

Syllabus

# A deep dive into the Rotterdam Convention



ROTTERDAM  
CONVENTION

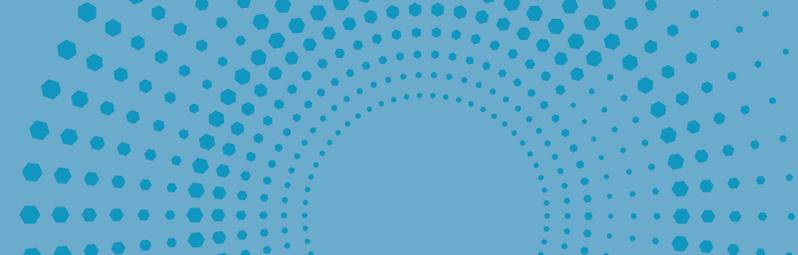


Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



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# 1. Background

The dramatic growth in chemical production and trade during the past decades has raised concerns about the potential risks posed by hazardous chemicals and pesticides. Countries lacking adequate infrastructure to monitor the import and use of these chemicals are particularly vulnerable.

In response to these concerns, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade was adopted in 1998 and entered into force in 2004. It aims to promote shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among Parties in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals in order to protect human health and the environment from potential harm and to contribute to their environmentally sound use.

This self-paced online course on the Rotterdam Convention primarily targets the Rotterdam Convention designated national authorities (DNAs) and Official Contact Points (OCPs). It also offers valuable

knowledge for other governmental and non-governmental actors with a role in the implementation of the Convention, from custom authorities to chemical importers.

This course complements the '[Introductory Course on the Rotterdam Convention](#)' by providing an in-depth learning experience, systematically covering the mechanisms and provisions of the Convention. It explores key concepts and processes in more detail - for example, step by step completion of an import response form - and covers topics currently not explored in the introductory course, such as Annex II criteria, provisions on custom codes and labelling etc.

The course serves as a 'one-stop-shop' that provides an overview of the breadth of available resources on the Rotterdam Convention, including the Resource Kit, the Final Regulatory Action (FRA) Evaluation Toolkit and the Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Pesticide Registration Toolkit etc, enabling the learner to better navigate and understand the scope and the purpose of these resources.

The course was developed by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and generous financial contributions from the European Union (EU).

## 2. Target Audience

The primary target audiences of the course are:

- Rotterdam Convention DNAs for industrial chemicals and pesticides, in particular those relatively new to the position;
- Rotterdam Convention OCPs; and
- Other government actors with a role in the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention at the national level, such as other relevant Ministries, custom officers etc.

The course also offers valuable knowledge and insights for the following audiences:

- Private sector entities with a role in the import and/or export of chemicals;
- Civil society organizations with an interest in the functioning of the Rotterdam Convention; and
- Individuals with an interest in the international trade of chemicals.





## 3. Learning Objectives

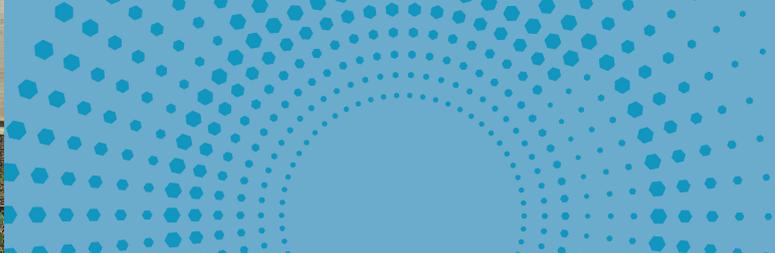
**After completing the course, you will be able to:**

- Explain the functioning, actors, key provisions and mechanisms of the Rotterdam Convention;
- Identify relevant tools and resources for the implementation of the Convention at the national level;
- Use relevant tools and resources for the implementation of the Convention at the national level; and
- Support effectively and efficiently the implementation of the Convention at the national level.

## 4. Methodology

The course is self-paced and adapted to the schedule of full-time working professionals and is suitable for participants irrespective of their level of pre-existing knowledge on the Rotterdam Convention. The four modules of the course are self-standing and can be completed in any order. For those with no or very limited background knowledge, it is recommended to complete each module in the given order. More experienced users may wish to choose specific modules individually to deepen their knowledge on a particular topic in a targeted manner. The DNAs that are relatively new to the position are encouraged to complete the entire course in the suggested order.

Participants are provided with the opportunity to learn through various experiences: absorb (read and watch), interact (activity) and reflect (relate to one's own reality). The lessons within each module are interactive making use of clickable objects, such as buttons, hotspots, tabs, accordions, flipping cards, videos, etc. Moreover, within each lesson, users will find activities that will help them to focus on the key concepts presented. To complete each module, beside the interactive lessons, learners will have to pass a short knowledge check with, for example, multiple choice questions, matching, ordering, multiple answers, etc.



