;
- iii) Early ratification of the Stockholm Convention by signatory countries;
- iv) National Implementation Plan (NIP) funding proposals take into consideration legislative, capacity-building, investment and other infra-structural needs assessments;
- v) Consequent approaches to the GEF for support for NIP and implementation of the Convention; and
- vi) The number of countries that start developing their NIPs for the Stockholm Convention.

All of these objectives were met with flying colours, one might say, in comparison with any other international convention in the environmental field.

The difficulty in evaluating the project “Support to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants” is not to establish that the objectives were met, but to determine the extent to which this project contributed to the result, as several other factors also contributed. Probably the single most important contributing factor was the existence of the GEF funding mechanism, by which GEF-eligible signatory countries could receive up to \$500,000 to establish and implement their NIPs. In interviews with workshop participants, who in many cases are now their national focal points for the Stockholm Convention, GEF funding is certainly seen as the major factor, although many also mention the important role of the initial workshops in awareness-creation and of the later ones as valuable experience-sharing opportunities. Attempts to separate the influence of the workshops and material prepared within the project from that of other factors would probably remain futile in any case, but would also encourage an atmosphere of competition rather than collaboration between projects with the same ends and objectives. Suffice it to conclude, therefore, that the objectives laid out for this project have been fully met through an arsenal of activities wherein the project “Support to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants” was one element.

The achievement indicators for project outputs in the logical framework are:

- i) Workshops’ evaluation by participants;
- ii) Better understanding by GEF-eligible countries of GEF procedures and guidelines for enabling activities;
- iii) Reports from each workshop disseminated to the participants of all other workshops; and
- iv) Website for dissemination of information for, and from, the workshops is in operation.

With one small exception, these indicators of project outputs were fully met. The exception relates to reports from workshops being disseminated only to participants of that and

subsequent workshops, but not to those of earlier ones, thus not to participants of “all other” workshops. (This wording, however, is not used in the next section under “activities to be undertaken”.)

With regard to achievement indicators of activities to be undertaken, the outcome is somewhat more mixed. The indicators are:

- i) Core material produced in the 6 UN languages;
- ii) Core material and region-specific material (in the language of the region) delivered to participants at least 3 weeks prior to each workshop;
- iii) Workshops cover all GEF-eligible countries;
- iv) On average 40 participants in each workshop, including representatives from different sectors of Government; Industry, and environmental or civil society NGO's;
- v) Monitoring and evaluation of each workshop conducted and recommendations fed into subsequent workshops;
- vi) Workshop proceedings and translations, where appropriate, produced and distributed to participants of all subsequent workshops; and
- vii) UNEP's website on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) updated with information on the POP Convention, countries' obligations, and steps for ratification.

With regard to ii), this did not fully occur, for a number of reasons: Countries were late in nominating participants or made last-minute changes in nominations; region-specific material in the form of country reports was often handed in at the workshops rather than submitted in advance; in case of the Manama workshop in Bahrain, the Arabic-language version of the documents was not sent out at all. Concerning iii), all GEF-eligible countries were invited, but not all attended - 141 came, which is just short of 90% of those invited. Regarding iv), Industry was, despite invitations, virtually absent from the workshops. In all other respects, the activity indicators were fully met.

The project thus met its objectives, and it did so within the allocated budget. Some small comments can be made with regard to the cost-effectiveness of the two last workshops, as both of them were repetitions for groups of countries, Anglophone Africa and the AOSIS countries, respectively. The latter workshop, which took place in St. John's, Antigua, was quite costly. The bottom line of this assessment, however, is that the project was cost-effective.

As outlined above, there is no question that the project contributed positively to the overall impact of the arsenal of activities geared at building capacity among the Parties to deal with POPs and fulfil the requirements of the Stockholm Convention. The continuation of the work at the national level safeguards the sustainability of the achievements.

A weakness of the project, and the only major one, was its inability to attract Industry, the involvement of which is a key factor in phasing-out industrially used POPs such as PCBs, which are currently used in many types of long-lived equipment.

The institutional infrastructure, financial planning, staffing, administrative arrangements and operational mechanisms were all fully adequate for this not-too-complicated project. The monitoring and evaluation system was fully adequate, and functioned as an effective management tool. The content of the workshops was changed, both gradually and at one

occasion more profoundly, based on feedback from the monitoring and evaluation process. It could perhaps be argued, however, that some of the changes should have been made somewhat earlier.

Participants interviewed by the evaluator highlighted several positive factors. One of these was that information was provided during the workshops not only about the Stockholm Convention, but also about other related international instruments such as the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions.

With regard to practical arrangements and some administrative aspects of the workshops, it served the project well to make full use of local UN facilities such as Regional Centres of the Basel Convention and UNDP local offices, whenever such were available.

The project is fully replicable, and a number of areas have been identified where continued information and advice would greatly benefit countries and assist them in their efforts to meet their obligations under the Stockholm Convention.

In summary, the project "Support to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants" is a well-carried out enterprise, the success of which was further spurred by other parallel and continuing activities with commensurate goals.

