

POPS COP-3 HIGHLIGHTS:

TUESDAY, 1 MAY 2007

The Committee of the Whole (COW) met throughout the day to address: measures to reduce or eliminate releases from intentional production and use of DDT, exemptions and evaluation of the continued need for the procedure under paragraph 2(b) of Article 3; best available techniques and best environmental practices to reduce or eliminate releases from unintentional production; a toolkit for the identification and quantification of dioxin and furan releases; and information exchange.

The COW established a contact group on effectiveness evaluation.

The contact groups on technical assistance and non-compliance met throughout the day. The budget group met in the afternoon, while the effectiveness evaluation group held discussions in the afternoon and evening.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION: COW Chair Karel Blaha suggested, and delegates agreed, to establish a contact group on effectiveness evaluation (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/22). He explained that the outcome of the discussion would be incorporated into the results of the contact group on technical assistance and reported to plenary. KENYA supported the actions proposed in the document and emphasized human health effects of POPs. She also highlighted the need for financial resources, capacity building and partnerships.

MEASURES TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE RELEASES FROM INTENTIONAL PRODUCTION AND USE: DDT:

The Secretariat introduced documents UNEP/POPS/COP.3/4, 24 and INF/2. Recalling Decision SC-2/2 that requests parties to complete a questionnaire on the status of production and use of DDT, he noted that only 12 parties responded. He explained that the Secretariat simplified the questionnaire, and noted the *Ad Hoc* Technical Working Group (TWG) recommendations on elaborating a business plan for a global partnership to develop alternatives to DDT for disease vector control.

Citing a national decree to discontinue DDT use, VENEZUELA expressed concern about the negative impact of World Health Organization (WHO) policy on DDT use, saying those countries that have banned DDT might resume using it. VENEZUELA and the EU supported the revised questionnaire prepared by the Secretariat.

The EU emphasized the importance of phasing out DDT in the long term, but recognized its effectiveness as a disease vector control. He encouraged the Secretariat to continue strengthening parties' capacity for reporting DDT use and production and further work on integrated vector management (IVM) in cooperation with WHO, UNEP and financial institutions.

He supported the TWG's recommendation on promoting a global partnership to develop a business plan for developing alternatives.

SWITZERLAND highlighted the need for management approaches to avoid DDT contamination. NORWAY suggested amending UNEP/POPS/COP.3/4 to include development and deployment of new alternative "methods and strategies," and supported by the AFRICAN GROUP, said that DDT should not be considered the final solution to malaria. MEXICO, supported by the AFRICAN GROUP and WHO, stressed the need to develop and deploy cost-effective alternatives. ZAMBIA and UGANDA underscored that capacity building is needed to assist developing countries in minimizing risks associated with DDT use. SENEGAL stressed the importance of integrated pest control, such as provision of sound sanitation. KENYA underscored a national ban on DDT use in his country and NAMIBIA, UGANDA and MOZAMBIQUE noted their continued use for disease vector control.

WHO clarified its position on DDT use, noting the organization's commitment to reduction and eventual elimination of DDT while simultaneously minimizing the occurrence of vector-borne diseases. She added that countries require financial and technical support to implement IVM. JAPAN emphasized the importance of further coordination between WHO and the Secretariat.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA suggested the GEF prioritize DDT issues. PERU expressed concern about populations exposed to DDT and the occurrence of numerous diseases, including cancer. She requested the Secretariat elaborate a baseline study on such populations. MOROCCO stressed the importance of mobilizing the necessary financial resources to promote developing countries' access to alternative DDT products and techniques. INDIA referred to an association between climate change and increase of malaria's development and transmission.

CHINA said that his country has completed an import and export chemical control list and will eventually eliminate DDT production, use and export for disease control. The GAMBIA stressed the importance of focusing on the adoption of IVM methods to reduce mosquito populations and human infection. SUDAN asked donors and the GEF to support the IVM programme. DJIBOUTI cited illegal trade of DDT as a serious problem and suggested strengthening capacity in developing countries to reduce such illegal practices. ZIMBABWE noted his country continues to use DDT for malaria control and supported affordable, appropriate and cost-effective alternatives. PAN called upon parties to comply with Convention obligations, ensuring that further exposure of communities to DDT is prevented. IPEN highlighted the limited research on alternative products and suggested health monitoring in areas of DDT use.

COW Chair Blaha suggested, and the COW agreed, to ask the Secretariat to prepare a draft decision on the issue.

Exemptions: The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/POPS/COP.3/5 summarizing the review process for entries in the register for specific exemptions adopted in Decision SC-1/24. Highlighting bracketed paragraphs in this decision, the Secretariat asked COP-3 to consider whether to establish a separate subsidiary body to assess and make recommendations to COP on extension requests for use of Annex A (Elimination) chemicals, or whether the COP should do this itself.

The EU emphasized that extensions should only be granted in well-justified cases on the basis of specific proposals. The EU proposed the Secretariat review extension request reports in order to avoid establishing an additional expert group. COW Chair Blaha, supported by CANADA and CHINA, suggested the Secretariat prepare a draft Conference Room Paper (CRP) based on the EU proposal. The US suggested the work be carried out by the POPs Review Committee (POPRC).

Evaluation of the continued need for the procedure under paragraph 2(b) of Article 3: The Secretariat explained that paragraph 2(b) of Article 3 of the Convention specifies that an exporting party must provide annual certification on chemical characteristics and other related information and both the exporting and importing parties must comply with the Convention requirements. He pointed out that there is currently a lack of data and information in this area. COW Chair Blaha requested the Secretariat prepare a draft decision on the issue.

