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UNEP Chemicals is a branch of UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE).

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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.

Inquiries and editorial correspondence should be sent to the Head, UNEP Chemicals. Material may be reproduced without fee, with acknowledgement.

Mainstreaming of chemicals into development planning

The UNDP-UNEP Partnership Initiative for the Integration of Sound Management of Chemicals Considerations into Development Planning Processes launched its first two inception workshops in Uganda on 5-8 November 2007 and in Zambia on 12-15 November. Both workshops were officially launched by the respective Minister for Environment of Uganda and Zambia.

More than 30 representatives covering 20 government ministries and agencies as well as the participation of private sector, academics and NGOs responded to the invitation of the Ugandan National Environmental Management Agency of Uganda and the Environmental Council of Zambia.

The wide diversity of participation was a clear indicator of the cross-sectoral relevance of the chemicals management. The active involvement and commitment to the project process from the Ministry of Planning and Finance in both countries was also a clear sign of the economic significance and the strategic value of the proposed approach by the partnership. This along with the participation of the highest country environmental authorities led the organizers to consider the project as solid basis to succeed in achieving its objectives.

POPs laboratories

Under the UNEP/GEF project "Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyse POPs in Developing Countries", a web-based and searchable databank containing 190 POPs laboratories worldwide has been launched.

Please visit <http://www.chem.unep.ch/databank/Home/Welcome.aspx>. Clients can identify laboratories according to "Tiers" reflecting their instrumental equipment and analytical experiences.

UNEP DGEF proposes POPs projects for Latin America

UNEP Division of GEF Coordination is developing two projects to promote the Stockholm Convention implementation in Latin America. These projects, to begin work in 2008, respond to NIP priorities and will promote the sharing of lessons and good practices amongst participating countries and beyond.

The first of these is a regional project that takes a life-cycle approach to PCB Management is being developed in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention (SBC). Main outputs planned are:

a) proposals for regionally-harmonized PCB regulations;

b) Industry/government partnerships and PCB management plans; and
c) good practices in PCB management identified and disseminated. The focus of the project is the Community of Andean Nations (CAN).

The second proposal will demonstrate the use of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) as monitoring, reporting and information dissemination tools for POPs has recently been submitted to the GEF. The main outputs of this global project will be a PRTR-based system implemented in Chile; designed for Ecuador, Peru, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Cambodia and Thailand; and promoted in five Central American countries.

Open burning of waste and biomass

With a view to improve the Toolkit on identification and quantification of dioxin and furan releases, UNEP Chemicals Branch is implementing two projects to tackle the largest sources of dioxin emissions in developing countries: Open burning of waste and open

burning of biomass, i.e., forest fires and sugar cane burns. Funding of these projects is from the Swedish Government, the Chlorine Chemistry Division (USA) and the SSC.



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Panama to host UNEP Chemicals meetings

UNEP Chemicals Branch, in collaboration with the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP/ROLAC), will organize the following meetings in Panama City:

- Workshop on Continuing PCB management in Latin American and Caribbean countries from 11-12 (a.m.) February;
 - Workshop on Development of Legal and Institutional Infrastructures on Sound Management of Chemicals from 12 (p.m.)-13 February;
 - Latin America and Caribbean regional meeting on SAICM from 14-16 February;
 - and with SSC, Chemicals Branch will host a one-day regional consultation on mercury and issues under consideration by SSC POPs Review Committee (POPRC) on 17 February.
- The above meetings presents an opportunity for stakeholders in the region, with an interest in chemicals management, to come together



Satellite image of Panama

to share experience, exchange information and technical knowledge on a variety of issues.

Funding for the above meetings has been made possible by the Governments of Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America and by the Organization of American States.

See www.chem.unep.ch/pops/pcb_activities/Panama2008/default.htm, www.chem.unep.ch/saicm for further information.

Outcomes of Mercury OEWG

The first meeting of the Ad hoc Open Ended Working Group on mercury was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 12-16 November 2007. More than 200 representatives of governments and civil society attended, with 91 governments represented at the meeting. The meeting discussed the range of options available to control mercury, including consideration of reduction of mercury emissions, environmentally sound management of mercury containing wastes, reduction of mercury supply and demand, environmentally sound storage of mercury, remediation of contaminated sites and increasing knowledge in relation to mercury. The range of available control measures was considered, with a number of proposals for additional control measures included in the list.

It was identified that further information in a number of areas will be required for discussions at the second meeting of the Working



Bang Pa-In Summer Palace pavilion, Thailand

Group, and the meeting elaborated a plan for intersessional work for the secretariat. A progress report on the work of the working group will be considered at the 10th special session of the Governing Council. The second meeting of the OEWG will be held from 6-10 October 2008 and will provide a final report to the Governing Council at its 25th meeting.

From the Head of Branch



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During my first months in UNEP Chemicals, the Branch was responsible for organizing the first meeting of the Open Ended Working Group on Mercury (OEWG). The meeting provided a solid basis for future work in the inter-sessional period leading up to the second meeting of the OEWG in October 2008. Its success will depend on thorough preparation of the second meeting, which will be a priority for UNEP Chemicals Branch. Another priority area for UNEP Chemicals Branch is SAICM implementation.

The Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund, facilitated by the SAICM secretariat, has already seen the approval of 40 projects benefiting 52 developing countries and countries with economies in transition. UNEP is working with UNDP to assist in the execution of QSP projects relating to mainstreaming of chemicals management in developing planning. I am, for the next year, expecting a broadening of the project portfolio to include a greater range of sectors and issues. However, the continued success of the work on metals, mercury in particular and SAICM in UNEP Chemicals Branch, will depend on funding for projects and staff to carry out these important tasks.