Among lessons learned there were three aspects in particular that participants in the workshops stressed as being valuable and relatively rare and that could and should be repeated:

- The presentation of related conventions, e.g. the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions, and the relationship between these and the Stockholm Convention was greatly appreciated by participants. In general terms, this type of broader outlook should be taken more often in workshops.
- The country reports, which charted progress and enumerated difficulties encountered, were a strong stimulant - both for action at the national level prior to the workshops, and as a learning tool during and after the workshops. The practice of preparing such reports should be encouraged for other types of seminars and workshops.
- The existence of a funding mechanism greatly enhanced the willingness and possibilities of countries to sign and embark on preparations for ratification of the Stockholm Convention. Information about GEF and the funding possibilities it provided was deemed especially important and attractive, in particular in the early workshops. Whenever possible, such couplings should be made between implementation and funding possibilities.
- A lesson learned from the execution of the project is to utilize existing local UN infrastructure for administrative and practical arrangements, and to consider the availability of such already when selecting venues.

Among recommendations, the following relating to priority needs for further assistance identified by workshop participants were the most pertinent:

- Review of existing legislation and introduction of new elements to restrict and eliminate POP's.
- Implementation of trade measures (for both licit and illicit trade).
 - Handling of stockpiles, wastes and contaminated sites.

B. Problems encountered and lessons learned

Relatively few problems were encountered during the execution of the project. The originally planned meeting schedule could not be followed, as regional and national holidays and “competing” international meetings had to be taken into account, so that the workshops ended up being spaced out in time.

The momentum of the learning and adjustment process within the countries was much spurred by the availability of GEF funding for preparation of the National Implementation Plan (NIP). This made the initial information package if not obsolete, at least less relevant, and as a result, the workshop content also evolved to meet the changing needs.

Some participants felt they had little to learn from their colleagues at the workshops as “their own country was far ahead”.

The administrative and practical arrangements for the workshops worked very well when local UNDP offices and Regional Centres of the Basel Convention could be utilized, but some difficulties, e.g. with regard to money transfer, were encountered when such facilities were not at hand.

Some problems occurred with a translation into Spanish and with the distribution of an Arabic language version of documents prior to a workshop, but these must by all accounts in the larger picture be regarded as minor.

There are several rather obvious lessons to learn from these problems:

- Be realistic with regard to the timing of a series of international meetings.
- Be aware that information is a “fresh product” and that needs can change fast.
- The definition of sub-regions should be made in such a way that countries with similar problems and level of development are brought together, realizing also that the advantages of discussions can not always be equal, as those lagging behind may have much to learn from those ahead, who might benefit less from the exchange. Language is an important factor, but not the only one, when sub-regions are identified.
- Utilize existing local UN infrastructure for administrative and practical arrangements whenever possible, and consider the availability of such already when selecting workshop venues.
- Always pay close attention to translation and document distribution issues.

There are also, in the project’s execution, some lessons to be learned from its successes:

- The presentation of related conventions, e.g. the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions, and the relationship between these and the Stockholm Convention was greatly appreciated by participants. In general terms, this type of broader outlook should be taken more often in workshops.
- The country reports, which charted progress and enumerated difficulties encountered, were a strong stimulant - both for action at the national level prior to the workshops, and as a learning tool during and after the workshops. The practice of preparing such reports should be encouraged for other types of seminars and workshops.

- The existence of a funding mechanism greatly enhanced the willingness and possibilities of countries to sign and embark on preparations for ratification of the Stockholm Convention. Information about GEF and the funding possibilities it provided was deemed especially important and attractive, in particular in the early workshops. Whenever possible, such couplings should be made between implementation and funding possibilities.

C. Findings and Recommendations for follow up

The workshops have contributed to knowledge about POP's and the Stockholm Convention, and stimulated interest among countries to join. They have also proven to be *one* feasible mechanism for information transfer and exchange, and have identified a number of remaining obstacles for countries overcome before fulfilling their obligations as future Parties to the Convention. The importance of the information given by the lecturers at the workshops were according to participants most significant in the early stages, while information exchange between participants became the most appreciated part as countries gained experience in working with their NIP.

Areas where follow-up seems particularly relevant and needed include:

- Review of existing legislation and introduction of new elements to restrict and eliminate POP's. This was an area of special concern to many of the interviewed workshop participants, and one where they felt additional support would be most helpful. This is especially relevant, as the three POP categories (pesticides, industrial chemicals and unintentionally produced POP's), tend either to fall under different parts of existing legislation or not to be covered at all. Several mechanisms could be employed for the purpose: Another round of workshops with this focus, short-term consultants from other developing countries to share experience and/or arrangements of study tours for key persons from one country to visit and spend time with colleagues in other countries that are further advanced in the adjustment process. UNEP Chemicals might include such activities in its capacity building programme, in consultation with other relevant organizations.
- Implementation of trade measures (for both licit and illicit trade). In many regions, countries that are Parties to the Convention will, at least for some time, border with countries that are not. Countries also acquire capacity at different speeds. Furthermore, border controls are often weak and in some regions non-existent. When chemicals are to be phased out and replacements are either more expensive or require new investment in equipment, illicit trafficking is likely to be a problem. Sometimes the magnitude of the trafficking can endanger or much-delay the whole process. In such cases, law enforcement entities charged with border control (e.g. police, customs, coast guard, army) could be trained to identify and interdict illicit shipments of chemicals to reduce the trade. Such measures are already being applied in the case of chemicals that are precursors to illicit drug manufacture, in a regimen overseen by the International Narcotics Control Board. Technical cooperation, including both practical training and assistance in upstream activities such as drafting appropriate legislative restrictions on import/export of scheduled chemicals, is conducted by, e.g., the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and various bilateral law enforcement agencies. POP's, or for that matter CFC's, could be similarly (and perhaps even simultaneously) addressed. This issue should also be discussed in follow-up work requested of UNEP by the IFCS at Forum IV.
- Handling of stockpiles, wastes and contaminated sites. Here, countries in many regions have limited capacity and experience. Both technology transfer and funding is

required. In many cases regional destruction units, e.g. using plasma technology could be a cost-effective solution. The self-evident first step is an inventory, and in establishing such the African stockpile project could be a model to follow. As in the next point support to monitoring mechanisms would be useful. The establishment of inventories of stockpiles is one of the areas of the National Implementation Plan where countries might want to develop Action Plans for funding beyond the NIP. Implementing agencies should encourage such steps where warranted.

