Webinar Report

Round Table: Developing and Updating National Implementation Plans - Challenges and Good Practices

5 June 2024

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GGKP

Introduction

This webinar marked the fourth event in the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP) webinar series, organized under Output 4.3 of Component 4 (Knowledge Management and Information Sharing) as part of the GEF project ID 10785, titled *Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)*. The series aims to share knowledge, experiences and best practices accumulated through the globally executed project, enhancing countries' capacity to meet their obligations under the Stockholm Convention.

The roundtable discussion convened representatives from the six Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centres (BCRCs-SCRCs) in China, the Caribbean, Czechia, Senegal, South Africa and Uruguay, and project countries. As key implementers of Component 3, these regional centres play a critical role in supporting countries to develop and update their National Implementation Plans (NIPs). The session provided a collaborative platform for agencies, technical experts and regional leaders to exchange insights, challenges and innovative approaches gained through project implementation while identifying areas for further improvement.

Another highlight of the discussion was the Stockholm Convention Integrated Electronic Toolkit, developed under GEF project ID 9884, which is designed to streamline the NIP update process, ensuring greater efficiency and data accuracy. Participants explored how this digital tool can enhance NIP development, improve data management and strengthen national compliance efforts under the Convention.

CEST 14:00	1. Welcome and opening remarks	**Mr. Hannes Mc Nulty**, Green Industry Platform Manager, GGKP **Ms. Anastasiya Buchok**, Senior Project Assistant, GGKP
14:05	2. Understanding the process of NIP development on a national level. Challenges and lessons learned.	**Ms. Gabriela Medina**, Director of the BCCC-SCRC Uruguay **Mr. Vincentius Mughongora**, Assistant Project Coordinator, Africa Institute
14:15	3. Sharing good practices. Existing and former experience.	**Ms. Maurissa Charles,** Project Coordinator, BCRC Caribbean
14:30	4. Process-oriented approach to review, development, and update of NIPs. The perspective of international experts.	**Mr. Roland Weber** – International POPs Environmental Consulting
14:45	5. Introduction to the Integrated Electronic Toolkit	**Ms. Mihaela Claudia Paun**, Programme Management Officer, UNEP
15:00	Q&A session and closing remarks	

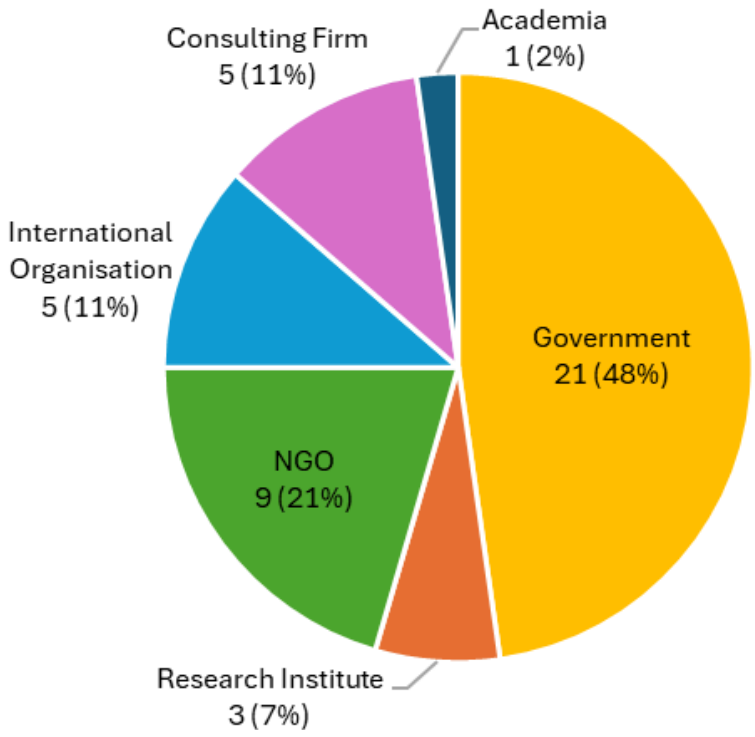
Registration and Attendance

Number of registrants: 62 / Total attendance: 44
(Approx. 43% female and 57% male)

Participants by country

Country	Count	Country	Count
Ethiopia	10	Dominica	1
Trinidad and Tobago	5	Republic of Korea	1
North Macedonia	5	Montenegro	1
Kenya	4	South Africa	1
Bahamas	2	Spain	1
Switzerland	2	Uganda	1
Uruguay	2	Ukraine	1
Georgia	2	United Kingdom	1
Cambodia	1	Zambia	1
China	1	Zimbabwe	1

Participants by Sector



Key Highlights

The landscape of challenges

The discussion highlights a variety of challenges, each unique to its geographical and political context, underscoring the complex landscape of environmental governance on a global scale.

