

**Rotterdam Convention on the Prior
Informed Consent Procedure for
Certain Hazardous Chemicals and
Pesticides in International Trade**Distr.: Limited
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**Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention
on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain
Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
Twelfth meeting**
Geneva, 28 April–9 May 2025

**Draft report of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam
Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for
Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International
Trade on the work of its twelfth meeting****Addendum****I. Rules of procedure for the Conference of the Parties (agenda
item 4)**

1. [to be completed]

**II. Matters related to the implementation of the Convention (agenda
item 5)****A. Status of implementation**

2. [to be completed]

B. Listing of chemicals in Annex III to the Convention**1. Chemical Review Committee**

3. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat outlined the information in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/5. The reports of the Committee's nineteenth and twentieth meetings were available in document UNEP/FAO/RC/CRC.19/14, and documents UNEP/FAO/RC/CRC.20/28 and UNEP/FAO/RC/CRC.20/28/Add.1, respectively. He recalled that the terms of office of 17 members of the Committee would expire on 30 April 2026 and that the Conference of the Parties was expected to appoint their replacements. One development since the issuance of the meeting documents on the matter was that two members had been replaced, which would need to be confirmed in two new subparagraphs to be added to the draft decision in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/5.

4. The Chair of the Chemical Review Committee, Noluzuko Gwayi, delivered a statement on the work of the Committee. She recalled that, at its eighteenth meeting, the Committee had decided to recommend that two new chemicals, methyl bromide and paraquat, be listed in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention, and that at its nineteenth meeting, the Committee had decided to recommend the listing of two additional chemicals, chlorpyrifos and mercury. The listing of those chemicals was before the Conference of the Parties for consideration at the current meeting. At its twentieth meeting,

the Committee had reviewed notifications of final regulatory action for benzidine and its salts, carbaryl, chlorpyrifos, chlorpyrifos-methyl, cyhexatin, dichlorvos, dicofol, ethion, hexachlorobenzene, methidathion, paraquat and paraquat dichloride, pentachlorobenzene, phenthoate, profenofos, prothiofos, quinalphos, thiodicarb and zineb, together with proposals for listing severely hazardous pesticide formulations in Annex III to the Convention for cypermethrin emulsifiable concentrate 10 per cent, cypermethrin emulsifiable concentrate 35 per cent, emamectin benzoate water soluble granules 5 per cent and methomyl water soluble powder 40 per cent. At its twenty-first meeting, the Committee would pursue its review of notifications on carbaryl, chlorfenvinphos, dichlorvos, dicofol, ethion, methidathion, penthoate, profenofos, prothiofos, quinalphos and thiodicarb and look at 24 new notifications on 10 chemicals.

5. Ms. Gwayi, recalling that her second term of office would expire on 30 April 2026, provided some reflections on her time as Chair. The Committee made available critical information on the dangers of the chemicals it reviewed. Such information was particularly useful to developing countries, many of which lacked the resources and expertise to carry out comprehensive risk assessments of their own. Capacity-building for new and existing Committee members helped to ensure rigorous discussions and improve the quality of the Committee's work. It was therefore regrettable that, in recent years, funding cuts had reduced the number of workshops that the Secretariat was able to organize. There had been a decline in the number of days allocated to the Committee for its meetings. It should be noted that the Committee required five days per meeting in order to fulfil its mandate effectively and start to clear the backlog of notifications of final regulatory action that had built up due to the high numbers of notifications of final regulatory action submitted by the notifying Parties.

6. In the ensuing discussion, widespread appreciation was expressed to the Chair and members of the Chemical Review Committee for their work and to the Secretariat for conducting orientation and training workshops and webinars, and activities to enhance openness and transparency. Several representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, encouraged such capacity-building efforts to continue, with one representative underscoring their importance in promoting the full and effective participation of members in the Committee's work.

7. Several representatives requested greater support from the Secretariat in implementing the Rotterdam Convention, including in the form of financial and technical assistance and information on alternatives to hazardous chemicals and pesticides. In that regard, several representatives highlighted implementation challenges, including finding agronomically viable and cost-effective alternatives for farmers, transitioning away from chemicals and pesticides that were currently essential for food security, combating the illegal trade in hazardous chemicals and eliminating pests and diseases. Some representatives outlined activities carried out in their countries to implement the Convention.

8. One representative highlighted the need to strengthen the Chemical Review Committee, while another emphasized the importance of addressing the backlog of notifications of final regulatory action. One representative called for the prompt sharing of information between countries on restrictions and prohibitions in order to avoid unnecessary trade barriers.

9. Several representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, called for the Conference of the Parties to request the Committee to identify, at its twenty-first meeting, an interim Chair of the Committee for its twenty-second meeting.

10. Following the discussion, the Conference of the Parties adopted the draft decision set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/5, as orally amended.