- The unintentionally produced POP's, such as dioxins and furans, constitute a special problem. The UNEP Toolkit is seen as helpful, but workshops and/or other training mechanisms on its implementation would be useful, as would assistance to set up new and support existing monitoring mechanisms such as analytical laboratories. UNEP Chemicals is undertaking a series of national and sub-regional workshops on the Toolkit, including field tests, within its capacity building programme to assist countries in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention. This program could to be expanded.

- Involvement of the private sector, e.g. Industry, in the work to eliminate POP's is still weak in most countries. The project failed to get broad involvement from their side. Incentives for greater participation of the private sector in the NIP are also needed. Some of the POP's, like PCB's, are primarily used by Industry, including the electricity generating sector and any phase out, replacement of equipment and substitution with more benign alternatives have to involve the primary users. UNEP Chemicals is taking an initiative to involve industry by arranging a workshop on PCB disposal in June 2004. This could hopefully be a starting point for a closer dialogue with industry on POPs issues. A closer collaboration with UNIDO and their industrial network would be feasible.

D. Material used for evaluation

The evaluation is based on review of written material and interviews as specified below. During five days with UNEP Chemicals in Geneva over the period 9 – 21 November 2003, interviews were made with the Project Manager and other key staff there as well as with participants in the ongoing PIC meeting who had earlier participated in this projects workshops. Furthermore telephone interviews were made from Geneva with other meeting participants and organizers in a number of other countries. A draft evaluation report was submitted to UNEP and with considerations given to the comments received this final version was prepared.

The evaluator finds that the methods used and the material available has been appropriate and useful for the evaluation exercise.

The following was used:

- a. Project documents

See Appendix 1

- b. Specific products

See Appendix 2

- c. Interviews with relevant UNEP staff and the Convention Secretariat

See Appendix 3

- d. Interviews with country representatives and other participants

See Appendix 3

E. Background

- a. The project

“Support to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants” is a medium-sized GEF project that was designed to raise awareness of countries of the steps necessary for implementation and ratification of the Stockholm Convention on POP’s. A series of eight sub-regional workshops, plus one for a global subset of countries (AOSIS), were held, to which all GEF-eligible countries were invited.

The planned duration of the project was 12 months from October 2001 to August 2002. The duration was later extended to June 2003 with addition of the ninth workshop for AOSIS countries. The original budget foresaw total costs to the GEF trust fund of \$580,000 and total counterpart, including in-kind contributions, of \$452,000. The GEF budget was subsequently increased by a sum of \$304,000.

- b. Expected results

The project was expected to facilitate and speed up the signing and ratification by countries of the Stockholm Convention on POP’s. This should be achieved by advising them on infrastructure and legislative measures for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention, as well as on related global instruments, e.g. the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions. Countries were also to be informed about the general risks associated with POP; of the benefits and obligations of becoming Party to the Convention; and of the GEF funding mechanism associated therewith.

- c. Activity components

The project prepared background material that was made available in all six UN languages; arranged a total of nine sub-regional workshops with general and specific information; and encouraged countries to present country reports regarding their current status, as well as the problems encountered in implementing the Stockholm Convention and in preparing their National Implementation Plans. Information was also given on the GEF funding mechanism associated with the Convention, so as to facilitate countries in applying for funding of, e.g., the NIP activities.

In addition, reports were published from all workshops and distributed to participants, and a synthesis report was prepared to summarize experiences. This material is also available on a CD-ROM. The background material as well as the workshop presentations and reports were also made available on the project’s web page, which was created by the project as part of the Stockholm Convention’s website maintained by UNEP.

F. Project execution

a. Meeting scheme

A preliminary workshop was held using other funding, for Anglophone Africa, in Accra, Ghana, 24-28 September 2001.

The following sub-regional workshops were subsequently arranged under the project:

- 1) For West-Central Asia in Manama, Bahrain, from 11 through 15 November 2001
- 2) For East Asia & Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand, from 26 through 30 November 2001
- 3) For Francophone Africa in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 25 February through 1 March 2002
- 4) For South & Central America in Montevideo, Uruguay, 18 through 22 March 2002
- 5) For Central and Eastern Europe in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 8 through 12 April 2002
- 6) For the Caribbean in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 4 through 8 June 2002
- 7) For the CIS countries in Kiev, Ukraine, 21 through 25 October 2002
- 8) For Anglophone Africa in Livingstone, Zambia, 25 through 27 November 2002
- 9) For AOSIS countries in St. John's, Antigua & Barbuda, 7 through 10 April 2003

The workshops contained, after a standard opening with information about the program of the meeting and that of UNEP Chemicals and GEF, sessions on the Conventions (Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel); Current status of legislation on toxic chemicals in the sub-region; Stockholm Convention obligations for POP's and related instruments; Basic features of Chemicals Legislation and Management; Future National Action and Regional Co-operation; Financial Mechanism for the Stockholm Convention on POP's.

