



**SEAPORT ENVIRONMENTAL
SECURITY NETWORK**

KICK OFF MEETING REPORT

**9 – 10 OCTOBER 2008
INTERPOL HEADQUARTERS**

LYON, FRANCE

SEAPORT ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY NETWORK KICK-OFF MEETING SUMMARY

Introduction

This document reports on the kick-off meeting of the Seaport Environmental Security Network held at Interpol Headquarters in Lyon, France, on 9-10 October 2008. Attached to this meeting summary are more detailed meeting notes and a list of meeting participants.

The Seaport Environmental Security Network

Illegal transboundary waste shipments can pose significant human health, environmental, and financial risks to the countries involved. The globalization of trade, repeated incidents of dumping, and the results of cargo inspections at certain ports have raised concerns about the extent of these types of shipments. Major international shipments of hazardous waste and recyclable materials must often pass through or be off-loaded in seaports, making seaports a critical hub in international efforts to ensure that the international waste trade is legal and safe.

The sheer volume of waste transfer through seaports, the complexity of the international regulatory environment, and the lack of formal institutional requirements for communication and cooperation among port officials present significant barriers to the effective monitoring and control of waste shipments. To respond to this problem, the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) established the Seaport Environmental Security Network (SESN) at the 8th INECE Conference in April 2008 in Cape Town, South Africa. The SESN is an informal network of professionals from industrialized and developed countries involved in the inspection and monitoring of transboundary movements of hazardous waste through seaports.¹ Its goals are to:

- Raise awareness of illegal movements of hazardous waste through seaports, their environmental risks, and the need to take action against them.
- Build capacity for inspections and enforcement actions.
- Facilitate international enforcement collaboration among government officials on ways to detect and stop illegal and dangerous shipments of hazardous waste.

Meeting Background

Difficulties in performing inspections, tracking waste shipments, sharing information between government agencies and collaborating internationally lead to a failure to detect, deter and prevent the illegal transboundary movements of hazardous waste. INECE convened a kick-off meeting of the SESN to receive input from government experts on how best to create mechanisms to increase awareness of common problems, detect and counteract non-compliance, and improve operational enforcement cooperation between countries.

¹ See the Seaport Environmental Security Network web site at <http://inece.org/seaport/>.

The kick-off meeting was co-chaired by Henk Ruessink of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of the Netherlands and Robert Heiss of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Twenty-four people representing twelve countries (Uruguay, Ghana, Panama, Germany, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom, United States, Netherlands, Republic of Benin, Jamaica, Thailand and Belgium) and four international organizations (Interpol, United Nations Environment Programme, Secretariat of the Basel Convention, and INECE) participated in the meeting.

The meeting co-chairs noted that the expected outcomes of the meeting were to:

- Gain mutual understanding of how different countries respond to the challenge of controlling illegal waste shipments through seaports.
- Exchange experiences.
- Generate ideas on the operation of the SESN.
- Propose concrete activities for the SESN.

During the meeting, participants discussed the importance of sharing information and improving cooperation at the intra-institutional and international levels in order to control illegal waste shipments at ports. Participants exchanged information on specific programs and experiences and discussed the importance of risk profiling and the use of (information) technology tools to identify and track movements of waste streams, and they reviewed current on-going activities of other international organizations.

Meeting Outcomes

Participants expressed a strong need and interest in supporting the Network. Many noted that they found the meeting discussions beneficial and timely. They expressed a common desire to strengthen informal and formal international collaboration relating to the issues discussed at the meeting.

The meeting participants proposed specific activities for SESN to undertake to support the network's goals and to organize it in a way that would maximize its effectiveness.

To support the network's goal of *raising awareness* of the challenges of controlling illegal transboundary waste shipments through ports, they recommended that the network:

1. Prepare country profiles that participants can use to share information about seaport operations.
2. Develop online collaboration tools such as a bulletin board.

To support the network's goal of *building capacity* to respond to illegal movements of hazardous waste through seaports, participants recommended that the network:

1. Develop an inventory of existing capacity building, training, and inspection tools.
2. Support the development of new training materials as necessary, such as an online training on how to conduct hazardous waste inspections at seaports.

3. Identify linkages among related ongoing projects to leverage resources to develop country or regional specific projects and to share outcomes with the wider network.

To support the network's goal of *facilitating enforcement collaboration*, participants recommended that the network:

1. Support the development of exchange programs for port inspectors.
2. Provide information resources on risk-based profiling techniques.
3. Share existing and model memoranda of understanding between customs, environmental authorities and police agencies.

To support *the organization of the network*, participants recommended that INECE:

1. Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the network and its members.
2. Link with other initiatives, such as those of the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Customs Organization, Interpol, the Basel Convention Regional Centres, and the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law.
3. Send a letter to the high level management of the participants in this meeting seeking their continued involvement in the network.

Meeting Conclusions and Next Steps

The co-chairs concluded by thanking Interpol for hosting the meeting and the participants for their enthusiastic discussions and substantive contributions to shaping the network. They committed to finalizing terms of reference for the network and to developing a work plan for 2009 based on the input received at this meeting.

They noted that some proposed activities would begin right away, such as the country profiles, the online collaboration tools such as a bulletin board, and the sharing of existing and model memoranda of understanding between customs, environmental authorities and police agencies.

The co-chairs emphasized that continuing to strengthen relationships and share experience among Network participants is critical to the success of combating illegal transboundary movements of waste through seaports, which in turn will help protect human health and the environment, ensure a level playing field for companies that store waste safely and legally, and promote the rule of law.