

# POPs Newsletter

No 13, June 2007

Prepared on behalf of [IHPA](#)

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## Aim

The aim of this newsletter is to disseminate information in a cost-effective way on the developments taking place in the area of POPs as implicated in the Stockholm Convention and other PTS of concern. It will cover, among others, the news on science and technology for disposal of obsolete stocks and remediation of POPs contamination which might be of interest for commercial exploitation both in developed and developing countries. Special emphasis will be given to bio-remediation, non-combustion related technologies which will benefit developing countries. The newsletter will not go into technical details of selected scientific publications but only highlight salient features for the benefit of the readers. One can [subscribe](#) and read IHPA Newsletter (2 times/yr free of charge).

## Note from the Editors

This year is important in the calendar of IHPA in that, it will be organizing the 9th IHPA Forum at Chisinau, Republic of Moldova from September 20-22, 2007.

We are also pleased to announce that the Editorial Board of IHPA-POPs Newsletter will be joined by Mr. Otar Kiria of Tbilisi, Georgia. He will be one of the sub. editors covering the Caucasus region. In this issue, we have included his review article on the situation of obsolete pesticides (OPs) in the region.

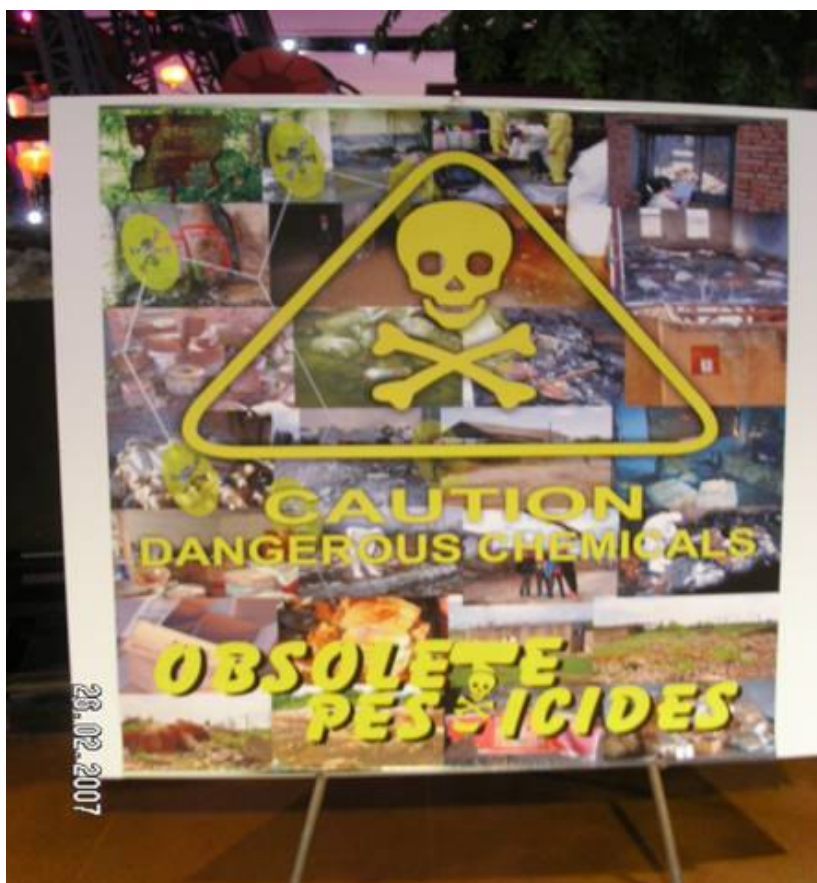
The theme of this newsletter is dangers of "OPS" in the Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (CEECCA). So we are starting the newsletter with data on OPs in Central Europe and the ECCA Region and reproducing posters presented in an exhibition in Reno, USA in Feb. 2007 and in the European Parliament during April-May 2007.

A new IHPA book "Danger- obsolete Pesticides" contains a chapter by IHPA Director Mr. John Vijgen (JV). Mr. JV was invited to stand as a speaker in the European Parliament during a public hearing on the book on May 2, 2007. The public hearing on the book was to: reinforce awareness of the dangers, help countries to eliminate Ops and, find funding to achieve this aim.