2. Methyl bromide

11. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat outlined the information in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/14, which contained a draft decision including draft text of an amendment to list methyl bromide in Annex III, and in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.11/14/Add.1, which contained the draft decision guidance document adopted by the Chemical Review Committee.

12. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, expressed support for the listing of methyl bromide in Annex III to the Convention. A number of representatives underscored the fact that the listing of any chemical in Annex III did not prevent its trade or constitute a ban on its use, and one said that the use of the prior informed consent procedure would enhance transparency in international trade and enable Parties to identify unreported or unauthorized uses.

13. Many representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, recalled that methyl bromide was controlled under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, therefore proposed referring to the Montreal Protocol in the preamble of the draft decision. While some representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that they saw the listing of methyl bromide in Annex III as a way of complementing the Montreal Protocol, others said that they did not support the listing of methyl bromide unless it was possible to ensure that there was no overlap or duplication of work with the provisions of the Montreal Protocol and that the listing constituted an improvement on the existing controls under that universally ratified instrument, especially given the scarcity of resources being experienced by all Parties. One representative emphasized the need to ensure synergies with the Montreal Protocol in the event that methyl bromide were listed in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention.

14. Many representatives provided details regarding the use of methyl bromide in their own countries or described their efforts to control and regulate the chemical, with some stressing that quarantine and pre-shipment applications were economically essential for crop fumigation. Some representatives said that they were not in favour of the listing owing to the absence of reliable, economically viable alternatives or concern that the listing of methyl bromide would lead to delays in the procurement of the chemical, with potentially dire economic consequences.

15. One representative said that, if methyl bromide were to be listed in Annex III, further technical studies should be carried out to identify viable, effective and accessible alternatives, and risk assessments should be conducted taking local conditions into account.

16. Following the discussion, the Conference of the Parties established a contact group on the listing of chemicals, to be co-chaired by Caroline Theka (Malawi) and Marit Randall (Norway). The group was mandated to discuss the draft decision on listing methyl bromide set out in paragraph 4 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/14.

17. [To be completed]

3. Mercury

18. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to a note by the Secretariat on the inclusion of mercury in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/13), which contained a draft decision on the matter. She recalled that at its twentieth meeting, in 2024, the Chemical Review Committee had, by its decision CRC-20/2, adopted the draft decision guidance document on mercury, as set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/13/Add.1.

19. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives supported the inclusion of mercury under the industrial category in Annex III to the Convention, and expressed agreement with the conclusion of the Chemical Review Committee that the chemical met all the requirements for listing. Several noted that subjecting mercury to the prior informed consent procedure would promote the exchange of information to support national decision-making, help protect human health and the environment, and assist countries in combating illegal trade. Some representatives said that the listing of mercury in Annex III would help vulnerable small island developing States to make informed decisions on mercury trade. A number of representatives outlined actions being taken at the national level to phase out the use of mercury in various products and processes in order to reduce mercury pollution, pursuant to their obligations as Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

20. There was some discussion on the implications for Parties that had ratified both the Rotterdam Convention and the Minamata Convention of listing mercury in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention, given that the matter of consent was included in paragraph 6 of Article 3 of the Minamata Convention, on mercury supply sources and trade. Several representatives said that the listing of mercury in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention would reinforce and complement efforts to regulate trade under the Minamata Convention, although it was important to avoid duplicating efforts and adding to the reporting burden and compliance obligations of Parties. One representative said that the listing of mercury would be premature until more analysis had been carried out regarding the potential economic impact on mercury-producing countries and the increased burden of mercury waste that might result. Another representative said that listing was not appropriate, as trade in mercury was already regulated under the Minamata Convention.

21. One representative said that the potential duplication of efforts, and the increasing number of requirements that needed to be met by industry and other actors, could run counter to efforts to strengthen synergies between and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Basel, Rotterdam

and Stockholm conventions. Attention should be given to how such issues might be resolved prior to the listing of mercury in Annex III.

22. The representative of the European Union introduced a proposal set out in a conference room paper. He said that the listing of mercury in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention would complement action under the Minamata Convention, thereby supporting Parties in their efforts to better control and phase out the use of mercury and ensuring that Parties had complete information on the import and export of the chemical. To clarify the linkage between measures under the two conventions, he proposed that the draft decision on the matter include a reference to the Minamata Convention and the applicable rules, and that the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention, in consultation with the secretariat of the Minamata Convention, develop guidance on the coherent implementation of both conventions for those Parties to the Rotterdam Convention that were also Parties to the Minamata Convention.

23. The Conference of the Parties agreed to mandate the contact group on the listing of chemicals to discuss the draft decision on listing mercury set out in paragraph 4 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/13 and the conference room paper submitted by the European Union in order to prepare a draft decision on the matter, as well as a supplemental decision on other actions to be taken, if applicable.

