

IFCS VI HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2008

The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS Forum VI) continued on Thursday morning with a brief plenary session, followed by working groups on nanotechnology and the future of the IFCS. In the afternoon, the plenary discussed integrated pest management (IPM) and integrated vector management (IVM). In the evening, three working groups and a drafting group met to discuss: the future of the IFCS; nanotechnology; lead and cadmium; and IPM and IVM.

IFCS PLENARY

The plenary convened briefly in the morning. Chair Karlaganis reported on the nanotechnology working group, expressing hope that consensus could be reached after the group's morning meeting. IFCS Vice-President Katima reported on the working group on the future of the IFCS. He noted that the group had held constructive discussions, was able to work through the draft decision, and that attempts to reach consensus would continue. Chair Wittmann reported that the working group on substitution had finalized the draft recommendations, and Ravi Agarwal, Toxics Link, introduced a draft decision on eliminating lead in paints. Chair Arndt reported on the working group on lead and cadmium, noting wide support for the view that significant risks are involved in the international transport of lead and cadmium via trade. The plenary adjourned and working groups on the future of the IFCS and nanotechnology resumed their work.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT AND INTEGRATED VECTOR MANAGEMENT: On Thursday afternoon, delegates convened in a plenary session on IPM and IVM, facilitated by Nassereddin Heidari (Iran), Saro Rengam (PAN AP) and Romy Quijano (PAN AP).

Robert Bos, WHO, presented on the characteristics of IVM including: cost-effectiveness; intersectoral action and community involvement; sustainability; regulation and operation; evidence-based decisionmaking; ecosystem analysis; health-based targets; and hierarchical programming.

William Settle, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), questioned the assumption that pesticides are necessary for food security. He suggested various forms of IPM as alternatives and

emphasized that IPM was a natural entry point to community-based training on, *inter alia*: agronomy; marketing; IVM; and HIV/AIDS.

Status of Implementation of IPM and Further Potential: Harry van der Wulp, FAO, discussed international trends and developments in IPM. He said IPM is a risk reduction strategy, which should decrease chemical use and help farmers meet new challenges in agricultural production, such as climate change and consumer demands for safe foods and biofuels. He said IPM is being mainstreamed by the World Bank, the EU and others, and has been implemented globally by small farmers and multinational corporations.

Mohamed Hama Garba, FAO, discussed experiences with regional projects in western Africa. He identified lack of information and training on pesticides as a serious problem for African farmers; discussed "field schools," which train farmers to make informed decisions; and emphasized positive economic results from these projects.

Hasan Bolkan, Campbell's Agricultural Research Center, discussed IPM in the food industry, noting its role in his company's corporate social responsibility programme. He highlighted the need to address public concerns over pesticide residues in food, pesticides in the environment and workers' safety. He outlined Campbell's pesticide quality assurance and IPM strategies, including disease-free seeds, disease or pest-resistant varieties and mating confusion.

State of Implementation of IVM and Further Potential: Robert Bos, WHO, identified malaria as the most important vector-borne disease. He outlined factors affecting global vector distribution and noted climate change as an important consideration for future vector-control programmes. On international measures, he highlighted, *inter alia*, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants' provisions on DDT, the Global Strategic Framework for IVM and the WHO's new position statement on IVM.

Henk van den Berg, Wageningen University and Research Centre, proposed a framework for decentralized decision-making on IVM, including: identification of diseases; appraisal of methods available locally; and strategy formulation. He identified the need for addressing determinants of diseases, including: vector behavior and longevity; human behavior; and

land use patterns. He stressed the need for intra-governmental cooperation and recommended facilitating action at the local level instead of traditional centralized vector control.

V.P. Sharma, Indian Institute of Technology, explained how IVM and IPM have been used to combat malaria in urban settings. Noting that the problem is exacerbated by severe water shortages in some areas and low water pressure in others, he called for: expansion of IVM programmes; regular vector surveillance; ongoing health impact assessments; improved sanitation in settlements; and implementation of community awareness campaigns.

Cross-Cutting Issues: R.R. Abeyasinghe, National Malaria Control Programme of Sri Lanka, discussed an integrated pest and vector management project in his country. He said that after using IVM for ten years, money spent on insecticides has decreased by 50%, pesticide use has been reduced and agricultural productivity has increased. He also noted that limiting the availability of pesticides has contributed to a significant decline in self-poisonings and suicides by farmers.

