

Clustering Assessment: Enhancing Synergies among Multilateral Environmental Agreements

by Judith Wehrli

Against the background of a widely fragmented and diluted international environmental governance architecture, different reform options are currently being discussed. This issue brief considers whether streamlining international environmental regimes by grouping or 'clustering' international agreements could improve effectiveness and efficiency. It outlines the general idea of the clustering approach, draws lessons from the chemicals and waste cluster and examines the implications and potentials of clustering multilateral environmental agreements.

Clustering as Building Block for Reform

In February 2009, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) established a Consultative Group on International Environmental Governance (IEG).¹ In its work, which has come to be known as the "Belgrade Process", the group identified the core functions of IEG (Box 1) and presented a set of reform options.² In February 2010, the UNEP Governing Council established another Consultative Group to continue this work and consider a broader reform of the IEG system.³ This second group adopted the Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome in November 2010,⁴ outlining options for the functions and possible forms of IEG. The proposed functions included a number of potential system-wide responses, including to encourage synergies between compatible multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).⁵ With regard to form, the Consultative Group suggested three different options, while stressing the principle that form should follow function: (1) enhancing UNEP; (2) establishing a specialized agency such as a world environment organization; (3) enhancing institutional reforms and streamlining existing structures. Clustering is considered the central element of the third or 'streamlining' reform option; although as a functional response to the current challenges of international environmental governance, clustering is a possible building block for any of the three institutional options.

Box 1. Functions in International Environmental Governance

- 1 Creating a strong, credible, and accessible science base and policy interface
- 2 Developing a global authoritative and responsive voice for environmental sustainability
- 3 Achieving effectiveness, efficiency, and coherence within the United Nations system
- 4 Securing sufficient, predictable, and coherent funding
- 5 Ensuring a responsive and cohesive approach to meeting country needs

The international environmental regime includes more than 500 MEAs.⁶ Most of the MEAs which have a global or regional scope have their own institutional arrangements, like Conferences or Meetings of the Parties (COPs/MOPs), secretariats, financial mechanisms, and scientific bodies. This number of agreements and structures is too large to be effective, and consequently, the multilateral environmental regime suffers from fragmentation and overlaps, being riddled with inconsistencies and lacking coherence and common orientation.⁷

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Brief 3

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Clustering MEAs, as described by Konrad von Moltke, refers to *grouping a number of international environmental regimes together so as to make them more efficient and effective*.⁸ It is about maximizing the efficient use of resources and reducing administrative burden *without requiring elaborate changes in legal or administrative arrangements*.⁹ Moreover, clustering aims to strengthen the implementation of MEAs at the national, regional, and global levels.¹⁰ It is based on a country-driven approach,¹¹ which aims to improve the coherence of international environmental governance by tapping synergies and avoiding overlaps, addressing national needs, and respecting the form-follows-function principle.¹²

Clustering Approaches: Issue, Function, Region

Three different approaches to clustering MEAs have been proposed:

Clustering by issue groups MEAs according to thematic areas, e.g. conservation of biodiversity-related issues, global atmosphere, chemicals and hazardous wastes, marine environment, and extractive resources.

Clustering by function refers to sub-units of MEAs, split according to different functions. For example:¹³

- preparation and taking of collective decisions (including scientific and technological assessment, transparency mechanisms, decision-making and voting rules)
- implementation review and compliance (including dispute settlement, reporting obligations, non-compliance procedures)
- implementation support (technology transfer, capacity building, joint activities relating to civil society, communication strategies).

Clustering by region groups MEAs according to the geographical region to which they apply. This approach is useful particularly for challenges that are regional in character, affecting neighbouring states (e.g. river basins), or that need regional responses, even if the problem is theoretically global in scope (e.g. long range air pollution).¹⁴

Various tools exist for integrating related or overlapping international environmental regimes more closely. The list below is not exhaustive and could be expanded by a wide range of tools. The practicability of each tool may, however, differ from one cluster to another:¹⁵

Joint secretariat functions:

Convention secretariats often have a pivotal role in the functioning and the implementation of a convention.¹⁶ They are generally responsible for arranging and servicing meetings of the COP to the respective convention and its subsidiary bodies. As coordinating bodies, MEA secretariats are the liaison between the parties to the convention, the convention bodies, the host institution, and other relevant international bodies, including those of related MEAs. They regularly report to the parties and assist them in the implementation of the convention by providing legal and technical support and general administrative and travel services. Their panoply of functions may additionally include communication and outreach activities, capacity building, public awareness, and fundraising.