Important parts of the agenda were also the working group discussions on topics such as: Intentionally produced POP's; Stockpiles and wastes; Unintentionally produced POP's; and Development of NIP, as well as country roundtables where participants gave account of the current situation with regard to the Stockholm Convention in their country.

The programs of the workshops were modified as time went by and many participating countries had already received GEF funding and started work on their NIP. Thus the program for the last workshop had, after the opening, a session called Background, The Conventions; followed by Current status of POP's implementation, in particular with regard to progress in ratification/accession and national implementation plans; Specific national issues related to the implementation of Stockholm convention obligations for POP's and related instruments; GEF funding of national, regional and sub-regional activities, NIP's and beyond; NIP and future national action and regional and sub-regional co-operation for the implementation of the convention.

The topics for working group discussions had also changed to now include items such as development and implementation of NIP's; Opportunities for sub-regional and inter-regional cooperation in addressing special issues related to the implementation of NIP's under the Stockholm Convention including activities beyond NIP's; Integration of national, inter-

regional and sub-regional activities under the Stockholm and other chemicals conventions; Issues for consideration by POP's INC-7; Strategic considerations for the upcoming POP's INC-7 and ratification procedures.

Wherever possible the workshops were arranged with the help of local UNDP offices or Regional Centres of the Basel Convention, which then took care of the on site and travel arrangements, while the Project Manager was responsible for the program and content of the workshops, coordinated the presentations, and arranged the evaluations.

The sub-regions selected for the meetings as presented in the list above were selected with a strong bias for common language with less emphasis on common level of preparedness. Some participants were somewhat critical of the decisions in this respect while others saw it as "innovative" and found it "refreshing" to meet colleagues from other countries "than the usual". Overall it seems to have worked in a satisfactory way.

b. Outputs

The outputs were written materials, also available on CD-ROM and on the UNEP Chemicals website, that fall into several categories. One part was training material that was distributed to participants prior to the workshop. This included Stockholm Convention text; Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Stockholm Convention; Layman's guide to the Stockholm Convention; GEF's Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention; Guidelines on developing NIPs and handling POP's.

Another part was the overhead and Power Point presentations from the lectures at the workshop, which were included in the workshop reports.

A third category was country reports, where progress to date and problems encountered in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention were presented. Also this was part of the reports from the workshops.

Fourthly, the outcome of the working group discussions during the workshops was made part of the report called Overview and Summary of Outcomes from GEF-MSP Sub-regional workshops on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP's Working Groups.

For a list of the outcomes see Appendix 2!

G. Evaluation

b. To what extent were project objectives met and planned results obtained

- At the objective level

Interviews with workshop participants give a strikingly consistent picture, with a single trend over time, and difference between countries as a function of their relative level of knowledge and expertise in the field of POP. Participants in the early workshops, e.g. the ones held in 2001 and the first quarter of 2002, state that the workshops and material presented improved their understanding of the risks associated with POP, and thereby of the needs for the Stockholm Convention and the benefits and obligations of becoming a Party to it. They also stress the value and helpfulness of the information given about the GEF funding mechanism for elaboration of the National Implementation Plan.

Country representatives in the later workshops, however, often had already applied for or even been granted GEF support for NIP preparation, and thus were already well informed about the problems with POP, the benefits and obligations of becoming a Party to the Stockholm Convention, and the GEF funding mechanism. For them, the value of the workshops was much more as a venue for gathering and discussing ideas on how to go about developing their NIPs, and the help given to identify some of the legislative, capacity-building, investment and other infrastructure measures needed to support implementation of the Stockholm Convention.

Many participants also stressed the value of having related instruments, e.g. the Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam Conventions, presented in one context.

An often spontaneously made comment was that discussions with other workshop participants and sharing experiences with them had been the most valuable part of the later meetings. This was not a totally universal feeling, however, as others from the same workshops stated to the evaluator that they felt they had had little to learn from other participants, as their own countries were way ahead of most others.

With regard to encouragement to sign and ratify the Stockholm Convention, workshop participants agreed that the workshops, information and other material they received via the project had certainly helped, but they also more-or-less unanimously said that other factors, e.g. the availability of GEF funding, had been a much more important factor.

Looking at the achievement indicators in the logical framework of the project, e.g. the number of signatories and early ratification of the Stockholm Convention, it is probably not possible to assess the precise role of the project in relation to other support activities. One can only conclude that employment of the whole arsenal, of which the project was a part and the GEF funding a strong element, has led to 151 signatures and 42 ratifications, of which 55 and 40, respectively, occurred after the start of the project. (That said, “after the start of the project” does not necessarily mean that the countries had yet attended any workshop, so the figure is an upper estimate of what the project could conceivably have contributed to. Looking at those who signed or ratified *after* having participated in the workshops, the numbers are 34 and 23, respectively. Playing the devil’s advocate, one could argue that if countries that signed (21) or ratified (17) the Stockholm Convention during the lead-in time of the project, that is, after inception but prior to the convening of workshops, represent an underlying trend caused by other factors than this project, and one assumes that this trend would have been unbroken also in the absence of the project, then little remains for which to credit the project!)

(Likewise, the project has, no doubt, contributed to but in no way caused, 127 countries to apply for GEF funding for their NIP. Ninety-six of these applications were already granted at the time of the evaluation and all include considerations of legislation, capacity-building, investment, and other infrastructure needs. These, plus the OECD country signatories, have also all started their NIP for the Stockholm Convention.)