For the countries of the Africa Institute, substantial bureaucratic impediments have delayed the initiation and progression of projects. The sluggish pace of governmental processes often affected the timely execution of agreements and the establishment of project accounts. Moreover, scientific issues such as NIPs frequently lacked priority among policymakers, leading to inadequate attention and resource allocation. The combination of limited engagement from implementing committees and financial constraints further exacerbated these challenges, resulting in delays and inefficient executions.

Meanwhile, significant hurdles in data management were reported in the region of the BCCC-SCRC Uruguay, with an absence of consolidated databases forcing reliance on scattered physical files or incomplete digital records. The difficulty in engaging stakeholders, particularly from the private sector, impeded data collection and active participation in necessary meetings, presenting substantial barriers to progress.

For Caribbean countries, communication difficulties varied widely across the countries and have affected data collection and stakeholder engagement. Challenges such as limited human resources, insufficient technical support, inadequate political will and inter-agency collaboration occasionally halted progress.

Effective practices and strategies

Despite these challenges, the regional agencies have developed effective strategies and best practices over time.

From the BCCC-SCRC Uruguay, the introduction of specialized training courses on PBDE and HBCD was highlighted as a significant advancement, enhancing the capacity for interpreting POPs monitoring data. Efforts to establish national coordinating mechanisms and strengthen focal points were also noted, which improved stakeholder involvement and ensured more systematic engagement.

The BCRC Caribbean tackled the challenge of diverse regional needs by implementing a proactive and multifaceted communication strategy. This approach included regular, structured updates through various channels such as direct meetings, digital platforms and distributed briefings. Such ongoing communication ensured that all parties were consistently informed and engaged, fostering a collaborative environment and enabling swift responses to any arising issues. Recognizing the distinct challenges posed by different locales, the BCRC Caribbean employed adaptive data collection techniques tailored to each country's specific context. This included leveraging both traditional methods such as surveys and innovative approaches like national focus groups and one-on-one stakeholder meetings.

Key Highlights

This roundtable highlighted the need for enhanced collaboration and resource allocation to address the myriad challenges highlighted during the discussions. The commitment to continuous improvement and adaptation will be crucial as they work towards fulfilling their obligations under the Stockholm Convention. These information-sharing activities not only facilitate a robust exchange of ideas, but also set the stage for future collaborative efforts, promising a more streamlined and effective approach to environmental management and protection strategies worldwide.

The roundtable discussion provided valuable insights from international experts, including Dr. Roland Weber, who shared lessons learned from the NIP update process, drawing on findings from the UNEP report, “From NIPs to Implementation.” A central recommendation was to “leverage existing national capacities built during previous NIP development cycles, ensuring that countries can build upon past efforts rather than start from scratch.” This approach promotes efficiency, continuity and institutional learning, facilitating more effective and timely NIP updates.

To achieve this, universities and research institutions were highlighted as critical partners in capacity-building efforts, particularly for inventory development. Establishing academic research groups specializing in waste, chemical and resource management can enhance technical expertise, while the long-term presence of professors ensures continuity throughout multiple NIP cycles.

Another important aspect emphasized was the need for an integrated approach to POPs management, where NIP activities are closely linked to national priorities on chemicals and waste management, as well as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Effective NIP development, review and updates should be anchored within existing frameworks, such as national chemical management plans, national profiles and globally harmonized system implementation strategies. This approach ensures that POPs management becomes an integral part of the broader environmental agenda, rather than being treated as an isolated activity.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of fostering synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and frameworks, including the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, the upcoming Global Plastic Treaty, and the Minamata Convention on Mercury, as well as initiatives under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Global Framework for Chemicals.

Furthermore, linking POPs management to climate action under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies was emphasized as a way to enhance cross-sectoral coordination and maximize resources. This integrated approach aligns POPs management efforts with sustainable production and consumption practices, further supporting the achievement of the SDGs.

