



## Coordination on Obsolete Pesticide Stocks Expanded

UNEP Chemicals and four partner organisations are moving to centrally coordinate their activities involving obsolete and/or unwanted stocks of pesticides and so protect human health and the environment.

Tens of thousands of tons of old pesticides are stored throughout the developing world, usually in inadequate or even dangerous conditions. Preliminary estimates show that persistent organic pollutants (POPs) comprise about 30 per cent of these stocks.

In response, UNEP Chemicals together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, the Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the World Health Organization, and the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development have formed a Coordinating Group on Obsolete Stocks. It will function under the auspices of the Interagency Organization for the Management of Chemicals.

Its objectives are to raise awareness about the

disposal problem, develop and propose effective responses, and ensure that limited resources are coordinated for maximum result.

Initial steps will include a baseline study describing the nature and extent of the problem, possible solutions, and current activities, with release expected in late 2000.



Wolfgang Schimml/GTZ – Pesticide Disposal Project

Workers in Madagascar move hazardous chemicals to internationally authorized containers during GTZ's dieldrin disposal operation in 1993.

### Toxics Assessment

UNEP Chemicals is soon to launch a two-year, US\$5 million project to assess persistent toxic substances on a regional basis. This Global Environment Facility project has received more than US\$1.6 million from donors, and additional co-funding is expected. Paul Whyllie from Jamaica has been appointed project manager.

### Inside this issue:

- [Coordination on Obsolete Pesticide Stocks](#) 1
- [POPs Treaty Negotiations Near Completion](#) 1
- [From the Director](#) 2
- [Better Termite Management Targeted](#) 2
- [Capacity Building Responds to Priorities](#) 2
- [Rotterdam Convention – INC-7 Set for Geneva](#) 3
- [Basel Convention – Preventing Stockpiles](#) 3
- [Calendar](#) 4
- [Selected Publications](#) 4

## POPs Treaty Negotiations Near Completion

Successful conclusion of negotiations is expected at the upcoming fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a global treaty on persistent organic pollutants (POPs), in Johannesburg, South Africa from 4-9 December 2000.

Setting the stage for this negotiation is the progress achieved at the previous session of the INC held in Bonn from 20-25 March 2000 where a draft text was developed for most of the convention, including a draft article on technical assistance. However, unfinished business remains on financial resources and mechanisms and how to specify the obligations for bans and restrictions on production and use of the 10 intentionally produced POPs.

To facilitate discussion on financial issues at the fifth session of the INC, the Chair, John Bucini (Canada) convened, at the INC's request, a meeting of one representative from each of 18 countries in Vevey, Switzerland, 19-21 June



Sandton Convention Centre – planned venue for INC-5

2000. The group discussed possible performance criteria and the current proposals for a financial mechanism and identified a number areas of common ground that should prove useful in reaching consensus in Johannesburg.

## From the Director



Photo / James B. Willis

As we pass the halfway point in the year, we in UNEP Chemicals are seeing a renewed commitment to partnerships to ensure the environmentally sound management of chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

A new IOMC coordinating group on unwanted stocks of pesticides and other chemicals has formed. Regional training workshops on chemical safety are being held jointly with FAO, WHO, the Basel Secretariat, and others. A joint UNEP/FAO termite expert group has also been established.

Coupled with other longstanding partners-

hips, such new developments reflect the reinvigorated commitment in the international community to work together to solve common chemical safety problems.

James B. Willis  
Director, UNEP Chemicals

*Five of nine pesticides that are POPs and the focus of international treaty negotiations have been used to control termites.*

## Better Termite Management Targeted

Alternative ways of controlling termites is the focus of an expert group established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, Global Integrated Pest Management Facility, and UNEP Chemicals as the result of a recent joint expert workshop.

The work is a component of the immediate actions being taken to promote more sustainable approaches through integrated pest management in the replacements of pesticides that are persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

Five of nine pesticides that are POPs and the

focus of international treaty negotiations have been used to control termites. Three -- chlordane, heptachlor, and mirex -- are still being used to control termites to protect agricultural crops and in building construction.

The FAO/UNEP Expert Group on Termite Biology and Management will continue discussions on alternative control strategies, begun at the February 2000 workshop, which highlighted positive and negative aspects of termites.

## Capacity Building Responds to Global Priorities



Graphic/Andrew Isaac

★ Workshops held

★ Workshops planned

The UNEP Chemicals capacity building program reflects global priorities identified by governments, and covers support of the Rotterdam Convention, issues related to persistent organic pollutants (POPs), support for Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers in countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and management and disposal of obsolete and unwanted stocks of chemicals, especially pesticides. It also includes a new project aimed at improving access to the Internet by African countries.

The program recognises that successful implementation of a convention requires all countries to understand the issues in the negotiation, ratification process, and implementation.

The Rotterdam Convention workshops are aimed at assisting countries initially in identifying steps necessary for ratifying the Convention and implementing their obligations. A workshop for the African region was held in Nairobi in June 2000.

Another is planned for Cartagena, Colombia in October 2000. Additional workshops are planned for 2001.