Among the objectives was also to “encourage co-operative partnerships and stakeholders for the implementation of the Convention.” The workshops all stressed that need, but with one of the main stakeholders, Industry, virtually absent despite invitations, it is not so obvious that the workshops had a large impact in this respect.

c. At the outcome level

Among the workshops' participants, Ministries and Governmental Agencies were well represented. Mostly, these persons came from the fields of Environment, Health and Agriculture. Environmental and civil society NGO's were generally present, but to a varying extent between workshops/regions. Industry was virtually absent.

According both to the persons interviewed and to the workshop evaluation form that participants filled out after each workshop, the discussions and exchange of experience with other participants gradually became a more and more important part of the workshops as time went by, and participating countries learned more and more about POP, the Stockholm Convention, the GEF funding mechanism and NIP from other sources. The participants generally appreciated the topics chosen for discussions, even if some, according to the evaluation form, would have liked to allocate more time to discussions in general, or to some specific theme, e.g. legislative aspects. The participants interviewed for this evaluation expressed only satisfaction with the topics, although a few felt they had little to learn from their colleagues as their own countries were farther ahead. From the proceedings of the workshops, legal and administrative measures, trade aspects and stockpiles seem to have attracted special attention, as did the question of further assistance, e.g. for developing laboratories, training personnel for monitoring and enforcement activities, research on alternative means of vector control for developing countries, and technology transfer questions. These were also reiterated in the interviews as problems that remain largely unresolved today at the national level.

In the evaluation forms that all participants were asked to fill in at the end of each workshop, the verdict with regard to usefulness and clarity of presentations and material was, with few exceptions, unanimously positive. They found the objectives of the workshops to have been clear and relevant, and the content well arranged, adequate, useful and, mostly, easily understood. They testified that after the workshops they had a clearer understanding of the steps necessary for their country to ratify the Convention and of the GEF guidelines and procedures. They also certified that they had found the exchange of ideas during the workshop useful and relevant, and that participation in the workshops had taught them many new things. On a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 (contrary to the UNEP rating system prescribed for this evaluation) is the best, 5 was the most-used rating, followed by 4 and 3, and only occasionally something below that. The average score ranged as high as between 4.4 and 4.8, dependent on workshop and question.

Being used to seeing ratings by more critical audiences, e.g. post-graduate students, I checked the evaluation form to see if there was any pattern with regard to the empty boxes (those not filled in). The entire outcome of that exercise can be seen in Appendix 4, but the question that participants in particular skipped or avoided to fill out was the one relating to the relevance of the exchange of ideas, i.e. the discussions with other participants during the workshop. It may be more than coincidence that this also was the only question that received several 1s, the lowest, rating.

A difference is also seen between the workshops, in that the questions of clarity were left out by a fairly large fraction of the participants in the Kiev, Russian-language workshop. Also in my interviews, participants in that workshop stated that there had been some problems understanding the Russian language version of documents, and that they themselves always read the English- and Russian-language versions in parallel.

As a general rule in analysing questionnaires, it is a good idea not only to study the scores and comments given but also the pattern of unanswered questions.

In the comments section of the evaluation forms, many participants stressed the importance of the country reports as a learning tool. This was much underlined in the interviews but several of the persons I talked to also stressed the importance of participants having to come up with a status report with regard to the preparations for signing/ratifying the Convention in their countries. This was in itself a push for the activities at home “as no one wanted to look all bad”, as one country representative put it.

As stated in the project brief a website for dissemination of information for and from the project was set up. It appears as part of the Stockholm Convention website, maintained by UNEP, and contains workshop reports and training material. Many interview participants praised the website of the Convention, including the sections on the project, and stated that they used it very regularly (daily or several times a week). Others, however, said that they had little or no Internet access and thus depended on printed material.

When reviewing the website I found it informative and well arranged. The information about the Convention, Signatories and Parties, POP's, upcoming events and press coverage is user-friendly, although the specific project “Support to the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP's” is not highlighted as such. Most of the project material must also be said to short-lived and of limited value much after the termination of the project.

As mentioned earlier, one workshop had been held in Anglophone Africa in Accra, Ghana, in September 2001 with Swedish funding, prior to the start of the project here under evaluation. As it had the same goal and very similar content, the country reports from that workshop could be compared to the country reports prepared for the workshop for the same group of countries held within the project in Livingstone, Zambia, in November 2002. Clearly, in most countries noticeable progress had been made between workshops. Whereas at the time of the Accra workshop countries were just learning about POP's, the Stockholm Convention and the GEF funding mechanism, in Livingstone a little more than a year later, they were in the process of finding ways to tackle it.

Among the project outcomes identified in the logical framework of the project is “Identification of sources of technical and financial assistance for implementation of the Stockholm Convention available outside of the GEF”. Although this information was presented at the workshops, few if any of the participants interviewed in November 2003, a year or two after they took part in a workshop, had any real recollection about it, and none of them had used it.

The project succeeded fairly well in engaging civil society and environmental NGO's, but failed to get Industry involved. In the workshop discussions, the importance of awareness-raising and stakeholder participation were emphasized. Especially with regard to PCB phase-out, participation of the industrial sector was seen as decisive.

The first eight workshop reports contain a total of 125 country reports with another 24, partly overlapping, in the last, AOSIS workshop. Thus, practically all of the participating 141 countries submitted reports to the project.

Among indicators listed in the logical framework of the project is “Reports from each workshop are disseminated to the participants of all other workshops.” The way this was done

was to make the reports from the *earlier* workshops available to those in the later workshops, but not to send the new reports to all participants of the previous workshops. They had to go to the website to find the reports, or to request them specially.

d. At the activity level

A series of eight sub-regional workshops, plus one for a global subset of countries (AOSIS), were held, to which all GEF-eligible countries were invited. Just prior to the project's start, a nearly identical regional workshop was also held for countries of Anglophone Africa, with other funding.