During the discussion, FRANCE proposed mentioning references to non-chemical and integrated solutions in the SAICM High Level Declaration and SAICM Global Plan of Action in the statement to ICCM2. The GAMBIA highlighted the need to present farmers with economically viable and socially acceptable options to reduce pesticide reliance and called for a reexamination of IPM principles. RWANDA identified the need to complement IVM with a better understanding of disease transmission. GUINEA suggested a strong recommendation in favor of the rational use of chemicals and labeling.

Warning that climate change could trigger the misconception that more pesticides are needed, WHO urged promoting IPM and IVM as the preferred options and called for participatory approaches to increase climate resilience. Responding to questions, Bos emphasized, *inter alia*, the need for strong monitoring in IVM and noted that most developing countries do not have the capacity to implement the strict conditions on DDT set out in the Stockholm Convention.

WORKING GROUPS

FUTURE OF THE IFCS: The working group on the future of the IFCS met in afternoon and evening sessions, as well as in informal consultations throughout the day. Some delegates reiterated the need for a short, convincing and attractive resolution that the ICCM would agree to, particularly given the absence of many countries which will be present at ICCM2. Delegates discussed proposed key elements for the Forum's operation. The group agreed to, *inter alia*, elements on: full participation of governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and other civil society representatives; raising new and emerging issues for discussion and to stimulate action, among other things, by the ICCM; following the lead country/sponsor/organization approach; and meeting during the ICCM intersessional period in time to contribute to ICCM processes. Deliberations continued late into the evening.

NANOTECHNOLOGY: The working group on nanotechnology continued negotiations on the draft Dakar Statement on Manufactured Nanomaterials on Thursday morning. Several delegates raised concerns about proposed

language on prevention of workers' exposure to nanomaterials in cases of scientific uncertainty on risk. Some suggested that the proposed wording implied the need for a moratorium on all activities related to nanotechnology. Others said language that ensures strict action to protect workers from exposure was necessary. Delegates agreed to the compromise language "to prevent or minimize" exposure. In the evening session, consensus was achieved on the preamble, which distinguishes between nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials and establishes the statement's focus on the safety aspects of nanomaterials. Discussions on the detailed recommendations continued late into the evening.

LEAD AND CADMIUM: The working group reconvened on Thursday evening to consider international transport of lead and cadmium via trade. The group began by debating whether to base discussions on the Chair's draft text or a shorter text proposed by one developing country. While agreeing on the need to establish a clear link between international trade and the risks posed by lead and cadmium, delegates disagreed on the adequacy of evidence. Discussions continued late into the evening.

IPM AND IVM: Chaired by Romy Quijano, PAN AP and Nassereddin Heidari, Iran, a small drafting group on IPM and IVM met in the evening to work through the draft recommendations on ecologically based IPM and IVM. Several delegates made comments and proposed revisions to the draft text, and discussions continued late into the evening.

IN THE CORRIDORS

For most delegates, Thursday was a busy day with several working groups scheduled from morning until late evening. Delegates inside and outside the meeting room continued to express differing opinions on nanotechnology, the IFCS's mandate and the scope of the proposed Dakar Statement. "The debate about whether the statement should address nanotechnology and nanomaterials or only nanomaterials has haunted the group all week," sighed one delegate emerging from the negotiations. However, late on Thursday evening, successful compromise was reached concerning the related parts in the preamble, giving delegates hope they may be close to resolution.

Lead and cadmium also generated more than a few exchanges in the corridors. Some delegates expressed concern over some of the data on the risks related to the transport of lead and cadmium via trade, arguing that they lacked a solid scientific basis, and hoped to see international efforts to fill this gap before any other actions are taken. Others, however, stated that the numerous accounts of children dying from lead exposure provide ample evidence of harm to warrant immediate action.

Negotiators on the IFCS's future also remained busy all day in the working group and in regional and bilateral consultations. Many were "guardedly optimistic" that consensus could be reached. While some expressed concerns that absent countries would oppose the IFCS recommendations during the ICCM, others hoped that the hurdles might not be insurmountable.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of IFCS VI will be available on Monday, 22 September 2008, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/ifcs6/>