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THE APPLICATION OF THE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT
PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS AND
PESTICIDES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

First session

Brussels, 11-15 March 1996

STUDY ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN WIDELY PROHIBITED CHEMICALS

Note by the Secretariat

Annexed to the present note is a summary of a study on international trade in widely prohibited chemicals, carried out under the FAO/UNEP Joint Programme for the Operation of the prior informed consent (PIC) procedure. A global overview table derived from the data provided by Governments, indicating the existence of trade in these chemicals, is appended to the summary. The full version of the study is made available to the session as an information document in English only.

STUDY ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN WIDELY PROHIBITED CHEMICALS

SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE

1. The purpose of the study is to collect from and provide Governments with information on production and international trade with regard to chemicals that have been banned or severely restricted in many countries or are subject to the voluntary PIC procedure. It is intended that the results of the study will be used by Governments as background information during the planned negotiations of an international legally binding instrument for the application of the PIC procedure for certain hazardous chemicals in international trade.

METHODOLOGY

2. In December 1994, UNEP, together with FAO, convened an informal consultative meeting to consider major issues related to the development of a legally binding instrument for the application of the PIC procedure. The meeting suggested, inter alia, to undertake a study on the actual export situations of chemicals domestically prohibited in many countries. At the end of December 1994, a questionnaire was sent to the Governments of all States requesting data for the years 1990-1994 on production, export and import of 47 chemicals which are subject to the voluntary PIC procedure or Council Regulation (EEC) No.2455/92, adopted by the Council of the European Communities on 23 July 1992, concerning the export and import of certain dangerous chemicals. It was requested that replies be received by February 1995, and by September 1995 over 60 Governments had responded. The distribution of the Government responses shows about 50 per cent received from developing and 50 per cent from industrialized countries from all regions of the world. The countries involved represent about 75 per cent of chemical trade world-wide.

3. A table based on the replies received was drawn for each chemical. It should be noted that since very little information was received for the asbestos fibres Actinolite, Anthophyllite and Tremolite, these were grouped

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under "Asbestos generic" in the attached table which hence covers 44 chemicals.

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Production

4. It can be seen from the table contained in the appendix that, while 21 of the 44 chemicals were being produced in 1990, only 9 of them were still in production in 1994. The information provided by Governments on their production quantities for 1994 reveals the following: two of the chemicals are produced in amounts of less than 10 tonnes (Aldrin -2T, Dieldrin -3T); two in amount of between 10 and 100 tonnes (Cyhexatin - 66T, Maleic Hydrazide -85T); one in amount of between 100 and 1,000 tonnes (Camphechlor -240T); three in amount of over 1,000 tonnes (DDT -2,280T, 1,2-Dichloroethane >1,000T and Ethylene oxide -210,000T). For one chemical, only the statement "yes" was provided in order to indicate the existence of such trade without specifying the amounts. The latter was not produced in 1990. For the other eight chemicals, production quantities remained stable or decreased by 1994, except in a single case where an increase was noted, the 1990 figure given is ">40T".

Export

5. In 1990, 22 chemicals were reported as being exported. These do not necessarily correspond to those chemicals reported as produced. By 1994, export had increased to 31 of the 44 chemicals listed. Only in one case had export of a chemical ceased. In 1990, eight of the chemicals being exported were no longer being produced. In 1994, 25 of the chemicals being exported were no longer being produced. Of the exports of 1994, in four cases export was signalled with a "yes"; 12 chemicals were exported in quantities of less than 10 tonnes; eight in quantities between 10 and 100 tonnes; two in amount of 100 to 1,000 tonnes and five in quantities of more than 1,000 tonnes. Comparing figures for 1994 with those of 1990: in two cases exports were the same as in 1990; in five cases exports were less than in 1990, and in 17 cases more. In seven instances, the reply "yes" was given which makes the determination of trend impossible.