The number of participants in the workshops ranged from 37 to 65, and totalled 479. Out of these, a range of from 21 to 56, and a total of 349 were country representatives.

Translation of documents for and from the workshops was generally done quite expediently, and in most cases was completed within a month. Exceptions are some vacation periods when it took longer, and a case with a translation into Spanish where a format dispute extended the process to three months.

The evaluator has reviewed the workshop training material and concurs with the opinion of the participants as expressed in the workshop evaluation sheets, that it is clear and relevant as presented. However, the printed versions are heavily based on Power Point and over-head presentations and lack the verbal comments and explanations that the lecturers provided. Although clear and relevant, they feel somewhat lean on reading them. Over time, there was a shift in emphasis in the workshop training material that reflects both the progress made at the national level in NIP preparation, and advancement in the knowledge and understanding of the threats from POP. Although this shift is clear, some participants, when interviewed, felt that it would have suited their needs better had it happened faster and gone further. At the same time, they acknowledged that other countries in the sub-region might have been less advanced and therefore more in need of the "old" type of information.

Several of the participants interviewed spontaneously commented on the relationships between this project and others relating to POP. Generally speaking, the African Stockpile Project was seen with either appreciation or envy, depending on whether their countries were involved or not. Clearly, many more countries would have liked to join had they been eligible. In contrast, the project 12 Pilot Countries Project for the Development of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) for the Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's), received either ironic comments (from those whose countries were not involved) or excuses (from those whose countries were involved, but which had not shown appreciable advancement over the others).

The organization of the nine sub-regional workshops was done effectively and good use was made of both UNDP offices and the Regional Centres of the Basel Convention to handle practical and administrative matters. Only when such facilities were not available, as in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, for the meeting there in April 2003, were problems encountered with money transfer and other administrative arrangements.

Workshop proceedings were simultaneously disseminated in English and the dominant local language, and this occurred without undue delays. The information was also made available on the website.

As to indicators in the logical framework of the project, core material was produced in the six UN languages, but was not always delivered with the region-specific material to all participants until at least 3 weeks prior to the workshops. The reasons for this varied. On some occasions, workshops were rescheduled and not all material was yet available. In most cases, some nominations of participants by Governments came late or were changed at the last minute so the participants were not all known three weeks in advance. In one case, the Bahrain workshop, the material in the dominant local language, Arabic, was not sent out prior to the meeting at all.

The logical framework indicators also say: “Workshops cover all GEF-eligible countries”. All of those countries were invited, and 141 of them attended. See Appendix 5. Obviously some were missing, but many of those are countries at war and/or with weak central Governments. Some other, however, such as Estonia and Mongolia, were absent despite participating in enabling activities for other environmental conventions. On enquiry, on condition of anonymity, a high-ranking person at the Ministry for Environment in one of the countries suggested that the reason could be “ that a certain key person didn’t have time and refused to delegate”.

“On average 40 participants in each workshop, including Government representatives from different sectors, Industry, and environmental or civil society NGO’s” is another logical framework indicator that was not fully met, as Industry representatives, although invited, generally did not attend. When inquired about the reason industrial representatives suggested that a reason could be that the sub-regions used by the project were poorly matched by the geographic coverage of industrial organisation which mostly have a global, OECD, or national base.

Monitoring and evaluation included the quarterly reports to UNEP/GEF and the evaluation forms that participants were asked to fill out after each of the workshops. In addition, monitoring and evaluation also took place informally, through e-mailed exchanges of views between the principal presenters and organizers. The evaluator has checked the e-mails in this respect, and finds the process reasonably thorough. However, the resulting observations and conclusions did not affect, as the indicators in the logical framework state, the content and arrangements at each subsequent workshop, but came more as a batch of changes in the program content towards the end (Livingstone and St. John workshops).

Workshop proceedings and translations, where appropriate, were produced and distributed to participants of the workshop in question and made available to all in the subsequent workshops. The UNEP website on the Stockholm Convention on POP, on which this project’s material was posted, was progressively updated and characterized as very useful by the participants interviewed.

d) Cost-effectiveness of the project

The project accomplished its goals within the budget allocated. The sustainability of the achievements seems guaranteed within the framework of the Stockholm Convention and no specific investment was under-utilised. From these points of view the project was cost-effective. However, had funds been more limited one could have questioned the repetition of the workshop for Anglophone African Countries, as one for the same countries with similar content had been held just before this very project started. The special workshop for representatives of The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) was also largely a repetition,

as most countries had already participated in earlier sub-regional workshops. The costs for that meeting in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, were strikingly high.

However, this is not a criticism of the execution of the project, per se, as it was decided when the project was extended, that the budget would be increased for the purpose of this last workshop.

Another aspect of cost-effectiveness relates to the many activities supporting the Stockholm Convention launched parallel to or overlapping with the project. The whole battery has clearly promoted the signing and ratification of the Convention, but it is difficult to assess the relative role and importance of the project itself, as it is a relatively small component in the total effort. Thereby also the question of the overall cost-effectiveness is somewhat muddled.

e) Comments on various aspects of the project

The participants interviewed from the first workshops consistently stated that the information they obtained helped them understand the problems associated with POP and the benefits and obligations that follow from being Party to the Stockholm Convention. They also stated that the information helped them in applying for GEF funding for their National Implementation Plans (NIP). Participants in the later workshops stressed the value of the workshops in relation to preparing the NIP and, especially, the importance of the opportunity to exchange experiences with regard to that work with colleagues from other countries.