Joint secretariat functions present a wide range of possible synergies among MEAs. For instance, cooperation among secretariats of related MEAs is conceivable in the provision of technical support to parties, by the organization of joint workshops, joint capacity building and outreach activities, or joint legal or administrative services. Furthermore, the secretariats could apply a joint communication strategy, including development of publications and web-based communication, in order to strengthen the internal links of a cluster.

Cooperation among secretariats could include staff exchanges and the use of common staff, as well as the sharing of facilities and infrastructure, if they are already located in the same place or if co-location is considered.

Joint managerial functions:

Shared managerial functions could support further streamlining of the structure and organization of MEA secretariats. In order to enhance coherent policy guidance in a cluster of related MEAs, a joint head could be appointed. The joint head would play a coordinating role, ensuring an integrated approach to common policy areas within a specific cluster, and increasing efficiency and effectiveness in cooperation and coordination among the secretariats of the respective MEAs.

Simultaneous or back-to-back Conferences/Meetings of the Parties: Simultaneous or back-to-back Conferences/Meetings of the Parties of related MEAs would allow the sharing of facilities and personnel and facilitate coordination among the decision-

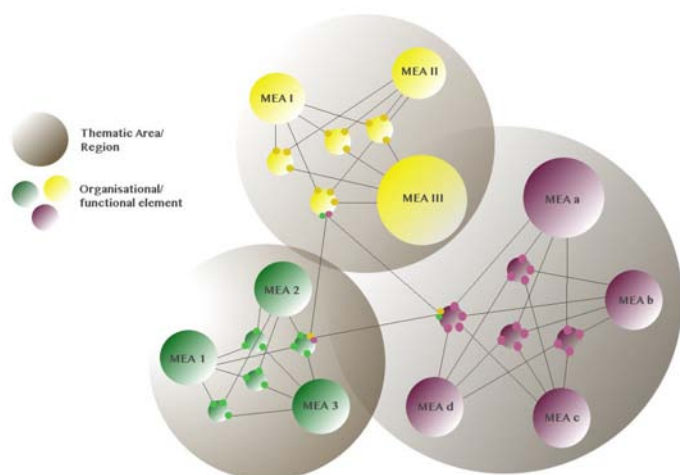
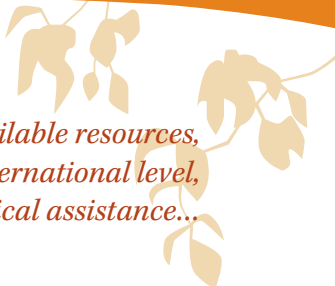


Figure 1. Structure of a clustered regime shows three different groups of MEAs, clustering them either by issue or by region (grey circles). Corresponding organizational elements of each agreement (e.g. COPs, secretariats, subsidiary bodies) or functional elements (e.g. implementation support, national reporting mechanisms) are grouped together by a close cooperation and/or a joint use of resources (smaller coloured circles). With regard to some of these elements, cross-cluster linkages are conceivable (as indicated through the triangular connection in the center).



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making bodies. A consecutive scheduling of the meetings, joint bureaus, or joint activities relating to civil society would also increase efficiency, since the administrative efforts and the travel costs of participants would be substantially reduced.¹⁷

Enhanced cooperation among executive and subsidiary bodies: MEAs often possess scientific advisory bodies. Their primary function is the provision of scientific advice and guidance to the COP and other bodies of the convention. Usually, scientific and technological assessment plays an important role with regard to the implementation of the convention.¹⁸ Establishing procedures for regular information exchange between the technical bodies and secretariats of related MEAs could improve the quality of the support provided to parties. Moreover, with the exchange of data on cluster-relevant issues, significant overlaps and duplication of work could be avoided. The creation of networks could enhance cooperation in research and training activities and strengthen science-policy interfaces.

Joint financing mechanisms:

Coordination of financial tools such as joint resource mobilization strategies and mechanisms, joint budgets, and the synchronization of budget cycles could facilitate effective collaboration and lead to savings.

