PCB Regional Webinar Series

Webinar #2: Making visible the legacy of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs): A regional webinar – AFRICA

Webinar Report

2 September 2025

cwm@unitar.org

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) are a class of synthetic chlorinated organic chemicals that are toxic to wildlife and humans, persistent, and can bioaccumulate and travel long distances in the environment. Furthermore, they are classified as carcinogens, and can suppress the immune system, which can increase the risk of developing a wide variety of diseases. There is scientific evidence that humans are exposed to PCBs through ingestion of animal fats, inhalation, and absorption through the skin. Workers in the electrical sector can be particularly exposed to PCBs as these chemicals may be present in older electrical equipment such as transformers, capacitors and fluorescent lighting ballasts.

PCBs have been listed under the **Stockholm Convention** as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Parties that ratified the Stockholm Convention aim to eliminate the use of PCBs by 2025 and to provide their environmentally sound waste management by 2028.

The Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Secretariat and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) are jointly hosting **regional webinars** that will offer valuable updates, technical insights, and an opportunity for a regional dialogue as Parties prepare for the 2026 reporting round and assess progress toward the 2025 and 2028 goals for the elimination of PCBs under the Stockholm Convention. These webinars have the following objectives:

- To inform countries about the outcomes of the recent 2025 Conferences of the Parties, including the revised guidance documents developed by the PCB Small Intersessional Working Group (SIWG), and new mandates adopted.
- To present the revised reporting format, timeline, and logistical arrangements for the 2026 reporting cycle under the Stockholm Convention.
- To provide an overview of the progress assessment process, including the 2027 global progress report coordinated by the BRS Secretariat with technical support from the PCB SIWG.
- To update on the status of the region in terms of PCBs management, share lessons learned, and discuss how these inputs can shape future actions.
- To provide information on the PCB Global Elimination Programme, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and other innovative financing approaches for achieving the 2025 and 2028 goals for the elimination of PCBs.

Webinar #2: “Making visible the legacy of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs): A regional webinar – AFRICA” is designed to support countries in Africa in advancing toward the 2025 and 2028 goals for PCBs elimination under the Stockholm Convention.

Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Speakers
09:00 AM (GMT+0)	Opening of the meeting	**Sofia Schlezak** Individual Contractor, UNITAR
09:10 – 09:25 AM	PCB goals under the scope of the Stockholm Convention and the BRS programme of work	**Augustín Harte** Programme Management Officer, Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm (BRS) Conventions
09:25 – 09:45 AM	Global and regional experiences and best practices for the Environmental Sound Management (ESM) of PCBs	**Mario Mendoza** Senior PCBs Expert, UNITAR
09:45 – 10:00 AM	Questions and Answer	**All Participants**
10:00 – 10:20 AM	Developing Effective National PCB Strategies: Practical Insights	**Edwin Camelo** PCBs Expert
10:20 – 10:30 AM	Country Intervention/Interaction	
10:30 – 10:45 AM	Exploring innovative financing pathways for PCB elimination	**Frank Moser** Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm (BRS) Conventions
10:45 – 10:55 PM	Questions and answers	**All Participants**
11:00 PM	Closing remarks	**Sofia Schlezak** Individual Contractor, UNITAR

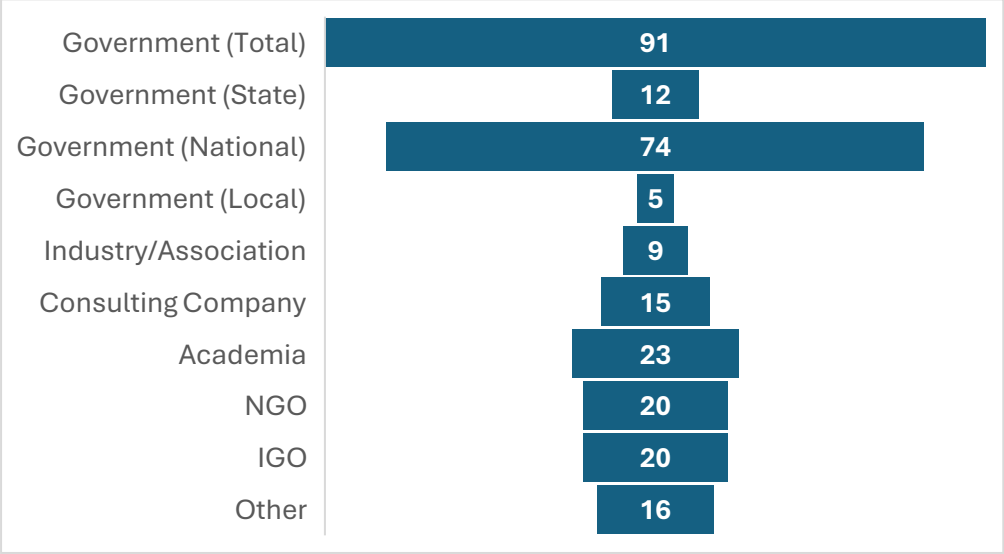
Resources

The resources for this webinar (flyer, presentations, satisfaction survey, recording) are available in the **Shared Folder** and on the **PCB e-Learning Platform**.