### Estimated stockpiles of OPs in the CEECCA Region.

Country/State	Estimated Total Tons OPs	Country/State	Estimated Total tons OPs
Albania	3	Poland	9,000
Armenia	800	Moldova Republic	6,600
Azerbaijan	4,000	Romania	1,000
Belarus	6,000	Russian Federation	100,000
Bulgaria	11,122	Slovak Republic	300
Czech Republic	400	Slovenia	400
Estonia	700	Tajikistan	3,300
Georgia	3,000	Turkmenistan	1671
Hungary	314	Macedonia	38,000
Kazakhstan	10,000	Ukraine	25,000

Kosovo	8	Uzbekistan	12,000
Kyrgyzstan	2,000	<b>Total Central Europe and</b>	240,713.
Latvia	2,000	<b>EECCA</b>	
Lithuania	3,280		



Poster presented at an exhibition on obsolete pesticide at Reno, USA and in the European parliament. Made by Mr. Wieslaw Stefan Kuc <wskuc-assistant@europarl.eu.int>

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## 1. Review Articles

In this issue we are providing one full review article from Georgia and only refer to two review articles written by our Director of IHPA Mr. JV in the book 'Danger - Obsolete Pesticides' and another written by the co-editor of the POPs Newsletter Prof. Sushil Khetan on a closely linked topic of 'Pharmaceuticals in the Environment'. Some chemicals belonging to these groups, among other things, interfere with the very basic natural duty of higher living species viz procreation by social union.

1.1. Firstly we refer to a Plenary lecture given by Mr. John Vijgen in the Pesticide Stewardship Alliance (TPSA) working Conference held in Washington D.C. Feb 25-28, 2007.

*(THE PESTICIDE STEWARDSHIP ALLIANCE, P.O. BOX 5204, TAKOMA PARK, MD 20913, EMAIL:< CONTACT@TPSALLIANCE.ORG>)*

PLENARY:

How Europe Is Dealing with its Stocks of Obsolete Pesticides

**John Vijgen**, IHPA, International HCH and Pesticides Association.

**Abstract of Presentation:** How is Europe dealing with the huge stocks of obsolete pesticides in the new European Union (EU) member countries and in the neighboring Caucasus and Central Asia? How big is the problem? Is there enough political momentum to eradicate the problem from the continent? What are the political dynamics? What is the role of the European Union (EU)? What infrastructure exists for pesticide collection and disposal? How does the European situation compare with what is going on in the United States and elsewhere? How are collection and disposal programs supported? What role could TPSA play in building a critical momentum of support for collection programs internationally, in the Central and Eastern Europe region, and in the United States? The

presentation featured the US premier of short videos and photos from Eastern Europe and the EU.



**Biographical summary:** John Vijgen was born in Heerlen, The Netherlands, and educated as a Civil Engineer at the Technical University of Aachen, Germany. He has been working on pesticide clean-up since 1988 when his efforts to clean-up HCH and Lindane in the Netherlands resulted in decontamination of 200,000 tons of HCH-contaminated soils. In 1998 Vijgen founded the International HCH & Pesticides Association (IHPA) with the objective of eliminating obsolete pesticides in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and the Central Asia Republics, and providing an international forum for solving the problem of obsolete pesticides. Currently he is leading the EU Phare project, supervising the disposal of pesticide wastes and providing technical assistance to prevent further accumulation of obsolete pesticides in Romania

1.2. Secondly we refer to a review article by the co-editor of the POPs Newsletter Prof. Sushil Khetan who along with Prof. Tomlinson on Carnegie Mellon University, Pennsylvania, USA has written a review on "Pharmaceuticals in the Environment", another relevant subject close to pesticides leading to toxicological implications.

The review is entitled "**Human Pharmaceuticals in the aquatic environment**" by **Sushil K. Khetan and Terrence. Collins, Dept. of Chemistry, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. American Chem. Society, published on the web on 27/05/2007. Contact [skhetan@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:skhetan@andrew.cmu.edu) or [tclu@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:tclu@andrew.cmu.edu).**



Sushil Khetan was born in India in 1943. He received his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees from St. John's College, Agra, in 1961 and 1963. At the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, he joined the research group of Professor M. V. George and earned a Ph.D. degree in 1968 in physical and synthetic organic chemistry. He worked with Dr. Leonard Spialter for his postdoctoral research in organosilicone chemistry at the Aerospace Research Laboratories, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, OH. In 1971, he returned to India and joined the pesticide industry as research manager. Later, he became head of a United Nations funded national program on development of environmentally friendly pesticide formulations. He coauthored a book on Pesticide Formulation (1998) published by the United Nations and was the sole author of a book on Microbial Pest Control (2001) published by Marcel Dekker, New York. In 2001, he joined the Green Chemistry group led by Professor Terry Collins at Carnegie Mellon University, where he has been actively working on the applications of TAML activators of peroxide for decontamination of chemical and biological warfare agents, degradation of thiophosphate pesticides, nitroorganics, and explosives, and removal of micropollutants and biological contaminants from water supply.