Many of them, though, used expressions such as "important at that time", indicating that by now the effects of the workshops had been superseded by many other events, not the least the continued work with their NIPs. One dissenting voice felt the workshop had come too late, and would have been more useful a year or so earlier.

(Some participants did not actually remember immediately, one-to-two years later, which workshop in a given place the questions referred to. "I go to so many workshops", they said. "I represent my country in all of these international meetings and thus travel most of the time." Comments like that naturally raise the question as to the selection of participants and to the further transfer of knowledge from participants to others in their countries, but as selection of participants was done by the Governments this is not a criticism of the project as such.)

The availability of the GEF funding for the NIPs has secured a use of the information and capacity created through the project, and thereby retention of the knowledge and sustainability of the project's achievements.

Representatives from 141 countries attended the workshops, including the pre-project one in Accra, which is just short of ninety percent of the GEF-eligible countries. Most of the participants represented Ministries and Governmental Agencies in the fields of Health and Environment. A fair number also came from Agriculture and some from Departments of Justice. The private sector, including Industry, was virtually absent, and the civil society NGO's sparsely represented.

The project was fairly straightforward, and the institutional infrastructure provided - a part-time project manager and a consultant within the UNEP Chemicals office in Geneva - was quite adequate to implement it. Financing was adequate, and together with the co-financing, met the needs of the project. The allocation of resources between budget lines was also feasible and adequate. The administrative arrangements, making use of local UNDP offices and Regional Centres of Basel Convention, when existing, functioned well. Some problems were encountered, e.g. in money transfer, when such facilities were not available. One of the lessons from the project relates to the timetables for a series of international meetings, where

account has to be taken of not only regional holidays, but also of other international meetings that might engage the same group of people. Some rescheduling and spacing out of the workshops, not foreseen in the original project document, was required for these reasons.

A special case, however, was the last of the workshops for Anglophone Africa, which was first planned to take place in Egypt, but was later moved to Zambia. The decision to do so, which during my interviews was spontaneously criticized by one participant and commented on by several others, was perceived as a punishment of Egypt for having chosen UNIDO instead of UNEP as executing agency for its GEF-funded NIP. The Project Manager says there were other reasons for the decision, such as delayed responses and general communications difficulties with the planned Egyptian counterpart, but the unfortunate perception of the change of venue as a punitive measure is still there a year later.

The project was not a complicated one, but was executed with the degree of flexibility required. The backstopping that the project required was delivered to the general satisfaction of participants, lecturers and Stockholm Convention focal points. The project is fully replicable, should the need arise. No special arrangements or steps have, however, been taken in this respect.

The formal monitoring and evaluation system of the project consisted of workshop evaluation forms that the participants were asked to fill out and the quarterly and semi-annual reporting to UNEP/GEF. Informally, though, there were also e-mail contacts and discussions that lead to changes in content and meeting schedules. No specific baselines were identified for this purpose and the indicators used are just some of those in the logical framework of the project.

Quality assurance has principally been based on the workshop evaluation forms filled out by participants, and the impressions by the organizers and lecturers present. The former have been analysed systematically with some care, the latter have been collected more ad hoc. Primarily, the quality assurance has been directed to the clarity and relevance of the presentations, to scheduling and, but less so, to the selection of topics for discussion.

With regard to control of deliveries, the Project Manager and the consultant devoted much time and energy to making sure that country reports have been included in the workshop reports, and have been quite successful in that respect.

H. Rated success of project implementation: UNEP rating system

Achievement of objectives and planned results	1	Excellent (The only question is the more exact role of the project among many other activities in achieving this.)
Attainment of activities	2	Very good (With few exceptions all was done according to plan.)
Cost-effectiveness	3	Good (Two more or less duplicated meetings enforce the law of diminishing returns.)
Impact	2	Very good (Although the exact role of the project among many other activities is somewhat unclear.)

Sustainability activities with e.g. NIP's under the Convention.)	1	Excellent (Thanks to the continued activities with e.g. NIP's under the Convention.)
Stakeholders' participation Industry.)	3	Good (The real exception being Industry.)
Country ownership elaboration of NIP's, and the preparations of the country reports during the workshops reinforced it.)	1	Excellent (The GEF supported elaboration of NIP's, and the preparations of the country reports during the workshops reinforced it.)
Implementation approach forward project was well implemented. A somewhat faster adjustment of workshop content to changing needs would have been desirable.)	2	Very good (A relatively straight forward project was well implemented. A somewhat faster adjustment of workshop content to changing needs would have been desirable.)
Financial planning Funding was also adequate bordering on generous.)	1	Excellent (Hardly any changes needed to be done except to accommodate one additional workshop and reach the goals. Funding was also adequate bordering on generous.)
Replicability in support of the Convention could be fully replicated with the project as a model.)	1	Excellent (Sub-regional workshops in support of the Convention could be fully replicated with the project as a model.)
Monitoring and evaluation needs.)	1	Excellent (Was done in a thorough fashion both by workshop participants and the UNEP management, and led to a shift in emphasis and content, especially towards the end of the workshop series to meet evolving needs.)
Overall rating	2	Very good

