



United Nations
Environment
Programme



Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/POPS/INC.6/INF/24
6 June 2002

ENGLISH ONLY

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR AN
INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT
FOR IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON
CERTAIN PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Sixth session

Geneva, 17-21 June 2002

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

REVIEW OF ONGOING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE
WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Information submitted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to
the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at its sixth session

Note by the secretariat

Attached to the present note is information provided by the secretariat of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The information has been circulated as submitted and has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/POPS/INC.6/1

K0261697 100602

**INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS TO THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL
NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR AN INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING
INSTRUMENT FOR IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON CERTAIN
PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS
(Geneva, 17 - 21 June 2002)**

1. Nine of the 12 chemicals identified in the initial list of 'Persistent Organic Pollutants' (POPs) are pesticides. FAO does not recommend the use of these pesticides in agriculture; they have been banned in most industrialised and many developing countries, however, they remain in limited use, legally and illegally. Based on the criteria for the screening of proposed POPs (annex D of the Convention) and looking at the specific exemptions, it becomes obvious that specific uses of certain POP pesticides will remain and that for the foreseeable future pesticides will continue to make up a significant proportion of the chemicals considered as POPs. It is the purpose of this note to provide a brief overview of FAO's ongoing activities directly related to POP pesticides.
2. The "International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides" is the major guiding document for government, industry, the general public and international organizations on pesticide management. It was adopted in 1985 and is under revision, most likely to be adopted by the FAO Council in 2003.
3. By following the overall guiding principles for the sound management of pesticides provided in the "International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides" and promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as its overall pest control strategy, FAO is conducting various activities with impact on and relevance to POP pesticides. Examples of ongoing work related to FAO normative functions include activities under the Rotterdam Convention, the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), the development of FAO Pesticide Specifications, and FAO's field programme which is linked to technical assistance provided to developing countries, e.g. through the Global IPM Facility or the programme on obsolete pesticides.
4. Six pesticides out of the nine initial POP pesticides are subject to the "Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade". This Convention was adopted in 1998. UNEP/FAO jointly provide the Interim Secretariat of this Convention. The established transparent information exchange procedures, e.g. the biannual PIC Circular published by the Interim Secretariat, identify the countries, which have given their consent to the import of those pesticides/chemicals. Further information can be obtained directly from the Interim Secretariat or through its homepage www.pic.int
5. The "Joint WHO/FAO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR)" estimates maximum residue levels for pesticides in food commodities moving in international trade within the CODEX ALIMENTARIUS. Since 1998 this Meeting has conducted dietary risk assessments for pesticide residues in food to allow estimation if the dietary intake is of concern. Governments are requested to submit monitoring and consumption data to the FAO Joint Secretary of this Meeting. Monitoring data for DDT residues in specific food items was evaluated by the JMPR in September 2000 which established a Provisional Theoretical Daily Intake of 0.01 mg/kg. Further information can be obtained through FAO's homepage <http://www.fao.org/AG/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/>
6. "FAO Pesticide Specifications" represent an internationally recognised mechanism to define quality standards for pesticides. These specifications provide an international point of reference against which products can be measured and judged thereby preventing the trade sale and use of inferior products. As part of their registration requirements some countries require that products permitted for use comply with the relevant FAO specifications. FAO specifications may be extended to similar formulations produced by other manufacturers through a simple procedure for defining the equivalence of pesticide products. The process for establishing FAO Specifications is detailed in 'Manual on the Development

and Use of FAO Specifications for Plant Protection Products, including the New Procedure'. Further information is available from the following web page <http://www.fao.org/AG/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/>

