

# Workshop 2018 of the Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes

## Issue Paper

### ***Session 1: Updates of National Regulations, Implementation Status of the Basel Convention: with a focus on the TBM/ESM of plastic wastes***

Session Coordinator:

Mr. Ridwan Tamin, Director, Basel Convention Regional Centre for South-East Asia (BCRCSEA) and,  
Ms. Juliette Voinov Kohler, Legal Advisor, BRS Secretariat

#### **Background**

- Since its establishment, the Asian Network has exchanged information on the latest national laws and regulations among competent authorities in our region. It is beneficial for each country to share their up-to-date national policies for the implementation of the Convention. At the workshop 2017, we paid special attention to three (3) waste streams that many participants are interested in: namely E-waste, ULAB (used lead-acid battery) and mercury waste, and exchanged information on policies and legal frameworks and the current status of import/export as well as recycling and treatment relevant to those wastes in each country.
- Recently, the collection and recycling of plastic waste have become quite important. This is largely affected by China's recent control on the import of recyclable wastes. This regulation has changed the trend of import/export of recyclable wastes including plastic wastes (this topic will be discussed in depth at the Session 2).
- Furthermore, plastic litter in the ocean is now ubiquitous and the scale and importance of this problem have received due attention recently. The UNEP has initiated discussion on this matter since 2014 and an ad-hoc expert working group was established to consider possible solutions pursuant to the Resolution adopted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA3). At the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG11) held in September 2018, possible further actions on marine plastic litter and microplastic within the scope of the Basel Convention were discussed. The establishment of new partnership focusing on plastic wastes was proposed, and it is highly likely that the proposal is to be adopted at COP14 in next April-May 2019.
- Some previous studies suggested that the global problem of marine plastic litter is largely attributed to Asian countries. It is timely to discuss what the Asian Network can contribute to this issue within the scope of the Basel Convention.
- Based on the above, the Session 1 of this year's workshop would exchange country's up-to-date national policies and the implementation status of the Basel Convention, with paying a special attention to plastic wastes (including the issue of marine plastic litters and microplastics), and facilitate the exchange of following information:
  - Trend of import/export of plastic wastes
  - Status of recycling facility development and the challenges
  - Regulations and policies for the control of import/export and/or the promotion of plastic waste recycling
  - Problems of marine plastic litters and microplastics that has already surfaced
  - Efforts made by countries to address the problem of plastic wastes (e.g., development of policy/regulation for reducing the plastic use/consumption, marine monitoring)

## **Structure of the Session**

- The Secretariat of the Asian Network will share results of questionnaire distributed prior to the workshop. Then, the BRS Secretariat will introduce major outcomes of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG11) relevant to the theme of the Workshop 2018.
- All countries/regions will deliver presentations including;
  - (1) Updates of national policies and the implementation status of the Basel Convention;
  - (2) Information related to plastic wastes, marine plastic litters and microplastics (upon request in the questionnaire)
- World Customs Organization (WCO) will share the recent trend of illegal traffic and ongoing efforts made by Customs to combat illegal traffic.

## **Points of discussion**

- The Q&A session will follow country presentations.

## **Expected outcome**

- The latest information for the implementation of the Basel Convention will be shared.
- The current status and challenges on the plastic waste, marine plastic litter/microplastic in the Asian region will be understood.
- Matters to be addressed in the future Asian Network will be identified.