Terry Collins was born in New Zealand in 1952. He received his B.Sc. (1973), M.Sc. (1975), and Ph.D. (1978) degrees from the University of Auckland where his research advisor was Warren R. Roper, FRS. He conducted postdoctoral studies with James P. Collman at Stanford University (1978–1980). He is the Thomas Lord Professor of Chemistry at Carnegie Mellon University where he directs the Institute for Green Oxidation Chemistry, a research, education, and development center focused upon developing a holistic approach to sustainability science. He is also an Honorary Professor at the University of Auckland. Professor Collins taught the first university course in green chemistry at Carnegie Mellon, starting in 1992. He writes and lectures widely on how chemists can promote sustainability; he has delivered 400 public lectures all over the world. Professor Collins' research is focused on greening the historically dirty area of oxidation chemistry by designing nontoxic catalysts for activating the natural oxidants, hydrogen peroxide and oxygen. His widely patented, commercializing TAML activators promise to transform industrial peroxide chemistry, allowing it to substitute more effectively for chlorine- and metal-based processes and to enable much more effective processes for destroying in water recalcitrant pollutants and hardy pathogens.

**Abstract:** In the exhaustive review running almost 46 pages, the authors in their *foreword* quote four stanzas from a poem written by British poet, Robert Burns at the end of the 18th Century called "*to a mouse*" which depicts interference of man's technology in "nature's social union" The authors refer to certain man made chemicals in the environment cause three often-overlapping toxicological end-points namely, the killing of cells, the mutation of DNA in ways that may lead to cancer, and the disruption of chemical signalling mechanism controlling cellular development which is least understood. This last area of toxicity, called "endocrine disruption" which at environmentally relevant concentrations of chemical can interfere with hormonal command of cellular development and the result can be severe impairment of growing creatures. Impairment of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) often follows nonmonotonic dose-response profiles. This contrasts with chemicals that kill and chemicals that cause cancer where the risk is usually amplified with increasing exposures and where there is a "no.effect concentration levels". However, with EDCs, the impairing effects are often found at low, but not at higher concentrations. The review article covers in seven major parts, pharmaceuticals of environmental concern, ecotoxicity, natural breakdown of pharmaceuticals in the aquatic environment including non.green chemistry and green chemistry methods of break down and ends with green chemistry perspective. The readers of POPs Newsletter are reminded that, the invention by the authors of TAML as a powerful oxidative degradation agent of organic/biological pollutants was covered in one of issues of the Newsletter.

1.3. The third one is an article by Mr. Otar Kiria of Georgia who will join the POPs Newsletter editorial board

covering the Caucasus region.

Caucasus is still not sufficiently committed to decide on Obsolete Pesticides removal - A short report on the EU TAIEX workshop 4-5 June 2007 in Tbilisi and the ongoing discussions.

By Otar KIRIA, Tbilisi, Georgia

#### **Bio.data of Mr. Otar Kiria.**

Mr. Otar Kiria comes from Georgia and took his degree in Statistics from Tbilisi State University, Georgia and went into journalism. He has extensive knowledge and experience in environmental reporting and public awareness and investigative journalism. He served as Public Awareness Specialist for POPs project by GEF in Georgia. He has extensively covered the OPs in the Caucasus Region He organized POPs Exhibition in Sofia during the 8th HCH Forum and also in the recent exhibition held in the EU parliament. He is a reporter for Newspaper 24 Hours. Since 2005 he has been Ambassador of IHPA in Georgia. He will join the editorial Board of the IHPA POPs Newsletter. His review Article on Ops in the Caucasus region is given below.