Joint implementation and review mechanisms:

Most MEAs require some form of national reporting to their governing bodies. A harmonization of reporting rules and formats would benefit developing countries in particular, as it could substantially reduce costs and administrative burdens. Synchronized reporting cycles and a consolidated reporting format for each cluster of MEAs are an important step for streamlining the implementation of MEAs.¹⁹ Further synergies could be found in combined monitoring, compliance mechanisms, or dispute settlement by cluster.²⁰

Lessons from the Chemicals and Waste Regime

The chemicals and waste regime currently possesses the most advanced arrangements for synergies between MEAs. It consists of a small group of relatively homogeneous MEAs, making it particularly suited for this vanguard role. The three major conventions of the regime – the Basel Convention,²¹ the Rotterdam PIC Convention,²² and the Stockholm POPs Convention²³ – are relatively similar with regard to their content and share a life-cycle approach to chemicals management. Their common objective is to protect human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and waste, and help facilitate the delivery of assistance to countries to manage chemicals and waste at different stages of their life cycle.²⁴

In the context of the reform discussions on international environmental governance, the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions initiated a process to enhance the synergies among them, with the aim of strengthening the implementation of the conventions at the national, regional and global levels.²⁵ The parties to the three conventions intended to promote coherent policy guidance and enhance efficiency by reducing administrative burdens and maximizing the ef-

fective and efficient use of resources at all levels.²⁶ In February 2010, simultaneous Extraordinary Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties (ExCOPs) to the three conventions were held in Bali, Indonesia at the margins of the special session of UNEP's Governing Council. The COPs of the three conventions took identical decisions on cooperation and coordination regarding *joint activities, joint managerial functions, joint services, synchronization of budget cycles, joint audits, and review arrangements*.²⁷ Subsequently, the COPs of the Stockholm, the Rotterdam and the Basel Conventions, at their respective meetings in April, June and October 2011, also took identical decisions regarding the implementation of these matters.²⁸

The enhanced synergies among the chemicals conventions have led to more effective information exchange among scientific bodies, national focal points, the secretariats of the conventions, and the regional centers and offices,²⁹ which facilitates the transfer of know-how among parties and stakeholders and raises public awareness. In addition, there are administrative benefits, such as the minimization of overlaps and inconsistencies in policies. Due to the establishment of joint services, the parties to the three conventions benefit from a better pool of available support and expertise as well as from better continuity of services. Uniform procedures, joint planning, and a more efficient use of staff skills have allowed significant gains in effectiveness and efficiency.³⁰ The minimization of duplicated efforts has also led to cost-related benefits.³¹ In brief, the synergies process has improved the use of available resources, reduced implementation costs, raised the cluster's profile at the international level, and improved coordination of technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It has also opened the way to a more integrated approach towards sound chemicals and waste management based on the life-cycle approach at the national, regional, and international levels.³²

In December 2011, the Executive Secretary of the three conventions submitted a proposal to establish a single integrated secretariat dedicating to serving all three conventions equally. The new structure is to be put into effect over the course of 2012.³³ In 2013, the COPs to the three conventions will evaluate the results of the synergies process and decide whether to continue it. Two possible ways of developing further synergies within the chemicals and waste cluster have emerged – deepening and enlarging (Figure 2).

Increasing the degree of cooperation in a specific field could deepen cooperation and coordination among the existing MEAs. This could be done through simple information exchange, systematic coordination of activities, or jointly planned and implemented actions. Adding new functional elements such as joint financing, monitoring and compliance mechanisms could also lead to deeper collaboration.

Enlarging the synergies would mean that the agreed areas of enhanced cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions would be applied to other relevant instruments. For example, including the new legally

binding instrument on mercury, which is currently being negotiated, could expand the chemicals and waste cluster. It is therefore possible to strengthen synergies not only among the three existing conventions, but also with other MEAs and institutional frameworks.³⁴

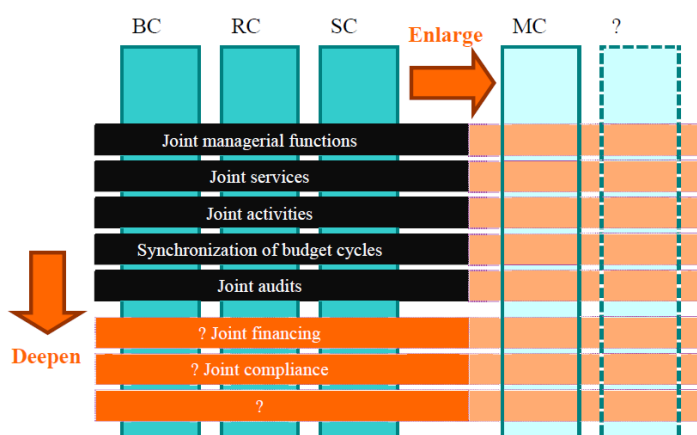


Figure 2. Possible continuation of the synergies process in the chemicals and waste regime. BC: Basel Convention; RC: Rotterdam Convention; SC: Stockholm Convention; MC: Mercury Convention

The chemicals and waste regime has become an outstanding example of enhanced international environmental governance based on a clustering approach. It is therefore important to consider whether and how this model could be applied to other groups of MEAs, for example to the biodiversity-related instruments.