24. [to be completed]

4. Chlorpyrifos

25. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to a note by the Secretariat on the inclusion of chlorpyrifos in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/8), which contained a draft decision on the matter. He recalled that, at its twentieth meeting, in 2024, the Chemical Review Committee had adopted the draft decision guidance document on chlorpyrifos, which was set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/8/Add.1.

26. In the discussion that followed, most of the representatives who spoke, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, expressed strong support for the inclusion of chlorpyrifos in Annex III, with many emphasizing that the use of the pesticide was already banned or restricted in their countries. One underscored the fact that the prohibition had not led to reduced agricultural output or increased costs to farmers. Some representatives noted the chemical's continued use and import, subject to stringent regulatory control, for pest control in specific crops, such as coffee and tobacco, but nevertheless strongly supported its listing. Some drew attention to the toxicity of chlorpyrifos and its impact on human health and the environment. A number of representatives called for increased technical and financial assistance to developing countries to facilitate their transition to safer alternatives.

27. Several representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, recalled that the inclusion of a chemical in Annex III to the Convention meant that the chemical would be subject to certain rules when traded internationally, and did not constitute an international ban; rather, it promoted the exchange of information on the listed chemical for informed national decision-making. The representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries added that his region already applied a bilateral explicit consent procedure to exports of chlorpyrifos to all countries and that the mechanism worked well. The same representative, supported by another, said that the listing of the chemical would create synergies with the Stockholm Convention, under which chlorpyrifos was now listed for global elimination, with some time-limited exemptions.

28. Several representatives opposed the listing of chlorpyrifos at the current time, with some expressing the view that more in-depth evaluation and scientific evidence of the harm posed by chlorpyrifos were needed. A number of representatives voiced concern about the lack of viable, cost-effective alternatives, which, they said, could put food security in their countries at risk. One representative said that the listing of chlorpyrifos in Annex III could jeopardize the phytosanitary management of pests in critical crops, such as bananas, rice and maize, and negatively affect the livelihoods of small and medium-sized producers. Some representatives highlighted the criticality of chlorpyrifos in controlling locust swarms and termites, especially in high-risk areas, emphasizing that its use was strictly regulated, that measures were taken to minimize harm to non-target species and mitigate environmental impacts, and that alternatives were actively being sought. One acknowledged that the inclusion of a chemical in Annex III did not constitute a formal ban on its use and called for strengthened regional cooperation in the sharing of data and best practices with a view to managing locust plagues in a more sustainable manner.

29. Following the discussion, the Conference of the Parties agreed to mandate the contact group on the listing of chemicals to discuss the draft decision on listing chlorpyrifos as set out in paragraph 4 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/8.

30. [to be completed]

5. Paraquat

31. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to the relevant documents, including a note by the Secretariat on the inclusion of paraquat in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/15/Rev.1). At its nineteenth meeting, in 2023, the Chemical Review Committee had adopted the draft decision guidance document on paraquat, which was set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/15/Add.1.

32. At its twentieth meeting, in 2024, the Committee had reviewed additional notifications of final regulatory action submitted by Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and Togo. Since the Chemical Review Committee had already made a recommendation on listing that chemical at its eighteenth meeting, it had decided not to take further action on the additional notifications at the time.

33. In the ensuing discussion, most of the representatives who spoke, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, voiced support for the inclusion of paraquat in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention, with many emphasizing that the chemical was already banned or restricted in their countries. Several representatives drew attention to the significant risks posed by paraquat to human health and the environment.

34. Several representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, recalled that the inclusion of a chemical in Annex III to the Convention did not in any way constitute an international ban or an invitation to Parties to restrict the use of the chemical concerned, but would enable Parties to access information on the chemical that supported informed decision-making. One representative emphasized the fact that the listing of paraquat gave countries access to the prior informed consent procedure and promoted responsible trade practices, especially for developing countries with limited capacity to assess hazardous chemicals. The representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries added that the Convention did not require the conduct of risk assessments or of comprehensive scientific assessments of chemicals, but rather the review of notifications of final regulatory action against the criteria set out in Annex II to the Convention.

35. Several representatives voiced their objection to the listing of paraquat in Annex III, noting that the herbicide was still widely used in the management of resistant weeds and was critical to food security. One representative said that paraquat was a herbicide of strategic phytosanitary importance, the use of which was subject to strict controls and monitoring on the basis of agricultural best practices. While he acknowledged that the inclusion of a chemical in Annex III did not constitute a formal ban on its use, he considered that it could be an indirect barrier to trade; in the case of paraquat, it could result in herbicide resistance, make weed management more difficult and increase production costs for developing countries. Some representatives expressed concern about the lack of viable, affordable and effective alternatives; the threat to food security and farmers' livelihoods, particularly small and medium-sized producers; and the attendant – and significant – socioeconomic impacts. Another representative emphasized that the substitution of paraquat was not possible without adversely affecting agricultural productivity and sustainability or interrupting the food chain.