Situation regarding obsolete pesticides still remains unclear for Caucasus. Countries still haven't decided whether to replace, incinerate, remove or even do something to solve the problem contaminating lives of millions in the region. According to information from the National Implementation Plans (NIPS) for the GEF by the national agencies or environmental institutions, Armenia has to take care of 800 tones of obsolete pesticides, being information generated from, one pesticides dump only, but information from other storage in the countries is completely missing, Azerbaijan – 8000, and Georgia – 3500 tones approximately. Countries have failed to execute detailed inventories of storage in order to provide definitive amounts of obsolete pesticides.

John Vijgen the IHPA managing director said that the Georgian inventory gave only a first impression, the inventory should be made in the same way as has been executed by Milieukontakt International (MKI) in the Kakheti region according to the FAO Format, but this means that we still have no proper data from whole country. The GEF, NIP project implemented by UNDP and Ministry of Environment Protection of Georgia during 2004-2006 showed amounts that were considerably different than the inventory conducted by Milieukontakt right before the removal of OPs in Kakheti region. We still don't know what's going on in Armenia, as no real inventory works have been made, apart from the MKI inception mission, which clearly brought forward the presence of considerable number of storage sites and amounts of obsolete pesticides. We don't know exactly the situation in Azerbaijan, where also the amount disposed at the special landfill that was constructed for burial of disused pesticides and other agrochemical substances near the Jangi village of Gobustan region. Here, according to the NIP about 8000 ton of pesticide and agrochemical substance were transported – according to John Vijgen of IHPA.

Georgia could have started already the removal process in 2006 with the financial and technical support of Milieukontakt International. However, Milieukontakt will pack only 250 tones of OPs. Mark Davis, coordinator of FAO's obsolete pesticides program expressed to IHPA: Even the cheapest ways will require \$10,5 millions to solve the problem, specifically as Georgia has to deal with the large pesticides dump of at least 2500 tones. Half of this amount could be found at the GEF, but this will be available only after Georgia has brought in the various donors and the country itself has shown its strong will to remove the OPs. Considering the time required for completion of the task, Georgia can easily afford that. Half of \$10,5 million over a period of four years will demand only approximately 1,3 million a year.

According to information by UNEP Division of GEF Coordination expert Mr. Jan Betlem, GEF funds seem to be more easily available for recipients since the beginning of June 2007. Thus, countries and implementing agencies will have to be more active and accurate in proposal writing.

For the Caucasus the key period could be at the right time. Besides, Tbilisi hosted the international OP Workshop gathering all of the key persons worldwide. Azerbaijan was among countries in the list but not attending the expert meeting in 4-5 June. Armenia shared an experience of redirecting water flow from the major pesticides dump site which was led to the safe route. Of course absence of members affected the workshop resolution.

Resolution highlighted problems as follow:

- Lack of awareness at the decision making level
- Lack of cooperation between UN agencies with regard to the GEF
- The problem of the Caucasus region is estimated at present between 10-15,000 tones of OPs
- Only in Kakheti region of Georgia a detailed inventory has been made.
- In Armenia no detailed inventories have been made
- Illegal imports of DDT and other hazardous pesticides into Georgia
- DDT is applied for malaria vector control and according to Stockholm Convention parties are expected to introduce alternatives to DDT. This is valid for both for a part of Georgia and Armenia

Solutions mostly determined by the factors like awareness rising, political will, financial restructuring, cooperation on all levels, and further education. The list of solutions was approved as follows:

- Media should more frequently highlight the problem to make aware the public of the link between health and OPs; seminars should be carried out for journalists

- Advancing awareness rising from information dissemination up to social campaigns
- Development of local and international expert database
- Stronger political and operational commitment of the governments
- Stronger cooperation between different governmental departments, such as the Ministries of Environment, Agriculture and Health
- Emergencies should be identified as such and addressed accordingly by notifying relevant external agencies
- Strong cooperation between governmental and non governmental organizations is needed
- Need for synergy of different UN agencies on their expertise on OPs
- Need for close consultations and arrangements between GEF and EU Commission on financial mechanisms for Caucasus
- As the size of the problem is relatively small, financing of solutions should be easy, if governments prioritize the issue in front of UN, EU, GEF and other donors
- Georgia and Armenia request to be involved in a regional initiative to introduce alternatives to DDT for malaria vector control
- Georgia and Armenia: A detailed inventory is needed for the whole country, in particular for the Magrelia region.
- The experience of the Khakheti project, carried out by MKI, should be used for the whole country and other countries as well
- About 75% of the OPs in the two countries are contained in two dumpsites; action should be concentrated on these sites. A demonstration project should be formulated for these sites
- Evaluation of existent local incineration facilities, like cement and power plants, for their qualification of destruction of OPs If the facility is qualified, monitored test runs must be carried out.
- Flexible reaction on organizational problems,
- start as soon as possible with the seminar preparation
- Involvement of NGOs and the Parliamentary Committee of European Accession in the preparation of a follow-up seminar

