



# Impact of COVID-19 on preparation for the Twelfth Meeting of the Basel Convention's Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG-12) and the new format for OEWG-12

Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

# Impact of COVID-19 on OEWG-12

- Not feasible to organize OEWG-12 as originally planned, on 22-25 June 2020, in Geneva, due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation;
- Not possible to postpone the meeting, due risk of conflicting scheduling, with still high level of uncertainty about the feasibility of conducting physical meetings towards the end of the year;
- Need to ensure that the intersessional work under the Basel Convention could continue as many meetings of the intersessional groups are scheduled towards the end of the year;
- On 9 April, OEWG Bureau agreed to a new format to conduct OEWG-12 by electronic means, as an exceptional measure, in light of the current extraordinary circumstances.



# Format of OEWG-12 to be held by electronic means

- The OEWG-12 will focus on process-oriented decisions, aimed at enabling the continuation of the intersessional work, and not on revising documents and guidelines in substance;
- Process-oriented decisions would, e.g., invite comments by Parties and observers on draft guidance documents and request the preparation of revised versions for consideration by COP;
- As a consequence, more in-depth discussion might be needed by the SIWGs/EWGs, etc., and during the COP, to further advance on the various documents;
- The rules of procedure apply to OEWG-12 and the rules and practices on decision-making remain the same;
- The OEWG-12 by electronic means will be composed of two parts:
  - Online session;
  - Email correspondence procedure;
- Maximum duration of meeting is 2 weeks (from 22 June to 5 July 2020, including weekends).

# Working modalities: Online session

- Online session will be held on Monday, 22 June 2020, at 2-5 pm (Geneva time);
- At this time, the OEWG-12 meeting will be opened and consider procedural matters: adoption of the agenda and agreement on organization of work;
- Substantive agenda items will be introduced;
- Co-chairs will invite Parties and observers to make statements and invite Parties to adopt draft decisions on relevant agenda items, through an email correspondence procedure;
- The consideration of relevant agenda items will be suspended pending the outcome of the email correspondence procedure;
- After the closure of the online session, an email will be sent on behalf of co-chairs to all Parties and observers to launch the email correspondence procedure.



# Working modalities: Email correspondence procedure

- After the send-out of the email, Parties will have 48 hours to provide by email statements, proposals, and/or rejections to the proposed draft decisions. Observers will have the opportunity to provide statements on agenda items;
- All decisions on which no proposals are made and no objections are raised within 48 hours will be considered adopted;
- If proposals or rejections are raised, the Secretariat will revise the draft decisions, in consultation with the co-chairs;
- The revised versions of the decisions will be circulated by email with an invitation to adopt them within 48 hours;
- These steps are repeated until agreement is reached. If agreement cannot be reached by Sunday, 5 July, the issue will be postponed to COP-15;
- All comments/proposals made by Parties will be made available to all participants via a password protected internet page;
- The meeting will be closed by co-chairs via email at the latest by Sunday, 5 July 2020.

# Participation in the electronic OEWG-12

## Representatives of Parties and admitted observers who have already pre-registered

- Official registrations received from Parties and observers for the face-to-face meeting will be considered as the official registrations for the new electronic OEWG-12.
- Parties and observers can make an update or a change to their delegation before **Friday, 22 May 2020**.

## Representatives of Parties and admitted observers who have not pre-registered

- For new registrations from Parties and previously admitted observers, a registration form should be submitted before **Friday, 22 May 2020**.

Parties may wish to consider registering additionally their Permanent Missions in Geneva for the online session.



# Working languages of the electronic OEWG-12

- All meeting documents and meeting reports (incl. the decisions of the meeting) will be translated into the six UN languages.
- Online session and correspondence procedure will be in English only, i.e. proposals on draft decisions are to be made in English only.
- General statements by Parties and observers may be made available in any of the six UN languages.



Thank you!

Consult our website  
for more information about OEWG-12:

<http://www.basel.int/oewg12>

Webinars on OEWG-12 will be scheduled as of next  
week.