## 5. Course Structure and Content

The course is structured in four modules, each module including two to three lessons:

### Module 1: What is the Rotterdam Convention and why was it created?

- Lesson 1.1. Objectives, scope and relationship to other agreements
- Lesson 1.2. Key mechanisms and actors

### Module 2: How are chemicals listed under the Convention?

- Lesson 2.1. Overview of the listing procedure
- Lesson 2.2. Notifications of final regulatory actions
- Lesson 2.3. Proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations

### Module 3: How does the trade of chemicals listed in Annex III to the Convention work?

- Lesson 3.1. Overview of the prior informed consent procedure
- Lesson 3.2. Imports of Annex III chemicals
- Lesson 3.3. Exports of Annex III chemicals

### Module 4: Which mechanisms exist for the exchange of information under the Convention?

- Lesson 4.1. Exports of banned or severely restricted chemicals
- Lesson 4.2. Classification and labelling
- Lesson 4.3. Exchange of scientific, technical, economic and legal information



# Module 1: What is the Rotterdam Convention?

## Lesson 1.1. Objective, scope and relationship to other agreements

### Content

- Following a summary of the history leading to the adoption of the Rotterdam Convention, this lesson covers its objective, its scope, definitions of key concepts, synergies with the Basel and Stockholm conventions, and cooperation and coordination with other multilateral environmental agreements.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the objective of the Rotterdam Convention;
- explain which chemicals are covered; and
- identify linkages with other agreements.

## Lesson 1.2. Key mechanisms and actors

### Content

This lesson maps out the architecture of the Rotterdam Convention. It introduces important definitions, provides an overview of the roles of the Secretariat, the subsidiary bodies, the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the Parties, including designated national authorities (DNAs) and official contact points (OCPs). It also sets the stage for the next modules by introducing the Convention's main mechanisms: the prior informed consent (PIC) procedure and information exchange. Moreover, considerations for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention at the national level are provided.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- identify the key actors and their main roles;
- list the responsibilities of DNAs and OCPs;
- take steps to implement the Convention at the national level;
- recall the Convention's main mechanisms;
- recall the key definitions under the Convention.



# Module 2: How are chemicals listed under the Convention?

## Lesson 2.1. Overview of the listing procedure

### Content

In this first lesson of module 2, the deeper dive into details begins. The lesson explains how industrial chemicals and pesticides are listed in Annex III of the Convention. In doing so, it examines the different procedures and criteria for the listing of (a) banned or severely restricted chemicals following notifications of final regulatory actions (FRAs) and (b) severely hazardous pesticide formulations (SHPF). It also covers the drafting, approval, and communication of the decision guidance documents (DGDs). Finally, it explains what actors are involved in the listing procedure and the role each of them plays.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- identify the steps and criteria leading to the listing of a chemical in Annex III;
- explain the role of the different actors in the listing procedure;
- distinguish between different processes for FRA notifications and SHPF proposals.

## Lesson 2.2. Notifications of final regulatory actions

### Content

At this stage, module 2 continues by elaborating on notifications of FRAs to ban or severely restrict a chemical – one of the two procedures by which a chemical can be listed in Annex III. This lesson explains how FRAs are notified, including relevant information requirements, the notification form etc. It also provides an overview of related tools to support Parties, such as the FRA Evaluation Toolkit and the FAO Pesticides Registration Toolkit.

## Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- identify existing tools and resources related to FRAs;
- use existing tools and resources related to FRAs;
- examine whether FRA notifications contain the required information; and
- complete the notification of FRA form.

## Lesson 2.3. Proposals for severely hazardous pesticide formulations (SHPFs)

### Content

The third and final lesson of module 2 will elaborate in more detail on the proposals for SHPFs, the second procedure by which chemicals can be listed in Annex III. The lesson also introduces the SHPF toolkit and other materials to support Parties.

## Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- identify existing tools and resources related to SHPFs;
- use existing tools and resources related to SHPFs;
- examine whether a proposal contains the required information; and
- explain the criteria used by the Chemical Review Committee (CRC) to assess SHPF proposals.



# Module 3: How does the trade of chemicals listed in Annex III to the Convention work?

## Lesson 3.1. Overview of the PIC procedure

### Content

Module 3 begins by looking in detail at the PIC procedure which was briefly introduced in module 1. Thus, the first lesson of module 3 describes how the PIC procedure works, including the role of the Decision Guidance Documents, the PIC circular, and the benefits of the PIC procedure.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain how the PIC procedure works;
- list the key articles relevant for the PIC procedure;
- identify key documents related to the PIC procedure; and
- use key documents related to the PIC procedure.

## Lesson 3.2. Imports of Annex III chemicals

### Content

Once the PIC procedure is explained, lesson 2 of module 3 focuses on the obligations of Parties regarding imports of chemicals listed in Annex III. It introduces the import response form and explains the distinction between interim and final import responses.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- outline the obligations related to imports of Annex III chemicals;
- list important considerations in taking a decision on future imports;
- identify sources of information to make informed decisions; and
- complete the import response form.

## Lesson 3.3. Exports of Annex III chemicals

### Content

While the previous lesson focuses on the obligation of Parties regarding imports of chemicals listed in Annex III, this final lesson of module 3 looks at the obligation of Parties with regards to exports of Annex III chemicals. This includes legislative measures to communicate decisions in a timely manner and ensuring compliance with import responses of other Parties.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- outline the obligations related to exports of Annex III chemicals; and
- identify action to be taken at the national level to ensure compliance.



