

East-West Co-operation on the solutions of obsolete pesticides problems in Central and Eastern Europe

The International HCH & Pesticides Association

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Introduction /Objectives

The International HCH & Pesticides Association, IHPA, was founded in July 1998 with the aim of facilitating and promoting international co-operation and the exchange of experiences within management of pollution problems stemming from the production and use of HCH and other unwanted pesticides world-wide.

The IHPA supports the work towards sustainable solutions in production and application of pesticides.

The objective of the IHPA is to solve the problems of HCH and pesticides contamination in soil, waste and water world-wide and to contribute actively in the search for sustainable solutions in production and application of pesticides.

The association promotes international co-operation of all parties, involved in the field of pesticides such as international organisations, public authorities, crop protection organisations, producers, NGO's, contractors, consultants and those who are concerned.

Pursuing the objectives the IHPA organises the International Forum and publishes the Forum proceedings and thereby makes information available. Hence, the IHPA seeks funding and sponsorship.

The IHPA does not pursue any commercial or political aims.

Outcome of the 5th Int. HCH & Pesticides Forum, June 1998 in Bilbao, Spain

This forum resulted in an increased attention and new awareness of the international problems of obsolete pesticides in general, but especially in the problems of Central and Eastern Europe. The complete details of the conclusions of the 5th forum can be read in IHPA's homepage <http://hjem.get2net.dk/HCH-Pesticides/>

6th Int. HCH & Pesticides Forum, 13-15 March 2001, Poznan, Poland

At the closure of the 5th Forum, The Plant Protection Institute (PPI) in Poznan, Poland, has offered to host the 6th Forum in order to draw the world's attention on the huge problems in Poland on pesticides amounting to 50.000-60.000 tonnes spread over the whole country. At the same time, this initiative should enable the other Central and Eastern countries to bring forward their national problems. The 6th forum will be held from 13-15 March 2001 in Poznan, Poland

What is known on the Central and Eastern European pesticides problems?

There are hardly any numbers known, as inventories are generally lacking, but as far as is known the following data have been collected during the years:

Albania: has reported considerable stocks of expired pesticides and aims at starting up projects. Amounts are unknown.

Bulgaria: has reported serious problems with the storage of pesticides. No numbers are known.

Georgia: The Ministry of Environment , Land Resources Conservation , Waste and Chemical Substances Management report problems with 400 tonnes of outdated pesticides and 3500 tonnes of outdated fertilizers. Further at several rivers and groundwater locations, pesticides levels are exceeded 30-50 times.

Hungary: The Hungarian Ministry of Environment has reported, in 1992 at the first forum, the Hungarian production of thiocarbamate, herbicides as well as limited quantities of glyphosphate and isoproturon. At that time under the five year plan production was planned to increase by 50 %. In 1994 the Ministry reported additionally that from 1953 until

1964 HCH isomers had been produced. The greatest hydrocarbon problem of Hungary: a tetrachloro benzene production plant with 49.000 tons of highly contaminated soil has been reported.

Latvia: About 2000 tonnes of unwanted pesticides at around 600 storage sites.

Lithuania: A total of 6000 tons has been found at storehouses. The government has started an official program on management of old pesticides. Lithuania reports also serious problems with soil mixed with pesticides in sites of burnt storehouses. At least 12 have to be cleaned out, however many fire sites have not yet been investigated

Moldavia: Around 2600 tonnes of non-utilizable and banned pesticides are reported. Further is noted that at the beginning of the 1980s, about 4000 tonnes of outdated pesticides have been buried at the Vulcanesti landfill site.

Poland: 50.000-60.000 tonnes (since 1992 during the first Int. HCH & Pesticides Forum in the Netherlands, PPI has brought forward these data)

Slovak Republic: Reported lindane production in Bratislava from 1955 until 1966. No other data on stocks are known.

Romania: Large residuals of the lindane production are known. High concentrations of HCH have been reported at the 5th Forum in Babeni Lake, which receives water from the county's biggest pesticides producing plant. No exact data on the production residues and storage of pesticides are known. According to government soil pollution with pesticides are occurring in the south and west of the country. In 1974 the Ministry of Health decided that acute non-professional poisoning with pesticides should be registered and reported periodically. The average number of cases registered each year is 600, the number increased in the last years.