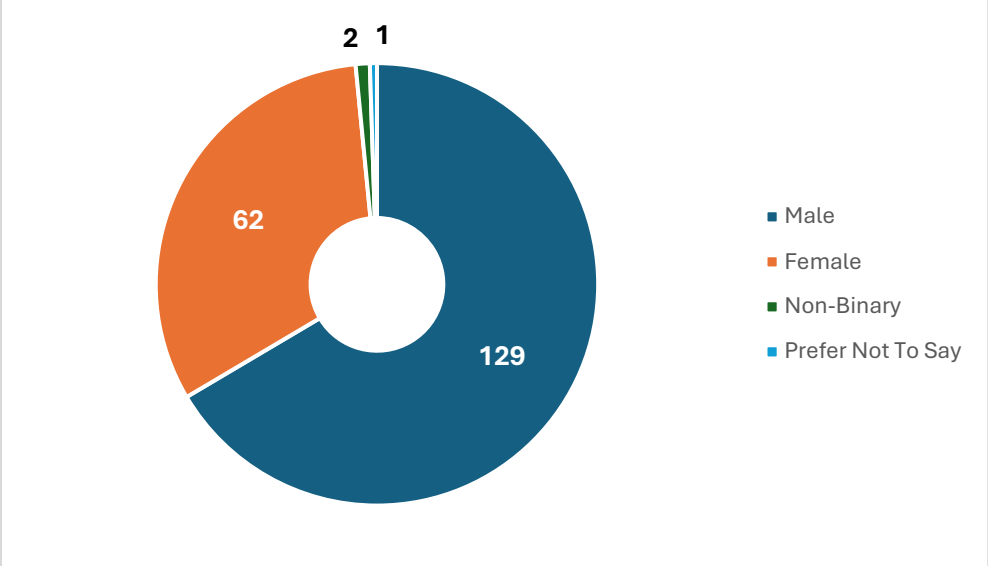
Attendance breakdown and representation

Total attendance: 194 participants

Sector distribution of participants



Gender distribution of participants



Country distribution of participants

AFRICAN REGION (43 COUNTRIES)			
Country	#	Country	#
Nigeria	16	Mauritius	1
Kenya	12	Republic of Congo	1
South Africa	9	Rwanda	1
Senegal	7	Sierra Leone	1
Ghana	6	South Sudan	1
Guinea	4	Tanzania	1
Madagascar	4		
Togo	4		
Uganda	4		
Botswana	3		
Burkina Faso	3		
Burundi	3		
Cameroon	3		
Côte d'Ivoire	3		
Ethiopia	3		
Gambia	3		
Morocco	3		
Mozambique	3		
Sudan	3		
Tunisia	3		
Zimbabwe	3		
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	2		
Egypt	2		
Niger	2		
Somalia	2		
Zambia	2		
Algeria	1		
Angola	1		
Benin	1		
Chad	1		
Comoros	1		
Djibouti	1		
Gabon	1		
Guinea-Bissau	1		
Liberia	1		
Libya	1		
Malawi	1		

OTHER REGIONS (39 COUNTRIES)			
Country	#	Country	#
Bangladesh	5	Fiji	1
Indonesia	4	Papua New Guinea	1
Myanmar	3		
Philippines	3		
Afghanistan	2		
Azerbaijan	2		
Cambodia	2		
Pakistan	2		
Armenia	1		
China	1		
Iraq	1		
Japan	1		
Jordan	1		
Mongolia	1		
Nepal	1		
Qatar	1		
Taiwan	1		
Thailand	1		
Vietnam	1		
Yemen	1		
Germany	5		
Moldova, Republic of	3		
Serbia	2		
United Kingdom	2		
Albania	1		
Croatia	1		
France	1		
Greece	1		
Ireland	1		
Italy	1		
Romania	1		
Slovakia	1		
Switzerland	1		
Argentina	1		
Jamaica	1		
Peru	1		
United States	4		

Audience considerations on achieving the 2028 PCB elimination target

Questions received (Q) and answered (A)

DISCLAIMER: PCB experts suggest the following answers based on their academic training and professional experiences. Please refer to official materials for legal provisions related to the Stockholm and Basel conventions.