MEASURES TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE RELEASES FROM UNINTENTIONAL PRODUCTION: Best available techniques and best environmental practices: The Secretariat introduced documents UNEP/POPS/COP.3/7, INF/4 and UNEP/POPS/EGBATBEP.2/4 on best available techniques and best environmental practices (BAT/BEP). CANADA, the EU, SWITZERLAND, JAPAN, BRAZIL, the AFRICAN GROUP, ICELAND, JORDAN, AUSTRALIA, CHINA, NORWAY, THAILAND and MOLDOVA supported adoption of the draft guidelines on BAT, and provisional guidance on BEP. COW Chair Blaha asked the Secretariat to prepare a draft decision incorporating all written submissions by parties.

TOOLKIT FOR THE IDENTIFICATION AND QUANTIFICATION OF DIOXIN AND FURAN RELEASES:

The Secretariat introduced documents UNEP/POPS/COP.3/8, INF/6 and INF/24 on the standardized toolkit for the identification and quantification of dioxin and furan releases. ZAMBIA and JORDAN stressed the need to simplify technical language. Recognizing the toolkit's importance, the AFRICAN GROUP noted that improvements and assistance are still needed. CHINA underlined the insufficiency of data on emission factors and the importance of further research. MEXICO stressed the need for funding to strengthen the toolkit and for capacity building in its use. Subject to available resources, the EU supported updating the toolkit, and JAPAN said that funding for toolkit improvement is not as high a priority as BAT/BEP and that cost effective ways of improvement should be sought. KENYA urged that the issue of "open burning" of waste be prioritized and for a country to be identified to carry out a pilot project. SENEGAL underscored the need to evaluate emission factors on the African continent. The US noted the trade off between funding availability and the amount of data collected, and suggested having only one meeting of the group before COP-4. COW Chair Blaha proposed, and delegates agreed, that a draft decision be prepared by the Secretariat.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE: The Secretariat introduced documents on information exchange and the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/13, INF/9 and INF/10). The EU recommended extending the pilot phase and postponing a decision on the strategic plan until COP-4. INDIA suggested the clearing-house mechanism be considered an enabling activity and initiated immediately. COW Chair Blaha deferred discussion on the issue until Wednesday morning.

CONTACT GROUPS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The group was co-chaired by Jozef Buys (Belgium) and Angelina Madete (Tanzania). Co-Chair Buys introduced the issues of regional centers and guidance on technical assistance. On centers and institutions suitable to serve as Stockholm regional centers, participants agreed Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres (BCRCCs) could qualify. A few participants noted that elements of the Stockholm Convention, including alternatives to DDT, could not be adequately addressed by the BCRCCs. Participants discussed draft ToRs for selection of the regional centers (UNEP/POPS/COP.3/15). Some delegates questioned the applicability of the Secretariat's nominated priority areas of effectiveness evaluation and DDT, and stressed the importance of reflecting regional priorities. The EU supported a project-based approach for selection of regional centers, whilst many expressed concern that this may sacrifice capacity building and continuity of centers. Uruguay proposed that during the intersessional period, regions nominate entities to serve as regional centers, and a process for center approval. As at 9:30 pm the group was discussing the draft decision prepared by the Secretariat.

NON-COMPLIANCE: The Chair of the Open Ended Working Group on Non-Compliance (OEWG NC), Anne Daniel (Canada), steered the group through the text on non-compliance procedures under Article 17 of the Convention (UNEP/POPS/OEWG-NC.2/2). Delegates focused on procedures for submissions, mainly on facilitation by the Committee and possible action by the COP, remodelling the text into a clear sequence of actions. Participants debated when to consider the need for technical and financial assistance, drew parallels with the Basel Convention and grappled over making instances of non-compliance public. During the evening session, the group considered issues of consultation and information, and expected to go on until 11.00 pm.

BUDGET: Chaired by John Roberts (UK), group participants commented on the revised version of UNEP/POPS/COP.3/INF/17 and its annexes on, *inter alia*: 2006-2007 budget expenditure; Special Trust Fund and General Trust Fund contributions for 2007; and proposed operational budget for 2008-2009. One participant stressed the importance of a zero nominal growth budget, while others questioned: the use of savings and surplus; parties in arrears; and expenditures on consultants, subcontractors and permanent staff. The Secretariat will collate information for presentation to the group on Wednesday.

EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION: Co-chaired by Thérèse Yarde (Barbados) and Ivan Holoubek (Czech Republic), participants discussed the regional groupings, and the oversight body for implementation of the Global Monitoring Plan (GMP). Most delegates favored using the existing five UN regional groups. Delegates generally agreed to establish an oversight body to facilitate and coordinate GMP implementation. With regard to its composition, some delegates preferred a small group consisting of five members with one representative from each region, while others supported three representatives. Discussions were expected to continue until 11:00 pm.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The COW started a bit late as many participants failed to return the translation headsets for recharging at the end of Monday's sessions. Once sessions began, some participants from smaller delegations worried about attending simultaneously occurring contact groups, and others commented they favored staying in the plenary hall to reduce the risk of getting lost again in the maze of corridors. Technical assistance and compliance remained key concerns for many participants throughout the day, and numerous delegates were optimistic about the progress made thus far.