The period from June 2007 to the end of year could be of the highest importance for the Caucasus region. Resolution defined that the demonstration project in Georgia by Milieukontakt International (MKI) could have a multiplier effect for the whole EECCA region. Mr. Wouter Pronk, Project Manager of MKI stated that the ongoing project will continue with more effective efforts regarding awareness rising. As for resolution chapters, they will be incorporated within coming stages of the mission. According to Pronk 'There is a good perspective to find international funding for follow-up projects in Georgia, but without an active commitment of the Georgian Ministry of Environment Protection this money will not be found and even the currently running Milieukontakt pilot project could fail.'

According to Mrs. Nino Chkhobadze, the former Minister for Environment Protection of Georgia, awareness raising round tables will by all means influence and force the overall political decision and direction with regards to OPs. The thing is that, according to EU's Neighbourhood Policy (NP) and the National Action Plan for it, Georgia must allocate certain amounts and efforts for removal of OPs. According to an official info from the European Parliament, the total amount allocated by EU for Georgia comprises approximately 120 million Euros. To this amount is indicated that this is also for the elimination of obsolete pesticides. It is up to Georgia to decide what amount will be used for OPs.

(Note: The opinion expressed is solely attributed to the author and does not reflect the opinion of the Newsletter)

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## **2. During a public hearing in the European Parliament Ms. A.Tcheknavorian IHPA Ambassador and President of the Association of UN former Industrial and Development Experts (AFIDE) delivered an emotional and hard hitting speech.**

Her speech is presented here:

*"Your Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,*

*I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Kuc for inviting me to this prestigious meeting at the European parliament. I hope that the European parliamentarians present to day in this conference, will take decisions and responsibility to eradicate the existence of obsolete pesticides in order to secure the European people's health, to improve the environment and finally to listen to the voice of these poorer countries in Europe and all the countries who have trade connections with Europe or are next door to Europe, sharing with us our planet and environment. Therefore, the topic of the discussions of today - the obsolete pesticides - is well known to you and the previous speakers eloquently presented to you, the importance and dangers of pesticides as a whole and obsolete ones in particular. In support of what has been said. I would like to contribute, by stating that it is high time that the European Parliament took care unanimously of the interest of its own Nations and to eradicate the existence of obsolete pesticides in Europe, in surrounding and other trading partners in order not only to eradicate the obsolete pesticides from Europe especially in the European countries but also protect the kids that are playing next to such dumped obsolete pesticides next to the doors of their houses and playgrounds. These kids are getting severe diseases such as brain cancer and more, which is incomputable with European social*

understanding for humanity. You will agree with me that it is high time to make an end to this unacceptable situation especially for the poor segment of the people in Europe or neighbouring countries. Surely, the humanity needs the prevention of the pest and thereby usage of pesticides.

Mankind has been at odds with pests for more than 4,500 years, ie 2,500 years before B.C., in order to protect their crops. People were using Sulphur, which they burnt under the trees or crops by producing SO<sub>2</sub> which was a good pesticide to kill the pest, and prevented the loss of their harvest. In the 15th century, toxic chemicals such as Arsenic was used and later it was replaced in the 17th century by nicotine sulphate, extracted from tobacco as insecticide, and in the 19th century the famous pyrethrum was produced from natural plants, called chrysanthemums or rotenone from the roots of tropical Plants. However, these pesticides, had also side effects - not only because of their dosage but - for example by burning sulphur or arsenic - BIRDS were also killed which showed drastically an immediate impact to the environment. Therefore a development took place in order to avoid such side effects and to cope with the increased need for pesticides as well as to combat human diseases coming from insects such as Malaria.

In 1939, Paul Müller - for first time - discovered an insecticidal activity of synthetic chemical called DDT, which became the world most wanted insecticide. I was a child at that time, I remember vividly the importance of DDT as the most magic product, and how carelessly they were spraying from the air or on the ground, excessively, to kill mosquitoes in highly populated urban areas for their "comfort" and in rural areas to secure economy and food security.

