



BASEL CONVENTION



ROTTERDAM CONVENTION



STOCKHOLM CONVENTION



**MINAMATA
CONVENTION
ON MERCURY**



Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

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PRESS RELEASE

Sound management of chemicals and waste a prerequisite for turning the tide on biodiversity loss and protecting human health:

Joint Statement of the Basel, Minamata, Rotterdam, & Stockholm conventions on the occasion of the UN Summit on Biodiversity

Geneva, Switzerland

30 September 2020

All eyes are on biodiversity today, as the UN Summit on Biodiversity brings together the international community in the name of stemming the tide of biodiversity loss worldwide. With biodiversity loss occurring at an unprecedented rate, we are called upon to recognise not only our common global duty to halt the destruction of our natural world, but also to act where we are, and where we can, to safeguard and restore the life-supporting functions of our Planet.

The Basel (1989), Rotterdam (1998), Stockholm (2001), and Minamata (2013) Conventions were agreed in order to manage and reduce the harmful impacts of hazardous chemicals and wastes on the environment and on human health. While focused on chemicals and wastes management, each of these Conventions also decidedly contributes to the overall protection of biological diversity and the range of goods and services provided by our Planet's ecosystems.

Pollution is widely accepted as one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss. Pollution might be experienced as plastics or pesticides choking life in our rivers and oceans, or as industrial chemicals such as PCBs and PFOS, taken up by living organisms and accumulating up the food-chain, causing multiple damages such as endocrine disruption and neurotoxicity, or as wastes dumping or open burning, poisoning our soils, freshwater and air, or as mercury dramatically affecting the health of small-scale gold miners. Common to each of these examples of unsustainable use of chemicals and wastes, is the almost irreparable damage done to the ecosystems and to Nature's ability to thrive and to contribute to the well-being of people.

As independent and legally binding instruments, the four Conventions provide for specific means to achieve their respective objectives, including by setting obligations for their respective Parties to control or reduce harm to human health and the environment stemming from the production, use, trade and disposal of the covered

chemicals and wastes. Since they contribute to a greater whole, their full implementation makes a significant, and vital contribution to the protection of the environment and biodiversity, and overall, to the health and well-being of people.

As a contribution to efforts to protect biodiversity, the secretariats of the four conventions have joined forces to develop an exploratory study highlighting the pollutants regulated by the four Conventions and their impacts on biodiversity. Based on existing scientific knowledge, the sound management of these pollutants under our Conventions will undoubtedly result in improvements to the state of biodiversity. The study will be launched at the 5th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, convening in 2021, in the run-up to the Conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (July 2021), the Conference of the Parties of the Minamata Convention (November 2021), as well as the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity convening to adopt the Global Biodiversity Framework, in late 2021.

For further information on the work of the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions: www.brsmeas.org

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