Assessment of the Clustering Approach

The effectiveness of clustering in strengthening the key functions of international environmental governance (Box 1) depends on the mode of implementation, the tools used, and the degree of cooperation and coordination achieved in a specific field. Table 1 lists the main potential contributions of the clustering approach to the core functions of international environmental governance. It indicates that the clustering approach offers significant potential in terms of efficiency and effectiveness since it allows for more streamlined and more coherent information exchange, scientific assessment, management and administrative and personnel arrangements.³⁵

Core Function

Tools

1 Science base

Enhanced cooperation among scientific advisory bodies and between secretariats and advisory bodies

2 Authoritative voice

Joint managerial functions

Simultaneous or back-to-back COPs/MOPs

3 Effectiveness, efficiency, and coherence

Joint secretariat functions

Joint managerial functions

Simultaneous or back-to-back COPs/MOPs

4 Funding

Joint financing mechanism

Joint secretariat functions, joint managerial functions and simultaneous or back-to-back COPs/MOPs

5 Country needs

Enhanced cooperation among MEA secretariats and between secretariats and subsidiary advisory bodies

Effects		Examples from the Chemicals and Waste Regime	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better pool of information, compatible data and expertise within a cluster ■ Improved communication and information exchange among scientific bodies, national focal points, the convention secretariats, and regional centers and offices ■ Better transfer of know-how and exchange of data on cluster-relevant issues among parties and stakeholders through harmonization of data and methods ■ Raised public awareness through coordinated communication on clustered issues ■ Enhanced cooperation in research and training and support activities ■ Enhanced science-policy interfaces (e.g. IPBES) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitation of the exchange of relevant information between the technical and scientific bodies through the sharing of information with one another, with the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals Management (SAICM), and with other relevant intergovernmental bodies concerning the procedures developed and the chemicals being discussed under the three conventions³⁶ ■ Development of information exchange systems on health and environmental impacts, including a clearing-house mechanism, with the aim of these systems serving all three conventions³⁷
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ More influence on global agenda-setting through a raised cluster profile ■ Better opportunities for mainstreaming of clustered issues into other relevant policy areas 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Empowerment and creation of a clear point of leadership and responsibility through the appointment of a joint head (Executive Secretary of the three Conventions)³⁸
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consistent agenda setting ■ Improved coherence in rulemaking and standard setting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Decision of the COPs to hold their future meetings in a coordinated manner and to request the Executive Secretary to schedule them in a way that facilitates their coordination³⁹ ■ Planning of simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the three COPs in 2013⁴⁰
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better continuity and complementarity of services ■ More efficient and effective administration through pooling of resources, uniform procedures, joint planning, and coordinated use of staff skills 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establishment of joint financial and administrative support service, joint legal service, joint information technology service, joint information service, joint resource mobilization service⁴¹ ■ Proposal of the Executive Secretary of the three conventions to transform the existing convention secretariats into a single integrated secretariat dedicated to serving all three conventions equally with the objectives of increased efficiency and improved delivery, and allowing greater consistency, simpler structure and better application of skills and talents⁴²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better coordination of policies and programmes ■ More integrated approach to specific policy areas within a cluster ■ Enhanced interagency cooperation on issues within a cluster 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promotion of coherent policy guidance ■ Minimization of overlaps and inconsistencies ■ Rationalization of activities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repeated adoption of substantially identical COP decisions on cooperation and coordination matters since their first simultaneous extraordinary meetings in 2010⁴³
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ More coherent allocation of financial resources according to the specific structure and needs of a cluster ■ Mobilization of additional funds by mainstreaming environment in financial institutions ■ Coordinated financial statements through synchronization of budget cycles 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adaptation of the budget cycles of the Basel and Rotterdam conventions to those of the Stockholm Convention, UNEP and FAO, enabling UNEP to produce coordinated financial statements for the three conventions⁴⁴
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maximization of effective and efficient use of resources at all levels ■ Reduced administrative and implementation costs ■ Reduced travel costs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lower long-term costs through restructuring of the secretariat organization⁴⁵
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitated support to the parties in the implementation of the conventions at all levels, in particular with regard to capacity-building, technical assistance, scientific support, support to regional centers and joint public awareness, and outreach activities ■ Joint use of regional centers, decentralization of activities and more efficient use of scarce resources required to implement national priorities ■ Improved addressing of needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joint activities with regard to the development of tools to support countries in implementing the conventions (e.g. electronic tools), capacity-building programmes at the regional level, coordinated support for sound chemicals and waste management at the national level and for the parties' implementation of the life-cycle approach to chemicals management, the small grants programme for the use of regional centers and offices, south-south cooperation, communication and public awareness⁴⁶