## **Session 2: Global Trend of the TBM of Recyclable Wastes**

Session coordinator: Mr. Michikazu Kojima, Senior Economist, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)

### **Background**

- There has been changes in trend of the transboundary movement (TBM) of hazardous wastes all over the world. The change of trade pattern has been significant since Chinese Government announced its import ban of some types of recyclable waste. Since then, major destination of recyclable wastes such as plastics, papers, metal scrap and others including mixed plastics and metals, has been shifted to other countries in Asia.
- Particularly, China's import restriction has enormous impacts on the circulation of plastic wastes not only in Asia but also in other regions including North America and Europe. This issue was actively discussed at the workshop last year. Since plastic wastes are also linked with an issue of marine litter pollution, mechanism for promoting the collection and recycling of plastic wastes has become quite important.
- Some countries of the Asian Network reported that a large volume of plastic wastes are being shipped within their territories and Government plans to impose ban or restriction on the import of plastic wastes. It is observed in some Asian countries that new pretreatment facilities are being established to improve the quality of recyclable wastes in compliance with the requirement of China's import regulation so that wastes can be re-exported to China.
- It is appropriate to point out heavy dependence on a high demand in a single country and external environmental costs for pollution/contamination caused by low quality plastics solely borne by China are not healthy for the world and especially for the region. Therefore it is timely to consider some measures for promoting the domestic or regional resource circulation.

### **Structure of the Session**

- At the beginning, the Secretariat of the Asian Network and Mr. Michikazu Kojima from Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) will update the recent trend of the TBM of recyclable wastes (particularly plastic wastes) and report what is now happening on the ground.
- Followed by the introductory presentations, IMPEL and four Asian countries (Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam) will share impacts of Chinese import regulation on Europe and Asia, respectively.

### **Points of discussion**

- Have there been changes in trend of the TBM in Asia lately?
- Any new policy/regulation was developed in Asian countries?
- What are effective measures to promote the recycling of wastes domestically and regionally?

### **Expected outcome**

- Recent trend of the TBM will be identified.
- Agree to continue to discuss this matter at the future workshops

### ***Session 3: Technologies, Policies and Practices to Promote ESM in Asia and Link with TBM***

Session coordinator: Dr. Shunsuke Kudo, Deputy Director, Industrial and Hazardous Waste Management Division, Environment Reaeration and Resource Circulation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ)

#### **Background**

- Under the Basel Convention, many Guidelines/Guidance have been developed and updated to support Parties to implement core elements of the Convention, namely the environmentally sound management (ESM) and control of transboundary movement (TBM). The Asian Network has also exchanged information on technologies, policies and practices to promote the ESM. At the last workshop, we shared up-to-date information on the extended producer responsibility (EPR) currently being introduced in many countries.
- At the workshop 2018, we continue the information exchange about ongoing efforts made by Government or industry to ensure and promote the ESM. Hence this workshop is organized in Japan, taking this opportunity, participants are encouraged to learn Japan's ESM technologies through keynote lecture by experts as well as site visit to a smelting and hazardous waste management facility.
- Although advanced ESM technologies are available in the region, it is challenging for all countries to set up state-of-art facilities for all kinds of waste stream, particularly those wastes difficult to treat/recycle (e.g., mercury wastes). In the long run, it is ideal that all wastes are managed at the source of generation in an environmentally sound manner, however, in the short run, the ESM through TBM can benefit the countries whose capacity is limited.
- In the past workshops, some industry representatives pointed out that the Basel PIC procedure could be a barrier from an economic perspective regardless if hazardous wastes to be exported from developing to developed countries for the purpose of ensuring the ESM particularly in the case of or where many transit countries are involved. It is also beneficial for countries to address this issue from a regional perspective.

#### **Structure of the Session**

- The BRS Secretariat will introduce the guidelines/guidance, relevant to ESM and TBM, recently developed or updated under the Basel Convention.
- Then, presentations will be given by waste management sector, BCRCs, and EEE industry regarding their efforts to ensure/promote ESM, sometime through TBM.

#### **Points of discussion**

- What are common elements for ensuring and promoting the ESM?
- How can ESM be ensured? TBM can be a solution?
- What the Asian Network can contribute to simplify the PIC procedure, particularly cases where many transit countries are involved.

#### **Expected outcome**

- Participants shared technologies, policies and practices necessary for the ESM and learned ongoing efforts made by Governments or industries.
- Possible solutions to improve PIC procedures will be identified.