36. Following the discussion, the Conference of the Parties agreed to mandate the contact group on the listing of chemicals to discuss the draft decision on listing paraquat as set out in paragraph 6 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/15/Rev.1.

37. [to be completed]

6. Iprodione

38. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to a note by the Secretariat on the inclusion of iprodione in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/11), which contained a draft decision on the matter, and a note by the Secretariat presenting the draft decision guidance document on iprodione adopted by the Chemical Review Committee at its eighteenth meeting, in 2022 (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/11/Add.1). He recalled that the Conference of the Parties, at its eleventh meeting, had been unable to reach consensus on the listing of iprodione in Annex III under the pesticide category, and had decided to defer further consideration of the chemical to the current meeting.

39. In the ensuing discussion, several representatives expressed support for the inclusion of iprodione in Annex III. One representative expressed concern at the increase in the number of chemicals recommended for listing by the Chemical Review Committee on which the Conference of the Parties had been unable to reach consensus, and the possible negative consequences of inaction.
40. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, recalled that the listing of a chemical in Annex III did not constitute an international ban on the use of that chemical or an invitation to Parties to restrict its use. In addition, a study, available on the Rotterdam Convention website, had found no conclusive evidence of any impact of listing on the price of or international trade in certain pesticides. His Party already applied a bilateral explicit consent procedure to exports of iprodione, and the mechanism had been found to operate effectively and promote cooperative efforts among Parties to protect human health and the environment. Information on alternatives to hazardous pesticides was available on the website of the Rotterdam Convention and from local offices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
41. Several representatives opposed the listing of iprodione at the current time, given its importance to food security in their countries and the lack of viable alternatives. One representative explained that iprodione was the only approved pesticide in his country for controlling several major plant diseases. Another representative said that iprodione was a product of strategic phytosanitary importance in the control of pests and fungi in crops of regional economic significance, such as bananas, cocoa, rice and tomatoes, and the application of control measures to the chemical could negatively impact the livelihoods of small and medium-sized producers. The same representative, supported by another, emphasized the importance of a science-based approach that took into account local conditions and production methods in strengthening national capacity for the safe use of the chemical, including through technology transfer and knowledge-sharing, in order to achieve a balance between sustainable national economic growth and the protection of human health and the environment. Some representatives called for in-depth discussion on the effectiveness of the Convention with a view to eliminating once and for all the indirect negative impacts of listing chemicals, preventing obstacles to trade and obviating the associated economic costs faced by developing countries.
42. Some representatives opposed a proposal to refer the matter to the contact group on the listing of chemicals, noting that many Parties were not in favour of the listing. Another representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, highlighted the fact that the usual procedure in cases of divergence of opinion was for the matter to be discussed in a contact group. The President proposed, and it was agreed, that consideration of the matter would be deferred to later in the meeting.
43. [to be completed]

7. Acetochlor

44. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat recalled that, at its ninth, tenth and eleventh meetings, the Conference of the Parties had been unable to reach consensus regarding the inclusion of acetochlor in Annex III to the Convention. Given the lack of consensus, the Conference of the Parties had decided, at its eleventh meeting, to defer further consideration of the listing of acetochlor to the current meeting. At its ninth meeting, in decision RC-9/5, the Conference of the Parties had agreed that all the requirements set out in Articles 5 and 7 for listing in Annex III to the Convention had been met for acetochlor. He drew attention to document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/6, which contained a draft decision, including draft text of an amendment to list acetochlor in Annex III to the Convention, and document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/6/Add.1, which contained a draft decision guidance document on acetochlor.
45. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, expressed support for the listing of acetochlor in Annex III to the Convention. One representative drew attention to the fact that the chemical had the potential to contaminate ground, surface and drinking water. Some said that, while they supported the listing of the chemical, they would need to continue to use it in their countries until a suitable, cost-effective alternative could be found. One representative recalled that the listing of acetochlor in Annex III would not constitute a ban on the chemical, while another, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, recalled that the notified final regulatory actions on the chemical fully met the criteria for listing.
46. Several representatives, noting that the chemical was essential for weed management in their countries, said that they did not support the listing of acetochlor in Annex III to the Convention. Some representatives said that, although the listing of a chemical in Annex III did not constitute a ban on its use, it did have significant repercussions in practice, leading to greater commercial control and a significant increase in costs for farmers. The extensive use of acetochlor in their countries meant that

listing would therefore have a hugely negative effect on national economies and on food production, thereby also posing a threat to food security. One representative requested that the Chemical Review Committee review acetochlor once again, taking into account the risk assessments carried out by other bodies that had shown that acetochlor could be used safely with suitable personal protective equipment. She said that her country had worked hard to minimize the volume of acetochlor used through the use of advanced spraying and drone technology.

47. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, drew attention to a study that had found no conclusive evidence that listing a chemical in Annex III to the Convention had any impact on the cost of, and international trade in, pesticides. The study was available on the Convention website.

48. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed support for further consideration of the listing of the chemical in a contact group, given that the Conference of the Parties had previously concluded that the criteria for listing the chemical in Annex III had been met. Several representatives said that they did not support further discussion in a contact group.

49. One representative noted that the discussions on acetochlor had shown that without the generation of any new scientific knowledge regarding the chemical no progress could be made, as the same arguments would continue to be presented by Parties.

50. Given the lack of consensus on the listing of acetochlor in Annex III to the Convention, the Conference of the Parties decided to defer further consideration of acetochlor to its thirteenth meeting.

8. Carbosulfan

51. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to the relevant documents, namely a note by the Secretariat on the inclusion of carbosulfan in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/7), which contained a draft decision on the matter, and the draft decision guidance document on carbosulfan adopted by the Chemical Review Committee (UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/7/Add.1). She recalled that, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties had agreed, in decision RC-8/6, that all the requirements set out in Article 5 and Article 7 for listing in Annex III to the Convention had been met for carbosulfan. The Conference of the Parties had been unable, however, to reach consensus at its eighth to eleventh meetings with regard to the listing of the chemical in Annex III. It had decided, at its eleventh meeting, to defer further consideration of the matter to the current meeting.

52. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed support for the listing of carbosulfan in Annex III to the Convention. Several representatives noted that the use of the pesticide was already banned or restricted in their own countries or subregions; a number highlighted the impact of carbosulfan on human health and the environment. One representative noted that exposure to carbosulfan in her country had proved fatal in some cases.

53. The Conference of the Parties adopted the draft decision set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/7, amending Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention to list carbosulfan under the pesticide category and approving the decision guidance document.

9. Liquid formulations (emulsifiable concentrate and soluble concentrate) containing paraquat dichloride at or above 276 g/L, corresponding to paraquat ion at or above 200 g/L

54. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat recalled that, at its sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh meetings, the Conference of the Parties had considered the inclusion of liquid formulations (emulsifiable concentrate and soluble concentrate) containing paraquat dichloride at or above 276 g/L, corresponding to paraquat ion at or above 200 g/L in Annex III to the Convention but had been unable to reach consensus on the matter. In its decision RC-6/8, the Conference of the Parties had decided that all the requirements set out in Articles 6 and 7 for listing in Annex III had been met for the paraquat dichloride formulations. At its eleventh meeting, given the lack of consensus, the Conference of the Parties had decided to defer further consideration of paraquat dichloride formulations to the current meeting.

55. She drew attention to document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/12, which contained a draft decision including draft text of an amendment to list the paraquat dichloride formulations in Annex III, and document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/12/Add.1, which contained the draft decision guidance document on the chemical.

56. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed support for the listing of the paraquat dichloride formulations in Annex III to the Convention. One representative noted that her country had registered the use of the chemical in 2013 and the registrations provided her country with the necessary information to enable continued risk assessment and management of the chemical. Another representative said that her country had a high volume of residues of the chemical that it was keen to reduce. One representative noted that, although the chemical was used in agriculture in his country, he did not object to the listing of the chemical in Annex III. Another said that, in his country, paraquat dichloride formulations were only used at very low concentrations.

57. Several representatives said that they did not support the listing of the chemical, as there was no viable alternative for its use as a herbicide in their countries. Listing the chemical would negatively affect the socioeconomic stability of their countries, in particular the livelihood of small-scale farmers, as well as food security. One representative expressed the view that, as the positions of Parties on the chemical had not changed after 10 years of discussion, it was now appropriate to close that discussion and consider other matters where consensus could more easily be reached. One representative said that the risk evaluation carried out for the chemical had not met minimum scientific standards, as the studies had been based on a product that was no longer representative of the products used, and the risk had been linked to the incorrect use of personal protective equipment, despite instructions regarding correct use being provided on the product labels.

58. The Conference of the Parties agreed to mandate the contact group on the listing of chemicals to discuss the draft decision on listing liquid formulations (emulsifiable concentrate and soluble concentrate) containing paraquat dichloride at or above 276 g/L, corresponding to paraquat ion at or above 200 g/L set out in paragraph 6 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/12.

