

9th INTERNATIONAL HCH and PESTICIDES FORUM, CHISINAU September 20-22, 2007

PREAMBLE

The **International HCH and Pesticides Forum** represents a platform for discussion between stakeholders of all kinds, working on implementation of projects related to POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical waste. It acts as a catalyst in the exchange of information for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention and other chemicals related multilateral environmental agreements, and the environmentally sound management of pesticides, pesticide waste and other chemicals.

The Forum brings together governments, donors, UN agencies, IGOs, NGOs, academia and the private sector for an exchange of information in an open and informal atmosphere.

On September 20 – 22nd, the 9th Forum on HCH and Obsolete Pesticides was held in Chisinau, Moldova. This Forum was initiated and enabled by the International HCH and Pesticides Association (IHPA) and hosted by:

- The International HCH & Pesticides Association (IHPA), the Netherlands
- The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Moldova
- Regional Environmental Centre for Moldova (REC Moldova)
- Milieukontakt International, the Netherlands
- The Federal Environment Agency of Germany (UBA)

At the 9th International HCH and Pesticides Forum in Chisinau, 140 participants from 35 countries attended. Status reports were presented from many countries from the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) region. The presentations emphasized again the adverse impact of obsolete pesticides on human health and the environment and stressed the importance of good quality NIPs as a basis for implementing sound chemicals and waste management as required under the international agreements.

During the course of the Forum it became clear that this broad and important theme requires more attention and action on the international agenda in order to reduce risks to local communities and to the global environment, threats for export in the agricultural and fisheries sectors and for development of sustainable tourism.

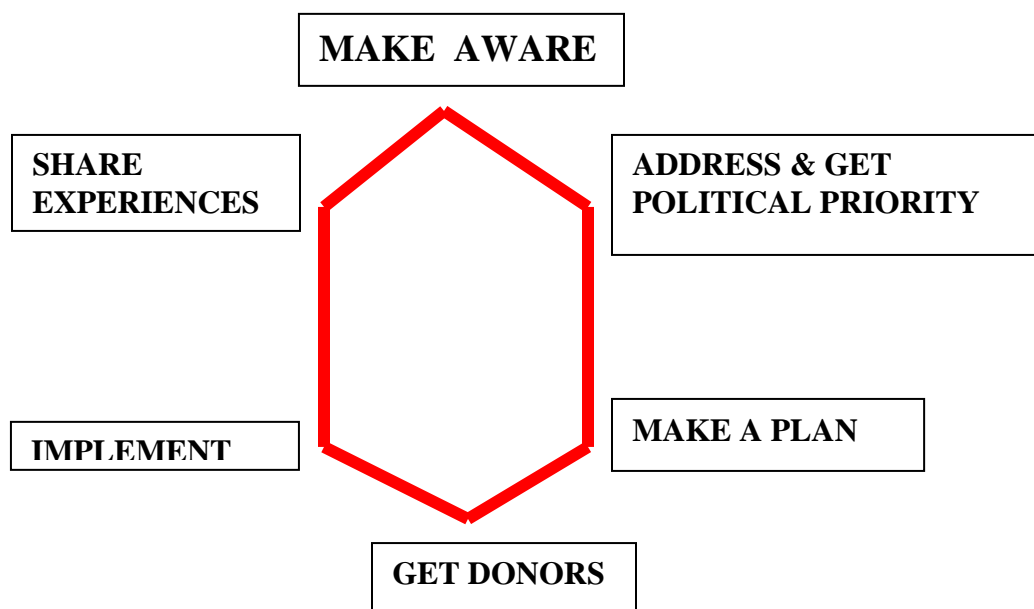
MOLDOVAN REFERENCES

The Republic of Moldova has shown a proactive and effective approach by using national funds to collect and repack using military forces at central storages more than 2000 tons, and finally by the World Bank as Executing Agency for the GEF, the removal of 1000 tons of obsolete pesticides and another 1000 tons of PCBs and PCB contaminated equipment, thus setting a reference for other countries in the region. In parallel, NATO is improving the national capacities for identification of obsolete pesticides and supported the repackaging of obsolete pesticides of more than 1000 tons.