Q: Is the ERS currently open for the submission of reports? Additionally, how can we obtain the login credentials for the OCP platform, including the access required for data entry?

A: The person responsible to transmit and submit the national reports every four years is the official contact point of each party. Each country designates a Focal Point, a Technical Focal Point and an Official Contact Point. The Official Contact point periodically receives a username and password which is required to access the reporting tool. For accessing the reporting format, an user and password is submitted to the Official Contact Point designed by the country. You can request the password again in this webpage: https://www.pops.int/Countries/Reporting/NationalReports/SCERSAccountrecovery/tabid/5280/Default.aspx.

It is always possible to retro-actively submit previous reports. You can always start with compiling and preparing information for submissions. The electronic reporting system can be accessed here: https://www.pops.int/Countries/Reporting/ElectronicReportingSystem/tabid/3669/Default.aspx

Q: How can I best access the reporting tool because as for Botswana we completed our inventory in 2018 through the SADC PCB elimination project and we are currently waiting for the disposal. How can we best access the reporting tool so that we update our status?

A: Please see previous answer.

Q: Could you please let us know if the inventory for Djibouti will be updated soon, given that the latest data dates back to 2007?

A: All the information the BRS secretariat is sharing is based on national reports; in future projects we will include further information from National Implementation Plans (NIPs). There is an open invitation for all countries to reach out. In any case, it depends on each countries' efforts and the support they have received from the GEF and other donors to implement and update their inventory. For country specific questions please contact Mr. Augustín Harte via email: agustin.harte@un.org.

Q: What are the plans for the countries that are yet to be covered under the project? How can countries get assistance for the NIP update?

A: Also through the Official Contact Points, but NIPs can be submitted at any time as they need to be constantly updated because of new chemicals, activities and challenges. Once the NIP has been finalized and updated you can submit it.

Q: Is there a PCB disposal centre in Africa?

A: There is no regional option for a facility to deal with PCB waste.

Q: Are there easy made technologies that can help to extract the PCB?

A: There are several technologies available for PCB treatment. You can see a summary of their main characteristics in the Guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants. However, the best strategy must be the result of a Technical-economic evaluation, where the key points are also the local regulations.

A good result from the PCB inventory, including the total PCB concentration and information about each of the Aroclors or congeners, will help make the best decisions. The most important activity is to identify the location and concentration of PCBs; then, the correct management of them will help dramatically reduce the risk of contamination (Transportation, storage, management, etc.).

Q: Can incineration in cement works be considered a solution for managing PCB contaminated sand?

A: Cement kilns treating POP wastes are considered in the guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with persistent organic pollutants. There you can find the process description, examples, emissions and residues, release control and post-treatment and other relevant information related coprocessing. .

Q: I would like to request clarification on the methods and equipment used to analyze PCBs, in order to determine whether a transformer is contaminated?

A: In the Revised guidance for the development of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) inventories and determination of PCB content you can find the methods for PCB classification and a flowchart for the classification that can help to clarify how PCB screening and Gas Chromatography could be done.
The PCB inventory strategy must be a result of an evaluation, finding the best procedure according to the stakeholder characteristics.

Q: Considering the specific socio-economic and logistical conditions of some countries, which method for the environmentally sound management and final disposal of PCBs is the most cost-effective and adaptable?

A: Please see previous answer.

Q: My question goes to Chlorination process, after the oil treatment, where can it be used again?

A: Yes, after the dechlorination process, the oil can be used as a dielectric fluid. Its dielectric properties, however, must be corrected and subsequently verified by laboratories specializing in the electrical industry.

Q: Are all transformers the same, including thermal, wind, hydraulic and solar transformers?

A: No, there are different type of transformers for different uses and conditions and also the sizes vary a lot. Not all equipment contains dielectric oils.

Q: The Inventory Form/guidance in the SC's website is as old as 2002 (its more than 20 years now!). Do you think it is still relevant, sufficient or requiring certain elaboration in term of fields/questions covered and practicality of using it on the field?

A: Indeed, this one is outdated, but in the **UNITAR training platform** there are other options posted.

Q: I need more clarity on the pollution control bond. How do we implement such in Nigeria?

A: Further discussions will be held to have a webinar with more detail on sustainable financing, for example, in the upcoming PCB Global Webinar. Please email cwm@unitar.org if you have not yet subscribed to our mailing list, or visit the **UNITAR PCB e-Learning Platform's Webinar Series Page** for upcoming webinars.

Regional PCB Webinar Series

Stay informed on all regional PCB webinars held during August and September of 2025 via the **PCB e-Learning Platform**.

Comments? Questions?
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