59. [to be completed]

10. Fenthion (ultra-low-volume (ULV) formulations at or above 640 g active ingredient/L)

60. [to be completed]

11. Chrysotile asbestos

61. [to be completed]

C. Enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention

1. Proposal to amend Article 16 of the Convention

62. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to documents UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16 and UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16/Add.1, the latter of which contained a proposal to amend Article 16 of the Rotterdam Convention. The proposal had been submitted by Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe in October 2016 and had been discussed at the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh meetings of the Conference of the Parties, with further consideration deferred to the current meeting.

63. Some representatives welcomed the proposal but suggested that it should be linked to support for the sound management of chemical products rather than the listing of chemicals in Annex III to the Convention.

64. A representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries said that relevant and effective decisions to foster the provision of technical and financial assistance for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention had already been taken in various forums, and that the support provided to countries by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) already took into account possible relevant aspects of the Rotterdam Convention within the chemicals and waste focal area. In addition, the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management had been set up to support institutional strengthening and capacity-building in developing countries. He encouraged all interested Parties to submit proposals and reiterated his constituency's commitment to continued support for institutional strengthening and capacity-building in developing countries through the Special Programme and in accordance with the provisions of the Rotterdam Convention and relevant decisions on the implementation of the integrated approach to financing.

65. A number of representatives of proponent countries asked that the proposal be referred to a contact group for further discussion, and several other representatives expressed support for that request.
66. The Conference of the Parties agreed to request the joint contact group on financial resources to discuss the amendment proposal set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16/Add.1.
67. [to be completed]

2. Information dissemination strategy

68. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to documents UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16 and UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/INF/17, the latter of which contained a report on the implementation of the activities in the information dissemination strategy, including the evaluation of its effectiveness.
69. A representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries thanked the Secretariat for its work on implementing the dissemination strategy, increasing transparency and training Parties on processes and mechanisms under the Convention, including the development of guidance and tools to improve engagement in all Convention processes. He said that he saw merit in the continued implementation of the dissemination strategy, which contained actions that were expected to further improve the information on the functioning of the Convention, the transmission of that information to stakeholders and the involvement of a broader target audience, in particular in national processes to implement the Convention and improve chemicals management.
70. The Conference of the Parties took note of the report on the implementation of the information dissemination strategy, including the evaluation of its effectiveness, and requested the Secretariat to continue implementing decision RC-10/10 and to report thereon to the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting.

3. Information received pursuant to decision RC-11/4 on enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention

71. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the Secretariat drew attention to documents UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16 and UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/INF/18, the latter of which contained a report on the information provided by Parties and observers in response to decision RC-11/4 on enhancing the effectiveness of the Rotterdam Convention by addressing impacts regarding the listing of chemicals in Annex III and its implementation, as well as options for a possible way forward. The submissions received from Parties and observers were available on the Convention website.
72. The representative of Brazil presented a conference room paper on the effectiveness of the Rotterdam Convention, noting that, while that effectiveness depended on the ability of the Convention to operationalize the recommendations of its subsidiary body, the Chemical Review Committee, obstacles to listing the substances recommended for listing had highlighted structural challenges that undermined the Convention's functionality. Understanding the underlying reasons for the stagnation, especially commercial apprehensions, socioeconomic impacts and other challenges resulting from misinterpretations of the scope and consequences of listing, deserved priority. Her delegation therefore proposed that FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) be invited to consider reviewing the use of listing in Annex III as a criterion for defining highly hazardous pesticides under the *Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides* of the *International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management*, as it generated unintended consequences by automatically linking the inclusion of chemicals in Annex III with their characterization as highly hazardous pesticides. In practice, that link had been used by private certification schemes to justify automatic bans of listed substances, which created uncertainty and hesitation among Parties, particularly those with export interests. In addition, to help address other systemic challenges, such as the difficulties many developing countries faced in preparing notifications of final regulatory action supported by scientific assessments and identifying suitable safer alternatives, the conference room paper included proposals to strengthen training and capacity-building initiatives and provide interpretation at Chemical Review Committee meetings and translation of key technical documents. It further proposed the establishment of a committee on the effectiveness of the Convention as a permanent subsidiary body tasked with monitoring and evaluating the overall effectiveness of the Convention, paying particular attention to the stages preceding the listing of chemicals and with a mandate to submit recommendations to the Conference of the Parties on potential institutional strengthening measures, including enhancement of the procedures and practices of the Chemical Review Committee.

73. The representative of the European Union then presented a conference room paper submitted by that Party. He said that his delegation did not see merit in continuing the discussion on the effectiveness of the Convention in a contact group. It considered the measures already implemented by the Secretariat to address the issue of enhancing effectiveness were sufficient and was in favour of continuing to support the implementation of those measures, including by means of technical assistance. The issues mentioned in the submissions and in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/INF/18 as negative impacts or challenges were mostly beyond the scope of the Convention and should therefore be addressed under the appropriate instruments or initiatives. The European Union and its member States did not, therefore, support the proposal to create another committee to address the effectiveness of the Convention. They nevertheless remained open to exploring the options proposed in the submission of Brazil for enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention, and would analyse them carefully and engage constructively in discussion. They understood that there were concerns about the use of listing of chemicals in Annex III to the Rotterdam Convention by private certification bodies and had submitted their conference room paper in a bid to clarify the situation and remediate the problem.