Today, as a chemist, I am still trembling when I remember THE MILKY air after the spray. We are all familiar how in 1960, Rachel Carson, not a scientist but a novelist wrote the best seller book called "SILENT SPRING", demonstrating the biological manifestation and the threat of DDT to biodiversity in presenting that many fish eating birds were disappearing because they were eating contaminated fishes and thus they could not continue to reproduce. Carson achieved to sensitize the world on the dangers of DDT to HUMANS AND to BIODIVERSITY. Since then the use of DDT was reduced and banned. However, 86 or more countries, especially developing countries, are using DDT for killing mosquitoes, for preventing Malaria or other carriers of fatal diseases. and as a matter of fact the pesticide use has increased 50 fold and 2,5 million tons of industrial pesticides are used each year, now surely the advanced countries, especially European countries have a better non-persistent synthetic and bio-pesticides in order to selectively control economic pests. However, DDT is still widely used in DC, the question is arising as to how and from where are those amounts of DDT coming from, despite that the production of DDT is banned in Europe. I believe, first is the lack of control of the, traffic of unused stockpiles of obsolete pesticides around the world, including in Eastern Europe. The illegal sales and transportation against the Basel convention or Stockholm convention, is taking place because of our silence.

Secondly, many European countries have donated in the past to the poor Nations, as a good will, excessive amounts of pesticides, sometimes already out-dated., which are the basis of today's illegal traffic of DDT. It has become a very lucrative business, but detrimental to the environment and humanity.

I believe that this is not only unethical but also inhuman, especially for us Europeans. Therefore, I hope that you will take immediate and the right decisions for eradicating obsolete pesticides from Europe and from DC, in order to take care of those poor kids and humanity. It is also important for Europe and its children who are already suffering, with bad allergies, mostly stemming from food, especially from vegetables and meat, which are containing chemicals from pesticides - imported even from European sources.

I know that European governments are capable to act, to eradicate the obsolete pesticides from EUROPE and DC as the human health, life and environment are priceless. I hope it would be not necessary that another novelist like Carson in 21 century to be found in order to sensitize the governments of the danger of obsolete pesticides and the need to be eradicate them. . My organisation AFIDE (an NGO, Association of UN former Industrial and Development Experts) is prepared to assist and join hands with European Parliament in order that the dream of a cleaner environment, a cleaner world for humanity will come true.

Thank you."

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### **3. Third COP Meeting of the Stockholm Convention held in Senegal, April-4 May , 2007**

The 3rd Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention on POPs was held at the Meridien President hotel in Dakar, Senegal. The main objectives of the meeting among others were:

- To adopt decisions related to evaluation of the continued need for DDT for disease vector control and alternative strategies to replace DDT.
- Criteria for the review process for entries in the register for specific exemptions
- Measures to reduce or eliminate releases from unintentional production of dioxin and furan
- Report on Guidelines Available techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP)
- Report on Cooperation/coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
- Report on effectiveness of evaluation and non-compliance
- Adoption of 2008-9 budget.

H.E. Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal welcomed the participants and recalling on the incident of toxic waste dumping in Ivory Coast (see also item 4.5.) noted that there is no mechanism in place to guarantee that toxic waste will not enter the African Continent. He specifically underscored the need for parties to commit and mobilize technical and financial resources to help implement NIP on POPs.

Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP in his message noted the challenges faced by the Convention including the need to deal with issues related to food and health and the use of DDT for combating malaria especially in Africa. He emphasized the inter-linkages among Stockholm/Rotterdam and /Basel Conventions and the need to establish regional centres that meet States' and people's needs globally. He highlighted the importance of NGOs, industry and other partners in implementing the Convention.

Technical assistance was discussed based on UNEP document which covered TOR for selecting regional/sub. regional centres for capacity building and transfer of technology.

On non-compliance a contact group on non-compliance was established to address the issue.

The session on Effectiveness of Evaluation discussed steps to be taken by Technical working group (TWG) on Global Monitoring Plan. (co. chaired by our POPs Newsletter Co-editor Dr. Ivan Holoubek of Czech Republic). He presented the group's work underscoring key issues such as the drafting of work plans and schedules, responses to capacity needs questionnaire, financial implications and interpretation and assessment of data pertaining to human health. India reported that eight laboratories had already been identified as regional centres for the implementation of GMP in the Asia Pacific. The EU supported the establishment of a global coordination group to replace TWG and drew attention to the long term need of developing countries for increased capacity in monitoring. IPEN wanted a strategy on monitoring at global, national, and regional levels, funding for global monitoring, transparency and full scale stake holder's involvement.