Import

6. In 1990, 29 of the 44 chemicals were being imported. In 1994, 37 of the chemicals were being imported. Concerning 1994, two import values were recorded as "yes"; four chemicals were imported in quantities under 10 tonnes; seven chemicals in amount of between 10 and 100 tonnes; 19 in amount of

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between 100 and 1,000 tonnes; five in quantities of more than 1,000 tonnes. In 27 cases, import increased in 1994 over 1990, and in seven cases it decreased as compared to 1990. No trend can be determined from three values received as "yes".

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CONCLUSION

7. Given the different values and forms in which data were submitted, as well as the frequent reply that data were not available, one should be cautious in drawing too many conclusions from the table. A constraint to obtaining data might have been the short-time frame given; it is clear that the collection of these types of figures is a very time-consuming process. Another constraint might have been the absence of a domestic authority to collect these data regularly.

8. When preparing the appended summary table a very general interpretation was made of the figures available. For example, when production figures were provided covering a four- or five-year time span, it was assumed that some production was occurring each year. Choosing to illustrate data by using only 1990 and 1994 lent more accuracy to this interpretation as, on occasion, production had ceased by 1994. Export and import figures for 1994 itself, however, may be inflated due to some countries submitting this type of data only for 1994. However, a valuable indication of the existence (if not the real quantities) of trade in these chemicals can be surmised from the table. The detailed report analysing the data provided indicates some of the problems encountered in trying to compile and analyse these types of figures. There were problems in obtaining data, in the format in which it was reported and in determining which chemical or compound data were related to when, for example, data existing only on groups of chemicals. Despite these limitations, the study does suggest that, on a global level, trade in banned and severely restricted chemicals is still occurring.

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APPENDIX**SUMMARY INDICATION OF TRADE IN BANNED/RESTRICTED CHEMICALS**

	1990			1994		
	Production	Export	Import	Production	Export	Import
Aldrin	+	0	+	+	0	+
4-Aminobiphenyl	0	+	+	0	0	0
Asbestos (generic)	+	+	+	0	+	+
Amosite	+	+	+	0	+	+
Crocidolite	+	+	+	0	+	+
Benzidine	0	+	+	0	+	+
Binapacryl	0	0	0	0	+	+
Camphechlor	+	0	+	+	0	+
Captafol	0	0	+	0	+	+
Chlordane	+	+	+	0	+	+
Chlordimeform	+	0	0	0	0	+
Cyhexatin	+	+	+	+	+	+
DBBT	0	0	0	0	0	0
DDT	+	+	+	+	+	+
1,2-Dichloroethane	+	+	+	+	+	+
Dicofol	+	+	+	0	+	+
Dieldrin	+	0	+	+	+	+
Dinoseb	+	0	0	0	+	+
EDB	+	+	+	0	+	+
Endrin	0	0	0	0	0	+
Ethylene Oxide	+	+	+	+	+	+
Fluoroacetamide	0	0	0	0	+	+
HCH	0	0	+	0	0	+
Heptechlor	+	+	+	0	+	+
Hexachlorobenzene	0	+	+	0	+	+
Maleic Hydrazide	+	0	+	+	0	+
Mercuric Oxide	0	+	+	0	+	+
Mercurous Chloride	0	+	+	+	+	+
Other Inorganic Mercury Compounds	+	+	+	0	+	+
Alkyl Mercury Compounds	0	+	0	0	+	+
Alkoxyalkyl & Aryl Mercury compounds	0	+	+	0	+	+
2-Naphthylamine	0	+	+	0	+	+
4-Nitrobiphenyl	0	0	0	0	+	+
Nitrofen	+	+	0	0	+	+
PBB	0	0	0	0	+	0
PCB	0	0	0	0	0	0
PCT	0	0	0	0	0	+
Mixtures of PCB & PCT	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pentachlorophenol	+	0	+	0	+	+
Quintozone	+	+	+	0	+	+
Tris (2,3-dibromopropyl) phosphate	0	0	+	0	+	+
Tris (aziridiny) phosphine oxide	0	0	0	0	+	+
Ugilec 121	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ugilec 141	0	0	+	0	0	0

KEY: + - data have been submitted that show production, export or import takes place.
0 - either no data have been submitted that indicate trade takes place or no production, export or import takes place.