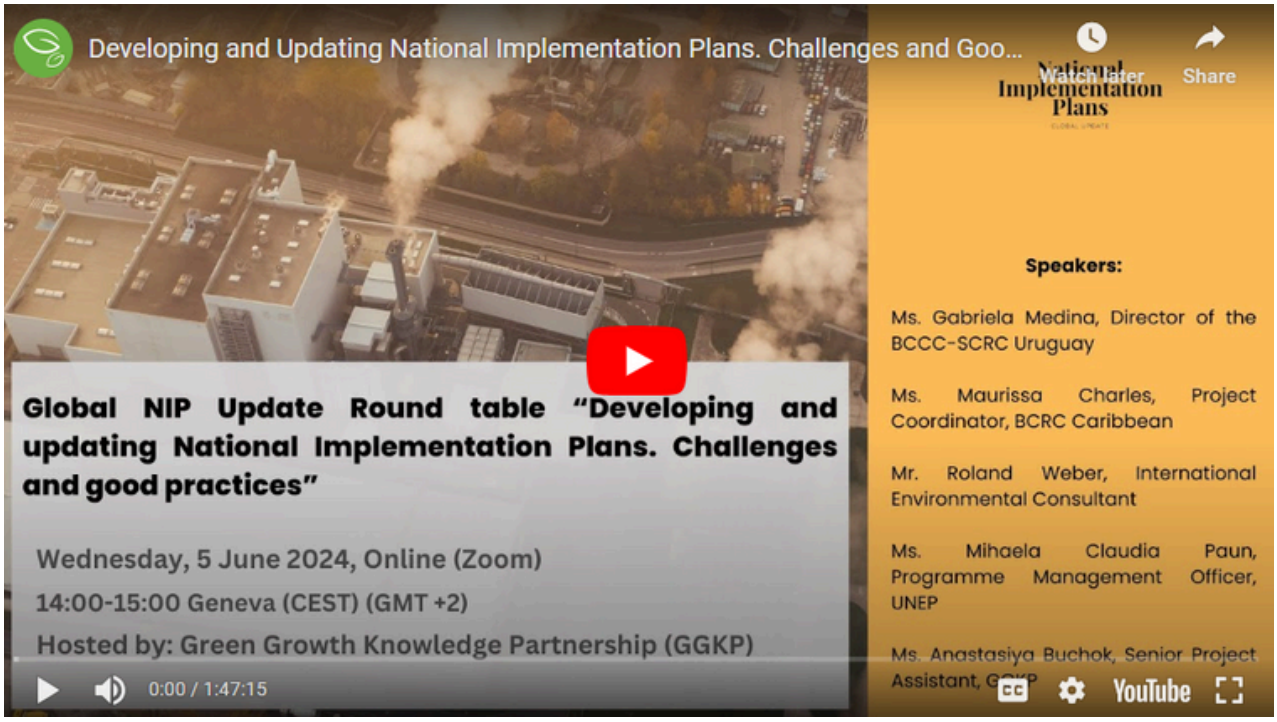
Key Highlights

A significant part of the discussion focused on the Stockholm Convention Integrated Electronic Toolkit. The toolkit was highlighted as a key resource for supporting countries in their NIP development, update and reporting processes. It offers several interconnected modules designed to streamline data collection, organization and submission while ensuring consistency with Convention requirements:

- *NIP submission module:* Provides a standardized template for organizing and submitting NIP data. It follows the core structure of NIPs, ensuring flexibility to address newly listed POPs and country-specific needs.
- *POPs inventory module:* This module has two parts. Part A presentsPOPs inventory guidance documents in an electronic and user-friendly format. Part B assists Parties in managing data collected for POPs inventories, whether preliminary or complete.
- *Guidance module:* Serves as a centralized repository for technical resources, including inventory guidance documents, toolkits and other relevant documents.
- *Queries module:* Facilitates stakeholders in querying data and information submitted in the POPs inventory module and NIP transmission module.

Resources

- **A concept note, presentation materials and video recording and materials of the webinar in English are available on the Global NIP Update platform:** https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/webinar/global-nip-update-round-table-developing-and-updating-national-implementation-plans



- **Green Forum Blog Post: Challenges and Good Practices in National Implementation Plan Development: Insights from the Round Table** https://www.thegreenforum.org/blog/challenges-and-good-practices-national-implementation-plan-development-insights-round-table

- **BCCC-SCRC Uruguay website:** http://www.ccbasilea-crestocolmo.org.uy/es

- **BCRC Caribbean website:** https://www.bcrc-caribbean.org

- **The Stockholm Convention Integrated Electronic Toolkit:** https://nips.pops.int/

- **UNEP (2018) From NIPs to Implementation: Lessons learned report** https://www.unep.org/resources/synthesis-reports/nips-implementation-lessons-learned-report

- **Global Framework on Chemicals: Enhanced sectoral engagement** https://www.unep.org/resources/synthesis-reports/nips-implementation-lessons-learned-report

Resources

- **POP-BFR in products and related waste and recycling**
  - Charbonnet, J.A., Weber, R. and Blum, A. (2020) 'Flammability standards for furniture, building insulation and electronics: Benefit and risk', Emerging Contaminants, 6, pp. 432–441. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emcon.2020.05.002.

- **Chemicals in plastics: opportunity to avoid regrettable substitutes**
  - UNEP (2023) Chemicals in Plastics: A technical report. https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/research/chemicals-plastics-technical-report
  - UNEP "Chemicals in Plastics" short film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=nFknRzTJwC8&feature=emb_logo
  - Aurisano, N., Weber, R. and Fantke, P. (2021) 'Enabling a circular economy for chemicals in plastics', Current Opinion in Green and Sustainable Chemistry, 31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cogsc.2021.100513.
  - Wiesinger, H., Wang, Z. and Hellweg, S. (2021) 'Deep Dive into Plastic Monomers, Additives, and Processing Aids', Environmental Science & Technology, 55(13), pp. 9339–9351. https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.1c00976.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the GGKP team.

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