On DDT, as always there was a heated debate and wanted a business plan for a global partnership to develop alternatives to DDT. WHO clarified its position on reduction and eventual elimination of DDT. IPEN highlighted the limited research on alternative products and suggested health monitoring in areas of DDT use.

(sources and further information: Earth Negotiations Bulletin <[www.iisd.ca/chemical/pops/cop3/](http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/pops/cop3/)>)

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## **4. News Items**

### **4.1 UNIDO/UNEP establish cooperation, partnership on post- NIP activities for the LDCs**

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN classifies 50 countries of the world as Least Developed Countries of which 41 countries are implementing NIPs. of the Stockholm Convention. Based on special conditions existing in LDCs on environmental matters and their dependence on exports of their agro products the EU, industrialized Americas, Australia, Japan calls for concerted global action to reduce the occurrence of POPs both intentional and unintentional. .Considering capacity building in LDCs with regards to managing POPs is a challenging task; UNEP/UNIDO is forming a strategic partnership to help LDCs to overcome the major financial/technical barriers. (Source *UNIDO/Stockholm Convention/Chemical management Unit NewsLetter, May 2007.* <[M.Eisa@unido.org](mailto:M.Eisa@unido.org)>)

### **4.2 BAT/BEP Forum**

Thailand organized BAT/BEP Forum for East and South East Asia. UNIDO as a focus on source releases identified in Annex C of the Stockholm Convention that is related to industry sector is providing technical assistance to the Forum. This will result in a BAT/BEP Technical Centre to organize training, sectoral studies, capacity building and research programmes. . (Source *UNIDO/Stockholm Convention/Chemical management Unit Newsletter, May 2007,* <[M.Eisa@unido.org](mailto:M.Eisa@unido.org)>.)

### **4.3 Co-operation on Contaminated Sites**

As a novel approach, UNIDO in collaboration with the Geoenvironmental Research Centre (GRC) of Cardiff University is initiating a web based facility in the field of contaminated sites for proper management in accordance with the Stockholm Convention. The portal when ready will provide information, technical support tools, learning and capacity building environment (e-learning) and tailored information dissemination. Such a portal will provide an interactive dialogue with developing countries having access to the e-portal to help in managing contaminated sites. (Source *UNIDO/Stockholm Convention/Chemical management Unit Newsletter, May 2007* <[M.Eisa@unido.org](mailto:M.Eisa@unido.org)>)

### **4.4 IPCP (International Panel on Chemical pollution)**

This is a new initiative on a global basis. The representatives may come from chemical management authorities, EPAs and SAICM (Strategic Approaches to International Chemical Management.) focal point of .IPCP will be registered as a non-profit society in

Switzerland. Our Co-editor Dr. Ivan Holoubek is also one of the founder members of IPCP. For more information contact point <[www.sust-chem.ethz.ch/news/IPCP](http://www.sust-chem.ethz.ch/news/IPCP)>.

#### 4.5. Basel Convention, Stockholm Convention and Rotterdam Convention have not only teeth but also can bite.

Ivory Coast, a least developed country in West Africa, won a case against Trafigura Company and got damages due to dumping of toxic waste off the coast of this West African country. About ten people died and tens and thousands sought medical treatment for nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and breathing difficulties after a ship chartered by Trafigura company dumped tonnes of toxic waste at a dozen sites around Abidjan the capital of Ivory Coast last August. An Ivorian government panel blamed many other companies and some government agencies for "fraudulent collusion". The company was fined \$200 million, under the country's poisoning and toxic waste laws, to be paid to the Ivory Coast Government. It is debatable whether the money also helped to get the release of Mr. Claude Dauphin, the president and cofounder of Trafigura who was jailed in Abidjan. The fine will be used to build a waste disposal facility at Abidjan and a hospital as well as pay for the clean-up of the toxic waste. The case clearly underpins the legally binding international conventions (Basel/Rotterdam/Stockholm) which all shipping companies should be familiar with. The case also attracted the attention of the EU which has proposed that an environmental crime bill will be enforced across the EU and punished by prison sentences and hefty fines.