Russian Federation: Here pesticides are produced at 23 factories. According to UNEP-Chemicals the registration Board has a first estimate of obsolete pesticides varying from 17.000 to 20.000 tonnes. Recently UNEP-Chemicals received a sponsorship of US EPA for a first inventory in the Russian Federation. For this project further sponsors are needed. Negotiations are going on with the Danish Ministry of Environment and the AMAP. The project is planned to start in 5 pilot regions.

Ukraine: Ukraine has 4 pesticides producers. A SAWG/USAID workshop in 1997 reported 10.000 - 100.000 tons. A first estimate from the Ukrainian Ministry of Agriculture (status September 1998) counts 13.490 tonnes (109 central stores for pesticides and 4000 small scattered sites for smaller amounts of pesticides). The Danish government has started this year a first inventory project. In 1999 The Ukrainian government has reported 22.000 tons (119 state warehouses and 47000 storage facilities) as hazardous waste. Annually more than 100 cases of pesticides poisoning during their applications are registered.

Uzbekistan: The government reports on expansive use of mineral fertilisers and pesticides, which caused soil pollution, pollution of surface and ground waters. It emphasises on the particular danger of soil pollution close to the former agricultural aerodromes and sprays storage. No numbers are known.

White Russia: No complete data available. Except that at the 4th Forum(1994) and 5th Forum (1996) White Russia reported dumping of 3776 tons of outdated pesticides in seven regions in the period 1974 to 1988.

Planned Actions

The 6th Forum is largely focussed on the large problems on pesticides in central and Eastern Europe. Alone on obsolete pesticide waste around 150.000 - 500.000 tons is expected in the region. The amounts of contaminated soils are unknown but will be surely some factors higher.

First overview will be made of the inventories per country, which should serve as a basis nation-wide inventories on the basis of proper field and site visits. These data should include information on waste, soil and water, as far as data are available.

The 6th Forum has an important message for the future actions, as a special workshop on the set up of international co-operation for "concerted actions" will be discussed in 2 main fields:

1. Concerted Action on pesticide waste
2. Concerted Action on diffuse soil contamination

The *concerted action on pesticide waste* has high priority because of:

- Pesticide waste is mostly occurring as obsolete waste, which means waste giving direct exposure and contact to the humans and animals and creating a direct threat!

- Pesticide waste, being uncovered creates further hazards to surroundings and generates soil and groundwater pollution
- Present solutions are very expensive and too high to create international commitment for a world-wide solution
- Alternative technical solutions, being sustainable and economically saving, can give perspectives for the final elimination of these problems
- Pilot projects, testing the new techniques at the various concerned locations is necessary

Both concerted actions are focussed on the development and testing in pilot plants of new alternative and sustainable techniques, which should also bring considerable economic benefits.

The *concerted action on diffuse soil contamination* takes a special place due to the following facts:

- The world-wide use of persistent pesticides in agriculture has led to enormous diffuse contamination of agricultural land, with threats to groundwater and surface waters, but also with a threat towards the food chain due to those persistent components, which are remaining over the year in the soil.
- As this contamination is concerning globally many agricultural land, present soil remediation techniques are not feasible
- Therefore new alternative ideas are needed, which comply with the main principles of simplicity and low prices
- Application of these techniques has to be based on handling by farmers, with focus on the level of education and awareness of developing countries
- Participants should include all knowledgeable organisations, such as leading research organisations, plant protection producers, remediating companies and consultants and national and international authorities
- This concerted action must bring a major breakthrough for the remediation of diffuse contaminated areas.

How can Central and Eastern European Governments achieve international solution of pesticides problems?