# Module 4: Which mechanisms exist for the exchange of information under the Convention?

## Lesson 4.1. Exports of banned or severely restricted chemicals

### Content

Module 4 starts by explaining the obligations Parties have when it comes to exports of banned or severely restricted chemicals that are not listed in Annex III. A key focus of this lesson are export notifications, including the information that needs to be included therein, the modalities for providing export notifications etc.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the obligations of Parties exporting banned or severely restricted chemicals that not listed in Annex III;
- explain the obligations of Parties importing banned or severely restricted chemicals that not listed in Annex III; and
- examine whether an export notification contains the required information.

## Lesson 4.2. Classification and labelling

### Content

This lesson covers the information required to accompany exported chemicals. It introduces the Harmonized System (HS) customs codes for Annex III chemicals and cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO). Further, it covers the labelling requirements and safety data sheets required when exporting both Annex III chemicals and banned or severely restricted chemicals.

## Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, labelling requirements and safety data sheets as they apply to the Convention;
- distinguish between information requirements for exports of chemicals listed in Annex III and banned or severely restricted chemicals that are not listed in Annex III.

## Lesson 4.3. Exchange of scientific, technical, economic and legal information

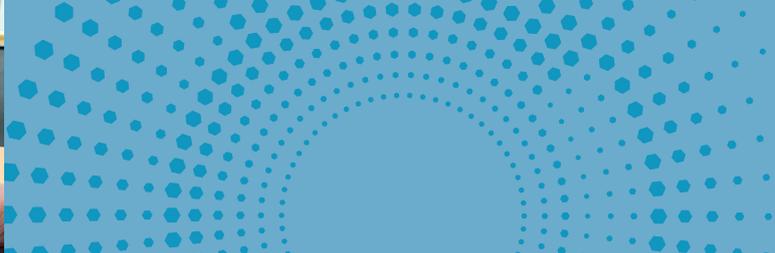
### Content

As introduced in lesson 2 of module 1, a key mechanism under the Convention is information exchange. This lesson covers the obligation of Parties to facilitate the exchange of information. It explains which types of information Parties are required to facilitate the exchange of.

## Learning objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- outline the information that Parties involved in the import-export of chemicals are required to exchange; and
- identify other sources of information and opportunities for the exchange of information.



## 6. Certification

The successful completion of the course rewards the learner with a certificate. To complete the course, the learner must complete all four modules and pass each associated quiz with a minimum grade of

70% from no more than three attempts. The completion of each module also rewards the learner with a badge.

## 7. Learning resources

To support learning, the course features a range of learning activities and experiences such as interactive lessons, videos, learning journals, quizzes and external resources.

### Video presentations:

Each module is briefly introduced in a video format. This could be in the form of a talk by a subject-matter expert or via an animated video. The videos walk the learner through the content of the module, specify the learning objectives and highlight the main concepts and principles that will be discussed.

### Interactive lessons:

The interactive lessons provide the learner with the content necessary to achieve the 2-3 specific learning objectives and contain a series of interactive spaces. These guide the learner through the various

themes and key messages of the lesson in a coherent and progressive manner. Each lesson features a variety of instructional tools, such as clickable objects, navigation buttons, hotspots, tabs, accordions, flipping cards, videos, check-for-understanding spaces, etc.

### Learning journals:

The learning journals are documents which accompany the interactive lessons and contain the same content in a static format for off-line consultation.

### Check-for-understanding:

Interactive quizzes in various forms, and other means to test and solidify the knowledge of the learner, will be spread throughout each module, typically after certain sub-themes have been discussed.

## Final quizzes:

Each module is assessed through a final quiz. To complete a module, after consulting its associated interactive lessons, learners must successfully answer questions in a final quiz. The quiz assesses the achievement of the learning objectives for each module. Each quiz can be attempted a maximum of three times. Passing a quiz with at least 70% rewards learners with a badge associated with the specific module. Once the three quizzes are passed and learners obtain the three badges, they can download a certificate of completion from the course 'Certification' section.

## Further reading:

A list of reference materials for further reading will be provided at the end of each module.

## Course evaluation:

Participants will be requested to provide feedback on the course by filling in a feedback form that can be accessed in the 'Certification' section on the course page.

# 8. Technical Requirements

## Browser:

- The course works best with Firefox 3.6 or higher (download for free at <https://www.mozilla.org/en-GB/>)
- The course is also compatible with Google Chrome (download for free at <https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/>)
- For technical reasons, it is not recommended to use Internet Explorer.

Note: JavaScript & Cookies must be enabled.

## Software:

- Adobe Acrobat Reader (download for free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>).
- Adobe Flash Player (download for free at <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>)
- Microsoft Office (Windows or Apple version) or Open Office (download for free at <http://www.openoffice.org>)

Platform: Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, ME,

XP or superior; MacOS 9 or MacOS X

Hardware: 64MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space

Modem: 56 K