Conclusion

Clustering can be part of any of the institutional reform options currently under consideration. Its tools are variable and adaptable, such that they could be an ideal complement to various institutional frameworks. If governments choose to enhance UNEP, clustering would be compatible with other specific measures for strengthening UNEP without the need to change its legal status. Better coordination and closer cooperation among MEAs would help achieve the core functions of international environmental governance, which by extension are also UNEP's core functions. If governments decided instead to create a United Nations Environmental Organization or World Environment Organization, clustering would also be necessary and useful. The

new organization could provide a home to a set of more integrated MEAs. Indeed, regardless of the particular institutional options that governments select, clustering will be an obvious strategy for putting the idea of streamlining into practice.

The achievements in the chemicals and wastes cluster are a good starting point from which to strive for further synergies, whether within the chemicals and waste cluster or beyond. In order to meet today's challenges of the world environment, efficient and effective environmental governance is urgently needed. Clustering is an important step towards achieving this end.

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Endnotes

- ¹ UNEP Governing Council's decision 25/4 taken at UNEP GC 25/GMEF which took place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 16 to 20 February 2009.
- ² UNEP (2009).
- ³ UNEP Governing Council's decision SS.XI/1 taken at its 11th Special Session (UNEP GCSS 11/GMEF) which was held from 24 to 26 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia.



Better coordination and closer cooperation among MEAs would help achieve the core functions in international environmental governance, which by extension are also UNEP's core functions.