At the same time the Moldova government has initiated a remediation project using in-site technologies from the clean-up of POPs pesticides polluted areas through the Canadian POPs Trust Fund.

The experiences of Moldova are good examples, which should be disseminated in the countries from the region.

One of the next steps of the Moldovan strategy is to promote sustainable agriculture using environmentally friendly fertilizers for the production of high quality organic food for the European market.



THE HEXACYCLE FOR ELIMINATION OF OBSOLETE PESTICIDES

FORUM DECLARATION

The participants of the 9th International HCH and Pesticides Forum representing governments, donors, IGOs, NGOs, the private sector, civil society and academia, meeting in Chisinau on 20-22 September 2007, expressed their gratitude to the Government of Moldova for its hospitality and generous contribution in organizing this Forum.

The participants.....

COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

Stress the continuing negative impact of POPs, obsolete pesticides and other hazardous chemicals on human health, the environment, wildlife and natural resources such as soil and groundwater, and are aware of the adverse economic consequences thereof,

Recognise the need for ensuring the dissemination of information and public participation in the decision making process regarding POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemicals,

Stress that If the population is well informed they will support Government actions on cleaning obsolete pesticides and help in solving the problem

Stress People have the right to be informed by the government

Stress the sustainability of solutions to obsolete pesticide problems require public involvement in the entire process

Welcome and support the initiative of FAO, IHPA, Green Cross, Milieukontakt and USAID with the help of other UN Agencies to submit the Capacity Building Project for 10 EECCA countries to the GEF and **urges** the GEF to proceed rapidly in order to facilitate urgent implementation of the project,

Recognise the powerful impact on policy-makers and donors of visual presentations about the threats to health and the environment from POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemicals. In this connection, the efforts of the European Parliament led by Mr. Wieslaw Kuc are acknowledged in raising awareness of EU Members of the Parliament by means of a large Public Session in the EU Parliament in May 2007 and the organization of the exhibition "Danger Obsolete Pesticides".

Further **recommend** to continue these efforts by hosting similar exhibitions in the European capitals and at other International Institutions such as GEF/World Bank to further raise awareness among the public and decision makers in order to secure more financial support.

Recommend that such exhibitions be replicated in countries of other regions including Africa, Asia and Latin America to stimulate public and political awareness,

STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Recognise the important benefits to be gained by the countries in the region from the adoption and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements addressing chemicals,

Recognise the value of high quality NIPs and other studies as foundations for taking action towards the elimination of risks from POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemicals,

Recognise the importance of sound national policies, legislation and strategies for pesticide, chemicals and hazardous waste management in preventing future accumulation of obsolete pesticides and other hazardous chemicals,

Acknowledge the role of the EU and the UN system as well as bilateral initiatives (twinning) in the implementation of actions to eliminate POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical wastes in the countries of the region,

Recommend, that countries prioritize within their NIPs, National Development Plans and other relevant action plans action for POPs and obsolete pesticides removal and destruction, and capacity building to prevent recurrence of similar problems;

Recommend that countries identify and formulate projects for the prevention and elimination of POPs and obsolete pesticides;

Recommend the adoption of the FAO *International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides* in the NIS countries and **Welcome** the actions of Ukraine in promotion of the FAO code,

DONORS

Acknowledge the crucial contribution that GEF makes to addressing POPs and obsolete pesticide prevention and elimination and building on the positive experiences in Moldova, **Urgently request** the GEF, after changes in their organization to expeditiously support POPs and pesticides clean-up projects.