#### 4.6 Economy/environment/health and safety clash in ship breaking case

The famous French aircraft carrier ship *Le Clemenceau* created great stir in the media when it was towed in to the ship-breaking yard in Alang, Gujarat., India. The controversy (including breaching of Basel Convention of trans-boundary transport of hazardous waste due to presence of asbestos, PCBs in the ship) resulted in the French Government recalling the ship. Now another ship Blue Lady (earlier called SS Norway) has beached at Alang and the case has gone to the Supreme Court. The SS Blue Lady is a passenger ship built in 1963 is 315 meters long, 11 storeys high, has 16 decks 1400 rooms, swimming pools, restaurants, shops, theatres, library etc. and was decommissioned and entered India's waters at Alang port probably for ship breaking. Again the ship might contain asbestos and also PCBs and the ship breaking raises the issue of economy of the region creating jobs due to ship breaking, the environmental issues of hazardous waste and above all the health and safety issues of the workers. To look into all these things a Technical Committee was appointed. According to the team the ship may contain 1240 tones of asbestos, used as insulating material in steam pipes, heat exchangers tanks, wall panels and doors. The team also noted PCBs in paint, flooring, cable insulation etc. In addition, the ship carried 108 lead acid batteries. The Technical Committee concluded "no other hazardous material of any kind or quantity was found that cannot be safely removed, handled and disposed of at Alang". But the Supreme Court clearly gave the verdict that any ship taken up for dismantling should be properly decontaminated by the ship owners prior to breaking. "any effort to dilute the Supreme Court orders to try to remove the concept of "prior decontamination will go against the interests of the workers in the ship breaking yard and also tantamount to a violation of the Basel Convention and this will be violation by both countries India as the recipient of the ship and Malaysia as the owner of the ship and both countries are signatories to the Convention". It is a landmark case where the environment and health of the workers at the ship breaking yard were given greater priority at the expense of economy of ship breaking industry for the region.

(source: The Hindu, India).

#### 4.7 Greater awareness to bio-medical and hazardous waste management stressed

In South India, Chennai (previously known as Madras), capital of Tamil Nadu is witnessing the economic boom taking place in India. One of the major problems is the medical waste management according to Tamil Nadu Medical Council Vice President. He said that: "wastes were first incinerated in Japan. But they noted that people were born with genital cancer and the sperm count was drastically low in men due to the release of dioxins and other chemicals from incinerated plastics. This led to the decision against incineration." Among the 575 hospitals in Chennai city, colour bags are provided for sorting out waste that would reduce the burden of disposal and reduce toxic emissions. According to another report Tamil Nadu in general is having a poor record in terms of hazardous waste management. It is the 5th largest producer of hazardous waste in India. In the country along with Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Kerala, eighty per cent of all hazardous wastes generated in the country come from these States. Tamil Nadu "fares poorly" in addressing hazardous waste disposal. According to the report, Gujarat has excellent record of hazardous waste management because of government support. Andhra Pradesh had evolved its own waste fingerprinting system to identify wastes from their precise industries that discharge them. If Gujarat was a sterling example of a vibrant chemical industry with excellent processing techniques, it was only because the government was supportive. Not only wastes being generated from current production but also those accumulated over the years. The report warned that this would slowly push the critical chemical industries sector out of Tamil Nadu. Already other states like Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh had begun to woo pharma and chemical industries to set up units in their States. The Vicepresident said "I will not be surprised if a time comes when chemical industries begin to move out of Tamil Nadu," It is a clear indication of investment going to states where hazardous and toxic wastes are well managed. (Source "the Hindu, Chennai).

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## On a Happy Note :

Normally in international summits, political or economical, the world leaders or WTO Representatives are protected from protests by various political/environmental organizations. Normally the protester are kept kilometers away from the venue of the summits. But in the EU-Latin America summit held last year in Argentina the world leaders were actually looking forward to a single protester carrying a poster saying "no to pulp mill pollution". The pictures tell why? (Source Kurier, May 13, 2006.). Readers are reminded that the Stockholm Convention under Annex c on unintentional POPs (U\_POPS) specifies under source categories "production of pulp using elemental chlorine or chemicals generating elemental chlorine for bleaching".

**British Prime Minister Blair along with other world leaders looking happily at the protester**



The front of the protester saying 'no pulp mill pollution'.



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5. Mark September 20-22 in your calendar for the 9th IHPA Forum at Chisinau, Republic of Moldova



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