7. The application of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) includes the search for alternative management approaches against pests and diseases. The need for such alternatives for POP pesticides is obvious. A Guideline document on IPM and Integrated Vector Management (IVM) co-produced by FAO and Global IPM Facility with UNEP and WHO is in press. As five of the nine POP pesticides are used against termites, FAO, UNEP and the Global IPM Facility conducted two joint workshops to recommend strategies for managing termites in agriculture and constructions (February 2000 and November 2001). The objectives of these workshops included the identification of new management approaches and not simply the replacement of a POP pesticide by another chemical. Further information can be obtained from the following web page <http://www.chem.unep.ch/pops>
8. The Global IPM Facility, in cooperation with several West African countries, has also developed a project for the GEF International Waters Programme focussing on prevention of build up and exposure to Persistent Toxic Substances (including pesticides which exhibit POPs like characteristics). The project will work with and through communities with IPPM Farmers Field Schools that are reducing overuse of pesticides in irrigated rice and vegetable production with support from a sub-regional IPPM Programme funded by the Netherlands. The GEF project has been approved as a PDF-B and will initially focus on the Senegal River valley in Senegal. The PDF-B phase will prepare a full scale GEF project involving Benin, Guinea, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Senegal.
9. The FAO programme on "Prevention and Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides" has been in operation since 1994. This programme was initiated with the support of a Netherlands Trust Fund. During its initial phase its focus was in Africa and the Near East. Since 1999, the programme has extended its activities on inventory taking and provision of advisory services on stocks of obsolete pesticides to Latin and Central America and the Caribbean (with limited support from UNEP and Canada) as well as some Asian countries (with financial support from Japan). Experience obtained through the inventory data from government sources from 46 countries in Africa and the Near East shows that in the order of 30% of the 50,000 tonnes of obsolete pesticides are POP pesticides. In 2001 FAO discovered an additional total of about 70,000 tonnes of BHC in one country in Africa. As this represents material, which was non-governmental in origin, it was not included in initial estimate of 50,000 tons. The FAO inventory of 50,000 tons is considered to be indicative of the existing stockpiles. The actual total including stockpiles of non-governmental origin, heavily contaminated soil and pesticide containers are likely much higher. For further information please refer to the homepage under <http://www.fao.org/AG/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/Disposal/>
10. FAO in cooperation with UNEP Chemicals, the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, UNIDO, The Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the World Bank, the African Development Bank (ADB), WWF, the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and CropLife International is working to establish the Africa Stockpile Programme (ASP). The objectives of the Africa Stockpile Programme are to clean up stockpiled pesticides and pesticide contaminated waste (e.g. containers and equipment) in Africa in an environmentally sound manner; to catalyze development of prevention measures and provide capacity building and institutional strengthening on important chemicals-related issues.
11. The total costs for clearing the entire continent of its stockpiles of obsolete pesticides is estimated to be US\$150-175 million. Because prevention is an important as disposal ASP will help develop suitable measures to prevent the recurrence of obsolete pesticide accumulation. The range of preventive measures will include pesticide use reduction and improved management of pesticides and will vary with the needs of individual countries. The total budget for prevention measures is estimated at US\$50-75 million. Thus the total ASP fund needed to cover programme costs is expected to be US\$200-250 million. The ASP has been encouraged to apply for GEF funding and is currently developing the programme in order to do so. The World Bank (as Implementing Agency) and WWF (as Executing Agency) will play key roles in raising the additional funding. ASP will also benefit from the assistance

and fundraising capabilities of its other participants. Funds will be sought from bilateral and multilateral agencies, private foundations, and the corporate sector, including pesticide manufacturers, transporters and waste disposal operators.

12. FAO has been approved as an Executing Agency with expanded opportunities for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in recognition of its expertise and experience related to POPs. It is understood that in preparation of national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention FAO's competence are limited to POPs pesticides, PCBs and industrial by-products being outside its mandate. The Organization has therefore not aggressively pursued a leadership role in the development of NIPs but has been willing to collaborate and offer assistance in relation to POPs pesticides. FAO is preparing projects for submission to the GEF that would provide guidance to governments on POPs pesticides and their disposal. Similarly through participation in the IOMC, FAO has contributed to the work of the World Bank and UNEP in the preparation of guidance on the development of NIPs. An important message has been to encourage countries to coordinate efforts at the national level in preparing their NIPs and to use them as an opportunity to develop consistent national approaches to related international agreements such as the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions.
13. Following the decision of the FAO Council (111th Session, October 1996) recognizing the relevance of the envisaged legally binding instrument for certain persistent organic pollutants (POPs) for sustainable agricultural development, FAO has participated actively in the discussions and negotiations during the previous sessions of this International Negotiating Committee (INC). This decision is also reflected in the Strategic Framework for FAO 2000-2015, adopted at the 30th Session of the FAO Conference in November 1999. The Strategic Framework calls for support to the development of an international regulatory framework from a food and agriculture perspective in partnership with other UN organizations. Such a regulatory framework is seen by FAO as an important pre-requisite for achieving food security for all by supporting sustainable agricultural production.
14. The examples of ongoing and planned activities have been selected to reflect FAO's normative functions and its field programme. There are also other activities carried out by FAO that will indirectly support the implementation of the Stockholm Convention e.g. training workshops on implementing the Rotterdam Convention, FAO projects on IPM or in support of the Code of Conduct. FAO will continue with these activities, however, FAO is also open to receiving comments and suggestions from this INC with regard to its present and future involvement related to POP pesticides.