Financial support from the EU for this important field can be obtained only if the following issues have been taken up by the new member countries and the other states in accession at a later stage:

- High prioritisation of the pesticides issues on the National Programmes. In most of the countries these priorities are not included yet
- Future discussions with of the National Delegations with EU-Delegations should have the pesticides issue continuously on the agenda, in order to stress the need for immediate actions.
- Urge European Commission to include the pesticides issues as high priority issue in the 6th Framework which will be developed from 2000 on by the EU
- Stop discussions on the national levels to define and assign the responsibility or competence for the pesticides problems as an agricultural or environmental problem. The change for international support is to formulate a common strategy for the concerning national ministries.
- Contact and stress the large international funding organisations to get involved and make that the issue will be included as soon as possible in their strategy and support frameworks

How can you influence the issue and push the issue forward?

The 6th International HCH & Pesticides Forum in 2000 in Poznan is an excellent possibility to state the seriousness of your problems in your country. A special workshop should help you to request a concerted action for Central and Eastern Europe

The Regierungspräsident Dessau and the IWU (who is organising today's symposium), have declared to make all possible efforts to host 7th International HCH & Pesticides Forum in Dessau in 2002/3. Herewith the coming forum will

remain in Central Europe, so to secure the highest international attention on the solution of Central and Eastern European pesticides problems.

Annex: Organisation and activities of IHPA

How to get involved?

IHPA offers 3 different kinds of Involvement:

Memberships

Memberships are limited to persons, which are highly dedicated to support the organisation of the Forum by obtaining sponsorship and funds in order to ensure the realisation of conferences and information by the publication of books.

Co-operating organisations

This option is open for organisations, which are interested to support the conferences. No costs or fees are required.

Sponsors

Sponsors can be persons or organisations, which financially support IHPA activities. A sponsorship can have a general character or be dedicated to a certain activity.

Science Centres: Possibilities for the exchange of technical information

IHPA supports a number of so-called Science Centres, which are knowledgeable organisations willing to share technical information and experiences for the benefit of international co-operation.

Each Centre lists a maximum of 3 issues of specialisation. Please feel free to make contact concerning the stated issues. The following Centres are active at the moment:

IHOBE; Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain:

Pesticides Soil Contamination (Ms. Ana Alzola)

HCH Chemical Treatment (Ms. Ana Mezo)

Treatment of Leachate contaminated with Pesticides and Heavy Metals (Ms. Marian Barquin)

Email: info@ihobe.es

Jordforsk, Norway:

Soil and water surveys and monitoring at point, local or international scale. (Ms. Gro Ludvigsen)

Contaminated soil surveys and in-situ containment and remediation (Mr. Hans Blom)

Water treatment systems (Mr. Ketil Haarstad)

Email: ketil.haarstad@jordforsk.nlh.no

National Centre of Environment and Sustainable Development (NCESD), Bulgaria:

Strategy, management and protective actions in relation to pesticide contamination

Soil and water investigations and monitoring

Biological soil treatment

Contact: Valentina Vassileva

Email: ncesd@nfp-bg.eionet.eu.int

The Pesticides Trust, United Kingdom:

Health and environmental effects of pesticides

Alternative pest management options in agricultural and public health

Obsolete pesticide prevention and disposal: planning, guidance, information and monitoring of operations.

Contacts: Mark Davis and David Buffin

Email: pesttrust@gn.apc.org

Plant Protection Institute, Poland:

Quality control of plant protection products

Analysis of the residues in plants, soil and water

Strategy, management and protective actions in relation to pesticide waste.

Contacts: Stanislaw Stobiecki and Andrej Silowiecki

STOCKI@OS.IOR.GLIWICE.PL

Forum Books

- HCH and halogenated Pesticides. State of Art for Risk Assessment and Technology Development. IWU Tagungsberichte, 1994.
- 4th Forum HCH and unwanted Pesticides. International co-operation of experts for the solution of the hexachlorocyclohexane and unwanted pesticides problems. PPI, Poznan, 1997. The book can be obtained at PPI (contact Mr. Stanislaw Stobiecki). Ph: +48 32 238 75 84, Fax. +48 32 238 75 03, Email: stocki@ior.gliwice.pl
- 5th International HCH and Pesticides Forum, IHOBE published in 1999: The book contains 50 detailed technical papers on the "State of the Art" of Pesticides. The book can be obtained at IHOBE S.A. (contact Ms. Nekane Ibargüen). Ph: +34 9 44 23 07 43, Fax: +34 9 44 59 00, Email: info@ihobe.es