74. In the ensuing discussion, some representatives emphasized that the proposal from Brazil respected consideration of national circumstances, including that Annex III not be used as an indirect path to restrictions or bans. Others stressed that they wished to find solutions, but those needed to maintain and strengthen the integrity and effectiveness of the Convention, therefore the proposal from the European Union was a helpful alternative for them. Yet another representative noted that while they supported some of the proposals in the proposal from Brazil, others gave rise to some difficulty.

75. A number of representatives voiced differing views about whether the basis for any further discussion should include consideration of the proposal of Brazil, the proposal of the European Union and all of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16/INF/18. Regarding specific elements of the proposal of Brazil, some representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that they did not support the establishment of an effectiveness committee, citing concerns about budgetary implications and any oversight function for such a committee. In addition, several others expressed the view that such a committee could further complicate the decision-making process under the Convention and even weaken the implementation of the Convention by undermining the role and work of the Chemical Review Committee. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, noted that the scope and intended mandate of the proposed effectiveness committee remained unclear and the implications of the proposal needed to be carefully reviewed. One representative, however, expressed strong support for the establishment of an effectiveness committee, noting that it would be able to tackle inefficiencies of the current process whereby discussions on the listing of certain chemicals were repeated at consecutive meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

76. A number of representatives drew attention to the need for any discussion on the effectiveness of the Convention to focus on the socioeconomic effects of listing chemicals in Annex III to the Convention, and, said one, to ensure that decisions on chemicals were not taken in isolation from the realities of the situation in developing countries. One representative underscored the need to revise the listing for highly hazardous chemicals to ensure consistency. A number of representatives underscored the need for the processes of the Convention to focus on scientific criteria and rigorous risk assessments.

77. One representative said that, although sustainable trade and agricultural development were essential for progress at the global level, responsible trade could only thrive when based on informed choices that protected human health and the environment. She, together with other representatives, recalled that the prior informed consent procedure was not intended to impose prohibitions but to allow countries to make their own, sovereign decisions. It was vital, therefore, that the process under the Convention provided a credible science-based benchmark, in particular in order to help developing countries, which often faced data gaps and weak regulatory infrastructure.

78. Some representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, emphasized the importance of technical and financial assistance for developing countries and for countries with economies in transition, with one drawing attention to the provisions in that regard under Article 16 of the Convention. One representative also noted a specific need for the provision of technical documentation for developing countries in the six official languages of the United Nations.

79. In relation to work with other bodies, several representatives noted that the majority of the negative impacts and challenges identified in document UNEP/CHW.17/INF/18 were beyond the scope of the Rotterdam Convention and should therefore be addressed under the appropriate instruments or initiatives. Some representatives underscored, in particular, the fact that it was not possible, as had also been proposed by Brazil in its conference room paper, to issue specific

instructions to FAO or WHO regarding their actions consequent to the listing of chemicals in Annex III to the Convention.

80. In response to a point of order, the Legal Officer clarified that there was nothing preventing co-chairs of a contact group from making interventions in plenary in their national capacity on issues not being dealt with in their groups. For issues being dealt with in their contact group, there was a practice under the conventions for co-chairs not to intervene in plenary in their national capacity.

81. Following the discussion, the Conference of the Parties established a contact group on enhancing the effectiveness of the Rotterdam Convention, to be co-chaired by Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) and Karoliina Anttonen (Finland). The group was mandated to discuss further actions that could be taken, on the basis of the proposed action in paragraph 8 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/16 and the report contained in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/INF/18, taking into account the conference room papers submitted by Brazil and the European Union and the discussion in plenary.

82. [to be completed]

4. Proposal from Kazakhstan to amend the rules of procedure

83. The representative of Kazakhstan introduced a conference room paper containing a proposal to amend rule 16 of the rules of procedure of the Convention. Recalling that the Parties had remained deadlocked over the course of several meetings on whether to list certain chemicals, he said that the solution was not to bypass consensus but rather to introduce a limit on the number of times an agenda item would be discussed. Thus, the proposal was to provide that an agenda item that had been discussed without resolution at three consecutive meetings of the Conference of the Parties would no longer be automatically included in the agenda of the next meeting. The goal was to help maintain the scientific relevance of the listing process. Furthermore, if any Party wished to revisit a discarded item, it remained possible to reintroduce it through the normal Convention procedure, meaning that updated notifications of final regulatory action and new data would be presented. In addition, such an approach would allow limited resources to be spent on important issues of concern to developing countries. Finally, saying that many Parties had not had sufficient time to review the proposal in detail, he asked for the opportunity to discuss the proposal in a contact group.