Per M. Bakken, Head, Chemicals Branch, DTIE, UNEP

Mercury inventory work

Following the release of the pilot draft of the Toolkit in all six UN languages for identification and quantification of mercury releases, a number of countries have started pilot projects using the Toolkit to investigate their national mercury uses and releases. Projects are currently underway in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Preliminary results are available from Africa and results from the other regions are expected early in 2008. For the Asian region, a results workshop will be held in March 2008, hosted by the Government of Japan, to discuss the outcomes and encourage others to undertake inventories.

Results from inventory projects will be used nationally to develop action plans which will assist countries in setting priorities to address their mercury problems. Future projects are planned, building on the results of the inventory work, in areas such as waste management and emission reduction. During 2008 it is hoped to expand the inventory projects within regions, drawing on the expertise developed by countries, to undertake inventory projects in a number of other countries.

SAICM regional meetings

The SAICM Secretariat will organize the 3rd EU-JUSSCANNZ meeting on SAICM in Paris on 12 February 2008 and a Latin American and Caribbean regional meeting on SAICM in Panama City from 14 to 16 February 2008. The meetings are the eighth and ninth in the series of SAICM regional meetings post adoption of SAICM.

Termiticide-IS and DDT-IS launched



POP pesticide issues: control of termites and malaria transmitting mosquitoes

In autumn 2007 UNEP Chemicals Branch launched two information systems to support international efforts on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and the Stockholm Convention. Both systems promote integrated pest management (IPM) and integrated vector management (IVM) as the most sustainable alternative approaches to these specific POP pesticides, whose elimination poses a major hurdle for many countries.

DDT is still used for disease vector control in many countries and is one of 12 insecticides recommended by WHO for indoor residual spraying in malaria control.

The DDT Information System (DDT-IS, URL:www.chem.unep.ch/ddt/Default.html) is an activity undertaken jointly with WHO and the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention. It aims at:

- facilitating exchange of information / experience; and
- providing easy access to expert advice from relevant expert groups and WHO.

Chlordane, heptachlor and mirex are termiticides for which it has been hard to find alternatives for termite management. The Termiticide Information System (Termiticide-IS, URL:www.chem.unep.ch/termites/Default.html) was created to:

- facilitate the exchange of information / experience on elimination of POP- termiticides; and
- provide easy access to guidance materials from the UNEP/FAO Global Termite Expert Group.

Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions' new Executive Secretary

Effective 1 November 2007 Donald Cooper took up his appointment as the new Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention and Co-Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.

Starting in 1984, Mr. Cooper was Manager of the Environmental Monitoring and Risk Assessment Department and Chief Public Analyst of The Department of Environmental Health in The Bahamas.

From 1992 to 2000, as Director of The Environmental Health Department, he managed key environmental assessment, Health, Food and Water Quality, and Compliance Monitoring programmes advising The Bahamas Government on development projects, Environmental Impact

Assessments, developing the national actions for the implementation of Multilateral Environment Agreements and acting as the Chief Negotiator for The Bahamas at International Environmental Meetings.

From 2000 to 2007, Mr. Cooper served as Undersecretary in The Office of The Prime Minister and The Ministry of Health and Environment managing The Bahamas Environment Science and Technology Commission (BEST).

Mr. Cooper was educated in Biochemistry and Genetics at Newcastle University and obtained a PhD in Microbiology at Leeds University, England.



Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Outcome of Stockholm Convention's POPRC-3

The third meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC-3) of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) took place from 19-23 November 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland. Over 100 participants attended the meeting, including all 31 Committee members, 39 government and party observers and representatives from 24 non-governmental organizations. The Committee approved the risk management evaluation for five chemicals, and recommended that COP-4 consider

listing under Annex A: lindane; chlordecone; hexabromobiphenyl (HBB); pentabromodiphenyl ether (pentaBDE); and under Annex A or B perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), its salts and PFOS fluoride (PFOSF). Risk profiles were approved for four chemicals (Commercial octabromodiphenyl, Pentachlorobenzene, and Alpha- and Beta- hexachlorocyclohexane) which will be scheduled for risk management evaluation at POPRC-4 in October 2008.

Status of Stockholm Convention Ratifications

To date, there are 150 Parties to the Stockholm Convention. New Parties since the last issue are: Bangladesh, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Guyana, Jamaica, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

Status of Rotterdam Convention Ratifications

To date, there are 119 Parties to the Rotterdam Convention. New Parties since the last issue are: Guyana, Viet Nam, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kazakhstan.

Basel Convention's new Executive Secretary

Since the last issue of this newsletter, Ms. Katharina Kummer Peiry, a Swiss citizen, was appointed as the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. She assumed her duties in September 2007.

Having worked on issues related to the Basel Convention for nearly 20 years, Ms. Kummer Peiry brings substantive knowledge of the Convention and strong negotiation and leadership skills to the position. Her career spans several years with the Government of Switzerland as Head of Environmental Affairs Section in the Federal Department

of Foreign Affairs, and as a University lecturer. More recently Ms. Kummer Peiry has been working as a consultant on environmental policy and law.

Ms. Kummer Peiry has authored and contributed to a number of publications on international chemicals and waste management, and is a recognized international expert on waste and chemicals management. She holds a PhD in International Law and a Master of Law.



Katharina Kummer Peiry, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Basel Convention