- ⁴ *Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome*, Second meeting of the Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level Representatives on International Environmental Governance, Espoo, Finland, 21–23 November 2010.
- ⁵ *Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome*, Para. 7, lit. c.
- ⁶ UNEP (2001), p. 3.
- ⁷ For a more detailed account regarding the main challenges of IEG, see Perrez and Ziegerer (2008), p. 254.
- ⁸ Moltke (2001), p. 3.
- ⁹ Moltke (2001), p. 5.
- ¹⁰ Nordic Council of Ministers (2009), p. 17.
- ¹¹ UNEP (2010), p. 14 and 16.
- ¹² Nordic Council of Ministers (2009), p. 13.
- ¹³ See Oberthür (2002), p. 322.
- ¹⁴ See Moltke (2001), p. 18.
- ¹⁵ For a different list of tools, see Moltke (2001), p. 5. See also United Nations (2007), p. 10.
- ¹⁶ See, for instance, enumerated Secretariat functions in Articles 16 Basel Convention, 19 Rotterdam Convention, 20 Stockholm Convention, 24 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), XII Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- ¹⁷ See Oberthür (2002), p. 321.
- ¹⁸ For instance, advisory bodies may recommend the setting of specific national targets and milestones with regard to the implementation of the convention's strategic plan, establish indicators or undertake periodic reviews in specific fields.
- ¹⁹ See United Nations (2006), p. 21.
- ²⁰ See Oberthür (2002), p. 323.
- ²¹ Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, adopted in 1989, entry into force on 5 May 1992, 175 parties. The Basel Convention was created to protect people and the environment from the negative effects of the inappropriate management of hazardous wastes worldwide. It is the most comprehensive global treaty dealing with hazardous wastes from their generation, through transport to disposal, www.basel.int (January 2012).
- ²² Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, adopted on 10 September 1998, in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, entry into force on 24 February 2004, 143 parties. The Rotterdam Convention provides Parties with a first line of defence against hazardous chemicals. It promotes international efforts to protect human health and the environment by enabling countries to decide if they want to import hazardous chemicals and pesticides listed in the Convention, www.pic.int (January 2012).
- ²³ Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, adopted in May 2001 in Stockholm, Sweden, entry into force on 17 May 2004, 173 parties. The Stockholm Convention is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from highly dangerous, long-lasting chemicals by restricting and ultimately eliminating their production, use, trade, release and storage, www.pops.int (January 2012).
- ²⁴ See United Nations (2011), p. 3.
- ²⁵ The COPs of the three conventions agreed to establish an ad hoc joint working group (AHJWG) to prepare joint recommendations on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions for submission to the COPs of all three conventions. The draft decisions prepared by the AHJWG were adopted by the three COPs without any substantive amendments: decisions BC-IX/10, RC-4/11, SC-4/34. For more information, see <<http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/>> (January 2012).
- ²⁶ UNEP (2011), p. 4.
- ²⁷ Omnibus decisions BC.Ex-1/1, RC.Ex-1/1 and SC.Ex-1/1.
- ²⁸ Decisions SC-5/27, RC-5/12, and UNEP/CHW.10/CRP.2, respectively.
- ²⁹ See *Submissions from parties, regional centers and other stakeholders on activities carried out to implement the synergies decisions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP 5 of the Stockholm Convention, 11 March 2011, UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/15.
- ³⁰ See *Enhancing cooperation and coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP 5, UNEP/POPS/COP.5/32/Add.3, particularly paragraphs 7ff. and 15.
- ³¹ UNEP (2010), paragraph 59. Also see detailed calculations of potential cost savings in a study provided by UNEP in 2006, analyzing possible financial implications of the synergies process: *Supplementary analysis of the financial and administrative arrangements that would be needed to implement any changes proposed to enhance synergies and cooperation between the secretariats of the chemicals and waste conventions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP2 of the Stockholm Convention, UNEP/POPS/COP.2/INF/18.
- ³² United Nations (2011), p. 4. For a detailed account of coordination mechanisms at the national and regional levels, see *Submissions from parties, regional centers and other stakeholders on activities carried out to implement the synergies decisions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP 5 of the Stockholm Convention, 11 March 2011, UNEP/POPS/COP.5/INF/15.
- ³³ Executive Secretary's proposal for the organization of the secretariats of the three conventions, 21 December 2011, available at <<http://www.basel.int/TheConvention/Synergies/Jointmanagerialfunctions/tabid/2501/Default.aspx>> (January 2012).
- ³⁴ United Nations (2011), p. 5.
- ³⁵ In its 2008 report, the UN Joint Inspection Unit came to a similar conclusion. See Joint Inspection Unit (2008), p. 12, para.54.

³⁶ As requested by the COPs of the three conventions in their respective decisions BC-IX/10, RC-4/11 and SC-4/34. See *Enhancing cooperation and coordination among Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP 5 of the Stockholm Convention, 2 March 2011, UNEP/POPS/COP.5/Add.1, p.8.

³⁷ See *Enhancing cooperation and coordination among Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP 5 of the Stockholm Convention, 2 March 2011, UNEP/POPS/COP.5/Add.1, p.13f.

³⁸ Omnibus decisions BC.Ex-1/1; RC.Ex-1/1; SC.Ex-1/1.

³⁹ Decisions BC-10/29, RC-5/12 and SC-5/27. The three secretariats have already at a high degree of integration with regard to the organization of COP meetings. In 2011 a Coordinator was assigned to supervise the three COPs. Most of the processes and functions performed for registration, travel, logistics, and finance in support of the COPs follow standardized procedures, and the management of documents follow the same general processes. See *Findings of the sub-groups set up under the secretariat task force on restructuring, Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions*, December 2011, p. 4.

⁴⁰ Decisions BC-10/29, RC-5/12 and SC-5/27.

⁴¹ Decided at the simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the COPs in February 2010.

⁴² Executive Secretary's proposal for the organization of the secretariats of the three conventions.

⁴³ For instance, decisions BC-IX/10, RC-4/11, SC-4/34; and decisions BC-10/29, RC-5/12, SC-5/27.

⁴⁴ Report of the joint meeting of the Bureaux of the Basel Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, Geneva, 26 March 2011, p. 5.

⁴⁵ Executive Secretary's proposal for the organization of the secretariats of the three conventions.

⁴⁶ See *Enhancing cooperation and coordination among Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions*, Note by the Secretariat to COP 5 of the Stockholm Convention, 2 March 2011, UNEP/POPS/COP.5/Add.1.

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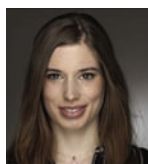
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