Call upon EU to include into the new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (OJ L 310, 9.11.2006, p. 1), the obsolete pesticides and POPs issue to facilitate country applications for financial support through this mechanism;

Further Call on the EU and other donors to recognize the growing momentum and desire among governments and civil society to eliminate and prevent POPs, obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemical stockpiles and to support national and regional initiatives in this area;

Call on the chemical industry to support activities aimed at eliminating legacy stockpiles of chemicals and preventing their recurrence;

Request the Parties of the Stockholm Convention recognise the urgent problems related to the so called polygons and uncontrolled dump sites of POPs and other dangerous chemicals which are particularly prominent in the EECCA region;

IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend the creation of a ‘technical committee’, acknowledged by the EU and donors, consisting of a small group of experts for specific advice on complex problems related to dangerous chemicals and land pollution.

Recommend the implementation of common monitoring programmes and comparable risk assessment systems for POPs in the environment;

Furthermore the participants expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Director of the IHPA and for his continuing energetic support and contributions in keeping the issue of obsolete pesticides on the international agenda.

BACKGROUND

The first HCH and Pesticides Forum was held in 1992 in Zwolle (The Netherlands). It started with status reports on the perception of the problems related to the presence of obsolete pesticides in different countries. During the next Forums in Magdeburg (1993), Bilbao (1994), Poznan (1996), Bilbao (1998), Poznan (2001), Kiev (2003) and Sofia (2005) the scope of the Forum was enlarged with exchange of information on common practice, technical solutions, risk assessment, the specific problems in Central European and EECCA countries, training, technology development and funding. Over this more than a decade the number of participants has grown from 40 till 140. The number of institutions present in the Forum has increased accordingly.

The value of the International HCH and Pesticides Forum as a whole is the possibility for the ‘pesticides community’ to debate important issues such as technology transfer, partnership and ‘lessons learned’ from failures and successes. This debate brings better understanding, and presents ideas for those preparing and implementing (National) Implementation Plans for obsolete pesticides, management of chemicals and sustainable agriculture, together aiming at overall sustainable development.

It is to be noted that the European Union stresses that Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans (NIPs) are an instrument to establish priorities and to determine the necessary means to achieve them. The EU further encourages the Parties of the Convention to seek coherence between NIPs and other existing and future plans to be developed in the area of chemicals management. The EU stresses the importance for Parties to use NIPs as a mechanism for enhancing strategies and strengthening cooperation between Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and urges Parties to integrate sound management of chemicals, including NIPs, in their national strategies for sustainable development, national development plans and other national and sector based development plans.

The above position has specifically been expressed to the 8th International HCH and Pesticides Forum for which official letters of support have been received. Letters from members of the EU Parliament and the European Commissioner to the Environment are especially worthy of mention.

Since the last Forum in Sofia in 2005, many countries have become Parties to the Stockholm Convention and are working on the preparation or finalization of National Implementation Plans (NIPs). The actual status is that 152 countries have signed and 148 countries have become Parties to the Stockholm Convention. In total 64 countries have submitted a National Implementation Plan, of which 59 in the years 2006 and 2007. The challenge for the coming years is to put these NIPs in place. This requires reliable inventories and assistance in the funding of projects and programs for training, repackaging and destruction of obsolete and POPs pesticides.

WHO has estimated that in 2050 every second human being will die from cancer due to contamination in food, water and the environment.

Until now, attention has been given only on a limited scale to the problems of soil and groundwater contamination as a consequence of former stocks of pesticides, especially regarding the medium and long-term negative effects threatening food production and groundwater quality.

FORUM SPONSORS

The International HCH and Pesticides Forum in Chisinau was sponsored by:

- Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Moldova
- The State Centre for certification and registration of phyto-sanitary means and fertilizers, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Republic of Moldova
- Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
- European Crop Protection Association (ECPA)
- Green Cross International
- Milieukontakt International, the Netherlands
- Trédi International, France
- International HCH & Pesticides Association (IHPA), the Netherlands
- Tauw Group, the Netherlands