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Recommendations and standards:

Implementation support material

Executive Guide on Transboundary Movement of Waste

Summary

The Basel Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes and their disposal which entered into force in 1992 is very widely adopted internationally (187 Parties). UN/CEFACT has developed the electronic messages which can enable the exchanges related to this Convention. This Executive Guide reminds the base principles of this Convention and explains the work which has been done within UN/CEFACT on the subject.

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I. Introduction

1. The Basel Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes and their disposal which entered into force in 1992, sets down the obligation for its 187 Parties (as of 31 December 2019) to ensure among other things that such movements involving at least two States are reduced to the minimum consistent with the environmentally sound and efficient management of such wastes, and that such movements are conducted in a manner which will protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects which may result therefrom. It also requires that only persons authorized or allowed to transport or dispose of wastes undertake such operations and that such wastes be packaged, labelled and transported in conformity with generally accepted and recognized international rules and standards.

2. Several actors are involved in the exchange of information, including exporters, importers, waste treatment facility operators, carriers, waste generators, customs and competent authorities of export, import and transit countries. The involved actors are required to exchange information at different stages in the waste shipment process and for each individual transport. For example, each individual transport needs to be announced (Movement Announcement message), each individual receipt of waste needs to be confirmed (Certificate of Waste Receipt message) and each treatment of waste needs to be confirmed (Certificate of Waste Recovery Disposal message). In addition, the permission process also requires several steps of information exchange (Notification Submission, Notification Decision and other messages).

II. Applications

3. The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) has developed a suite of electronic (eBasel) messages for all potential messages and processes in order to facilitate and dematerialize all potential exchanges between the actors of transboundary movement of waste under the Basel Convention. These have been made available free of charge on the UN/CEFACT website and are based on the UN/CEFACT Core Component Library, ensuring harmonization with other processes on the supply chain such as supply chain exchanges, transport messages and other regulatory declarations. The messages are available for anyone to use and are accompanied by a Business Requirement Specification (BRS) which details the choreography and processes behind the proposed electronic exchanges.

III. Benefits

4. The exchange of this information through electronic messages helps to ensure rapid access to information and ensures the consistency of information throughout the process. It allows both private-sector actors and regulatory bodies to integrate the information within their internal computer systems. It facilitates supply chain and transport processes and the corresponding documentation/information exchanges for the private sector and can optimize risk analysis for regulatory bodies. Such electronic exchanges promote faster reaction times while saving resources such as paper.

IV. More information

5. UN/CEFACT eBusiness standard for the Transboundary Movement of Waste (TMW) under the Basel Convention:

https://www.unece.org/unecefact/mainstandards.html#ui-accordion-jfmulticontent_c68838-panel-0

6. The Basel Convention:

<http://www.basel.int/TheConvention/Overview/TextoftheConvention/tabid/1275/Default.aspx>

<http://www.basel.int/Implementation/Controllingtransboundarymovements/Overview/tabid/4325/Default.aspx>