On POPs, the focus is the sound management of dioxins, furans, and PCBs and the identification and introduction of alternatives for POPs pesticides. Here there is emphasis on bringing together health and agriculture sectors and their respective approaches to integrated pest management and integrated vector management.

Ensuring an appropriate legislative base is the focus of a further series of workshops. The first was held for CIS countries in May in Novgorod, Russia.

## Rotterdam Convention – INC-7 Set for Geneva

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee will convene its seventh session from 30 October to 3 November 2000 in Geneva, continuing its work in overseeing the implementation of the interim Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure and preparing for the first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The work comes under the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.

The Committee will consider recommendations made by the Interim Chemical Review Committee (ICRC), which met in February 2000, concerning the inclusion of four remaining pesticides identified under the original PIC procedure. These pesticides will become subject to the interim PIC procedure once the Committee adopts the Decision Guidance Document (DGD) for each chemical.

The ICRC has recommended that the Committee:

- Adopt the draft DGDs for ethylene dichloride and ethylene oxide;
- Not make bromacil subject to the interim PIC procedure; and
- Adopt a policy regarding the inclusion of pesticides containing a contaminant, to guide the ICRC in its future considerations of whether to recommend that such pesticides be made subject to the interim PIC procedure. The ICRC would only consider the draft Decision Guidance Document for maleic hydrazide at its next session.

Other ICRC recommendations the Committee will consider relate to assistance to States in identifying severely hazardous pesticide formulations and operational procedures for the ICRC.

In its preparations for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Committee will start considering draft Rules of Procedure, Financial Rules and a budget, for the first biennium. It will also address the issues of non-compliance and disputesettlement, location of the secretariat, support for implementation and responsibility and liability.

Photo/LindaDurkee



UN Headquarters, Geneva

### Status of ratifications as of 11 July 2000:

73 Signatories;

7 Parties (New Parties since March 2000:

Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Surinam).

The Convention has not come into force.

## Basel Convention – Preventing More Stockpiles

Thousands of tonnes of unwanted or obsolete pesticides have accumulated in developing countries, prompting international organisations, including the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, to coordinate their work to make maximum gains in preventing further accumulation (See article, p.1.).

Also responding to this concern is the upcoming Continental Conference for Africa on the Environmentally Sound Management of Unwanted Stocks of Hazardous Waste and their Prevention. The conference, called for by the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, will take place in early 2001 in Morocco.

One of its main objectives will be to provide concrete solutions to the unsound management of such hazardous wastes and so protect human health and the environment. It also will feature preparation of an integrated strategy and con-

solidated work programme that would support and benefit existing or planned activities by the Parties, UN organisations, and other stakeholders in the area of hazardous wastes.

The Conference will be a direct followup to the Workshop on Obsolete Pesticides, being held by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, and the United Nations Environment Programme 13-15 September 2000 in Alexandria, Virginia, USA.

FAO Photo/G. Diana



In Zambia in 1997, corroded and rusting drums containing obsolete pesticides were placed inside UN-approved plastic drums and stored in a warehouse prior to disposal.

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*The UNEP Chemicals Newsletter is published periodically to give readers world-wide an update of activities to promote the environmentally sound management of chemicals and so help protect public health and the environment.*

*UNEP promotes sustainable development by catalysing vital global actions and building national capacity for the sound management of chemicals through information exchange, training, and capacity building*

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UNEP/Johnny Hendarta/TOPHAM

## Ordering Publications

A publications list is available from UNEP Chemicals and on the Web ([www.chem.unep.ch](http://www.chem.unep.ch)). Documents are free of charge.

## Selected Publications

**Press Coverage-Fourth Round of Talks on Treaty on Persistent Organic Pollutants.** Available in hard copy (English), July 2000.

**Country Case Studies on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).** Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet, March 2000.

**UNEP/FAO Global IPM Facility--Workshop Report on Termite Biology and Management.** Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet, March 2000.

**Master List of Actions on the Reduction and/or Elimination of Releases of POPs--Second Edition.** Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet, March 2000.

**Regionally-based Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances--Project Brief.** Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet, March 2000.

**International Activities Related to Chemicals.** Available in hard copy (English) and on Internet, December 1999.

## Calendar

### 19-22 September 2000

Regional Training on Management of Dioxins, Furans and PCBs--Montevideo, Uruguay

### 26 September – 2 October 2000

Workshop To Promote Sustainable Alternatives Strategies to POPs in Latin America-Caribbean (Tentative)

### 14-20 October 2000

Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS-3)--Salvador, Brazil

### 30 October--3 November 2000

Rotterdam Convention--Seventh Session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-7)--Geneva

and PCBs--Arusha, Tanzania

### 14-17 November 2000

National Workshop on Establishing PRTRs--Nicaragua (Tentative)

### 4-9 December 2000

Fifth Session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on POPs Treaty (INC-5)--Johannesburg, South Africa

### 21-22 December 2000

Networking for Chemical Information Access, Abidjan/Dar-es-Salam (Tentative)



UNEP/Amr Ahmed/TOPI/M

### 13-16 November 2000

Regional Training on Management of Dioxins, Furans