84. During the ensuing discussion, many representatives, some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, said that they did not, or could not, support the proposed amendment to the rules of procedure, although some thanked Kazakhstan for presenting its proposal and acknowledged its intention to improve the efficiency of the Convention. Some representatives expressed support for the proposed amendment and a number of others said that it merited discussion.

85. Representatives who opposed the proposal presented a range of views justifying their positions. Several asserted that the proposal did not address the identified problem. A number said that removing chemicals recommended for listing from the agenda simply because no consensus has been reached after three meetings would undermine the criteria and principle of, and weaken, the Convention. A representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries said that, in creating a fixed time limit on the duration of agenda items under discussion regardless of scientific merit, political complexity or level of Party support, the proposal represented a significant deviation from established procedural norms in international environmental law. Some said that limiting opportunities for discussion could hamper efforts to achieve consensus, and one stressed the importance of ensuring that complex or contentious issues that had been diligently reviewed by the Chemical Review Committee were not simply abandoned owing to the influence of forces outside the scope of the Convention. One said that the proposal undermined the authority of the Parties and the recommendations of the Chemical Review Committee, and also expressed concern that the proposal as worded could apply to any item on the agenda, not solely to the listing of chemicals in Annex III. One said that, while reaching consensus was the goal, the process prior to listing also had value, as this resulted in awareness-raising and information exchange and potentially leading to regional and national action. From her perspective, she said, the proposal appeared to promote secrecy and suppress access to information.

86. Some representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that it was appropriate to keep an item on the agenda if the Parties were not able to reach a conclusion on the matter. The representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries added that the rules of procedure already provided for the removal of an item from the agenda if Parties decided that further consideration was unnecessary, hence the proposed amendment was not needed.

87. Some representatives affirmed the importance of the role of the Rotterdam Convention in enabling Parties to make informed decisions.
88. A number of representatives acknowledged that the Convention faced a serious challenge, which they characterized as the inability to list certain chemicals in Annex III even though they met the criteria and a large majority of Parties supported listing. Some, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, suggested, as an alternative solution, allowing a vote once a chemical had been considered at three meetings without Parties reaching consensus. Several of those who spoke subsequently, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed support for that approach. Another representative more generally suggested exploring other means of streamlining discussion rather than limiting the time for considering critical agenda items.
89. Some representatives said that it was essential to achieve consensus for decision-making, adding that if consensus could not be reached a chemical should only be discussed thereafter if new scientific information became available.
90. Several representatives indicated their willingness to discuss the matter in a contact group, while some others, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, did not. One representative said that consideration of the proposal should not take precedence over other discussions.
91. One representative proposed establishing a working group to explore relevant alternatives and present proposals to the Conference of the Parties at its next meeting.
92. The Conference of the Parties agreed to request the contact group on enhancing effectiveness to discuss the amendment proposal submitted by Kazakhstan, taking into account the discussion in plenary.
93. [to be completed]

D. Compliance

94. [continued]
95. During the ensuing discussion, one representative thanked the Chair and members of the Compliance Committee for their hard work and voiced support for the draft decision, including the provision for enhanced cooperation and coordination between the Compliance Committee of the Rotterdam Convention, the Committee Administering the Mechanism for Promoting Implementation and Compliance of the Basel Convention and the Compliance Committee of the Stockholm Convention.
96. The representative of the European Union introduced a conference room paper in connection with the programme of work of the Compliance Committee for the biennium 2026–2027. He explained that the European Union and its member States were of the view that the draft revised programme of work set out in document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/17 appropriately reflected important provisions of the Rotterdam Convention that should be examined by the Committee, but suggested two additional activities as set out in the conference room paper. He also proposed a change to the wording of the draft decision.
97. One representative thanked the European Union for its proposal but noted that the proposed insertions contained new elements regarding legislative and administrative measures, which might have cost implications, and asked for the opportunity to discuss the proposal further in a contact group. Several other representatives subsequently echoed her request.
98. The President took note of the request and said that he would provide an update after consulting with the Bureau regarding arrangements for such a contact group.
99. Following the discussion, the Conference of the Parties established a contact group on compliance, to be co-chaired by Martin Lacroix (Canada) and Hassan Azhar (Maldives). The group was mandated to consider the draft decision set out in paragraph 26 of document UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.12/17, taking into account the discussion in plenary and the addition proposed in the conference room paper submitted by the European Union and its member States.
100. [to be completed]

III. Other matters (agenda item 10)

101. [to be completed]

IV. Adoption of the report of the meeting (agenda item 11)

102. [to be completed]

V. Closure of the meeting (agenda item 12)

103. [to be completed]