I. Rated success of project implementation: GEF rating system

Achievement of objectives and planned results	Highly satisfactory
Attainment of activities	Highly satisfactory
Cost-effectiveness	Satisfactory
Impact	Satisfactory
Sustainability	Highly satisfactory
Stakeholders' participation	Satisfactory
Country ownership	Highly satisfactory
Implementation approach	Highly satisfactory
Financial planning	Highly satisfactory
Replicability	Highly satisfactory

Monitoring and evaluation

Highly satisfactory

Overall rating

Highly satisfactory

Appendix 1: Project-related documents reviewed

- MSP as approved by the GEF Council, September 2001. Medium Project brief – Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP
- Supplemental request to the project “Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP”
- Final report for internal projects “Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP”
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 October to 31 December 2001
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 January to 31 March 2002
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 April to 30 June 2002
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 July to 30 September 2002
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 October to 31 December 2002
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 January to 31 March 2003
- Quarterly report to UNEP/GEF, 1 April to 30 June 2003-12-19
- UNEP PIR Individual Report FY 2003 “Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP”
- Workshop Evaluations from Manama, 19 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Bangkok, 31 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Ouagadougou, 26 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Montevideo, 29 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Bratislava, 25 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Port of Spain, 23 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Kiev, 18 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from Livingstone, 32 forms
- Workshop Evaluations from St. John’s, 42 forms
- List of applications for GEF funding for Enabling Activities
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Islamic Republic of Iran
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Mongolia
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Argentina
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Saint Lucia
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Jamaica
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Ukraine
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, The Republic of Seychelles
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, The Republic of Guinea Bissau
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Senegal

- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Kingdom of Cambodia
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Republic of Cuba
- Project proposals for Enabling Activity Funding for Accession and Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Republic of Albania
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Accra
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Bangkok
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Ouagadougou
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Montevideo
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Bratislava
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Port of Spain
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments before Kiev
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Kiev
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments before Livingstone, round 1
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments before Livingstone, round 2
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments before Livingstone, round 3
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after Livingstone
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments before St. John's
- E-mails evaluating workshops and discussing changes and adjustments after St. John's
- Various documents relating to translation issues and stocks of proceedings in different languages

Appendix 2: Specific products

0. (PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Chemicals, Policy and Legislation, with Special Emphasis on the Reduction and Elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Accra, Ghana, 24–28 September 2001)
1. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Manama, Bahrain, 11-15 November 2001
2. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Bangkok, Thailand, 26-30 November 2001
3. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 25 February - 1 March 2002
4. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Montevideo, Uruguay, 18-22 March 2002
5. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 8-12 April 2002
6. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 4-8 June 2002
7. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Kiev, Ukraine, 21-25 October 2002
8. PROCEEDINGS, Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Livingstone, Zambia, 25-27 November 2002
9. PROCEEDINGS, Inter-regional workshop for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, 7-10 April 2003
10. Overview and Summary of Outcomes from GEF-MSP Sub-regional workshop on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), Working Groups

11. CD-ROM, GEF-MSP on Support for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP, Compilation of Workshop Proceedings and background documents
12. Training material: Stockholm Convention text;
13. Training material: Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Stockholm Convention;
14. Training material: Layman's guide to the Stockholm Convention;
15. Training material: GEF's Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention;
16. Training material: Guidelines on developing NIPs and handling POP.

Appendix 3: Persons interviewed

Bo Wahlström, Project Manager, UNEP Chemicals, Geneva

John Whitelaw, Officer in charge, UNEP Chemicals, Geneva

Mohammed Omotola, Project Consultant, UNEP Chemicals, Geneva

Cairine Cameron, Financial & Administrative Officer, UNEP Geneva

Bahar Zorofi, Program Officer, UNEP Nairobi

Taghi Ebadi, Iran

Naji Kodeih, Libanon

Vellayutham Pachaimuthu, Malaysia

Angelita Brabante, Philippines

Dahouri Zadi, Cote d'Ivoire

Bouchra Dahri, Morocco

Arturo Navarro Arias, Costa Rica

Vesna Ternifi, Slovenia

Gabor Kovacs, Hungary

Mario Abo, Cuba

Mzia Gvilava, Georgia

Anahit Aleksandryan, Armenia

Yuriy Kundiyev, Ukraine

Terek Eid Muhamed, Egypt

Thembisile Kumalo, South Africa

Desire Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso

Nelson Manda, Zambia

Hyacint Chin Sue, Jamaica

Ali Kafkas, Libanon

Appendix 4. Workshop evaluation: non-responses in otherwise completed forms.

The following quantifies the specific questions that were left blank on the workshop evaluation forms:

The objectives of this workshop were: Clear – Not clear	7
Relevant – Not relevant	25
The contents of this workshop were: Well arranged – Disorderly	22
Adequate – Inadequate	27
Useful – Not useful	24
Easily understood – Not easily understood	29
Your understanding of the steps necessary for your country to ratify the convention is: Clear – Confusing	3
Your understanding of GEF guidelines and procedures is: Clear – Not clear	3
The presentation of this workshop was: Clear – Not clear	1
The terminology of this workshop was: Simple – Complicated	20
Clear – Not clear	33
The exchange of ideas during this workshop was: Useful – Not useful	8
Relevant – Not relevant	46
Participating in this workshop enabled you to learn: Many new things – Nothing new	10

Appendix 5: GEF-eligible countries that were invited to the workshops but did not attend

Albania
Angola
Bosnia-Herzegovina
Eritrea
Estonia
Equatorial Guinea
Federated States of Micronesia
Guatemala
Marshall Islands
Mongolia
Nauru
Somalia
Tonga
Turkmenistan
Tuvalu
Qatar
United Arab Emirates