



Pesticide application in El Kjara, Sudan.

How pesticides management contributes to MEA implementation

In most ACP countries, agriculture is the most important economic sector, employing more people, using more chemicals, managing more land and providing stewardship for more ecosystems than any other sector. FAO provides guidance and technical assistance to countries to produce enough safe food sustainably and improve rural livelihoods. In doing so, countries are supported in implementing many MEAs including biodiversity, desertification, climate change, genetic resource conservation and through pesticide management, the family of chemicals conventions (Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm) and voluntary agreements (SAICM, International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides). The EU supported MEAs programme has given a significant boost to ACP capacity in these areas.

Environment-related problems with pesticides

Pesticides are very widely used in agriculture, as well as in public health, recreational, industrial and domestic environments. In ACP countries pesticides are probably the most diverse and widely used group of chemicals. Unsound pesticides management poses significant and often unacceptable risks to human health and the environment. Most of the human population is exposed to pesticides either directly, when the pesticides are applied, or indirectly as residues in food or water. Of particular concern in developing countries are the use of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs), the presence of unsafeguarded obsolete stocks of pesticides and the overall poor management of pesticides products from their point of entry in the country to their end of life.

HHPs are chemicals that have high acute toxicity, chronic toxic effects (even at very low exposure levels), and/or environmental toxicity. Several HHPs banned in industrialized countries are still readily available in the developing world. The vast majority of farmers living in these countries lack access to and knowledge of the minimum risk reduction requirements such as well maintained and calibrated spraying equipment and suitable personal protective equipment. Farmers are generally untrained and often illiterate so that they cannot read and interpret complex instructions on pesticide labels. Pesticides are estimated to be responsible for approximately 4% of deaths from all accidental poisonings, and by many accounts this estimate may be very conservative.

Oversupply of pesticides and poor stock management has led, and continues to lead, to the accumulation of obsolete stocks. The global stockpile of obsolete pesticides is estimated to be 500,000 tons. Obsolete pesticide stocks can be found in stores or warehouses, on farms and estates, in hospitals and offices, outdoors and buried, in rural and urban areas. The sound management and disposal of the stockpiles require significant financial resources. Additionally, contaminated land is eliminated from production and the health of exposed populations deteriorates. The most seriously affected are usually poor communities which have no means for relocation or removal of the chemicals and are forced to consequently co-exist with the threat of exposure.

Pesticide externalities such as those described above, place a heavy financial burden on national economies and society in general. Nowadays, the importance of pesticide management

is widely recognized by governments, industry, civil society and farmers. Effective implementation of MEAs at national and regional level can make a significant contribution to addressing these issues.

MEA implementation problems and solution in pesticides

Most countries have ratified the multilateral environmental agreements that deal with aspects of chemicals management and most also adhere to voluntary international initiatives such as SAICM and the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. While these international instruments provide a sound framework for the management of chemicals, their enforcement, implementation and harmonization with existing national laws requires comprehensive guidance and capacity-building at national level and coordination at regional level. In order to support the implementation of the chemicals conventions in the broader context of pesticide life cycle management, FAO closely collaborates with the other participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

The FAO MEAs component of the EU-supported programme assists ACP countries in identifying national priorities for the implementation of chemicals conventions through regional-led, multi-stakeholder consultations. These priorities include a wide range of actions that support the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention implementation such as legislative review, disposal of obsolete stocks, pesticide data management, development of risk reduction strategies and effective alternative plant protection practices.

Building on its long expertise, the FAO MEAs Programme has, so far, enabled the inventory, safeguarding and disposal of a significant amount of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other obsolete pesticides from Africa and the Pacific. This includes disposal of and identifications of alternatives for the pesticide endosulfan, recently listed under the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. In doing so, the programme has focused on developing the capacity of the countries to coordinate future disposal activities. The FAO system for Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) is currently used by some countries to prioritize remediation actions land contaminated by POPs and other pesticides. While FAO's support to countries relates specifically to pesticides, the relevance of these actions to the management of chemicals in other sectors and to the implementation of all the chemicals conventions is clear. Several tools and guidelines have been developed to support countries in strengthening their life-cycle management of

pesticides. These include tools for inventory, risk assessment, environmental assessment, storage and transport of obsolete pesticides; guidelines and field surveys for pesticide container management; pest and pesticide management policies and practices through Farmer Field Schools; FAO and WHO pesticide technical specifications, quality control and registration. The Pesticide Stock Management System (PSMS) is a web-based database designed to facilitate the collection and sharing of information on pesticide stocks, movements and registers of permitted products. It was developed with significant input from national counterparts and is now active in several African and Caribbean countries. Pesticides are regulated by legislation that addresses human health, environmental protection, agricultural practices, international trade, border controls and commerce among other topics. In many countries, legal provisions are outdated and incomplete. FAO has published a Legislative Study and Guidelines on Pesticide Legislation to provide governments with up-to-date advice on pesticides management in agriculture and public health. The FAO MEAs component has informed the revisions of national legislation on pesticides to enable countries to comply with their statutory obligations under legally binding conventions and best practices.

Under the MEAs Programme, collaboration with regional institutions has been strengthened to increase the impact of sound pesticide management at field level with anticipated positive effects on agricultural trade. An important agreement was signed between FAO and the Comité de Liaison Europe-Afrique-Caraïbes-Pacifique (COLEACP) to promote sustainable strategies on plant protection of horticultural products, pesticide management and good agricultural practices in ACP countries. In an effort to build the capacity of pesticide "managers", the first postgraduate university Diploma on Pesticide Risk Management (DPRM) was launched at the University of Cape Town. The DPRM is aimed primarily at regulators of pesticides, inspectors, public health officials, pest control managers, pesticide laboratory analysts and disposal and waste management managers from ACP countries. The course will soon be accredited as a Professional Masters Degree. Finally, FAO field work has a strong focus on reducing the need for pesticide use in agriculture through good agricultural practices and the promotion of alternatives.

Concluding remarks

The MEAs Programme has the overall objective of contributing towards better protection of the environment and public health in ACP countries. This objective can be achieved only through a holistic enforcement of the legally binding and voluntary MEAs. The MEAs FAO component

is making a significant progress on the implementation of the chemicals cluster by building synergies with the various ongoing initiatives in the field of pesticide management and sustainable crop intensification. It is also achieving progress by partnering with regional and national institutions and international organizations (WHO and UNEP) and by leveraging significant additional funding from its own Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and from other interested donors.

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African Hub (AUC)

A joint policy brief of the African Hub and the African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) was developed to create synergies and to foster collaboration with other EU-funded programs at the AUC. It focuses on links between AMESD and MEAs. In connection with the brief, the African Hub set up a stand and made a presentation at the AMESD Policy Conference at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on 23 May 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to demonstrate how AMESD products and services can be used for MEAs reporting.



ACP MEAs exhibition stand at AMESD Policy Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 23 May 2012.

An information note and brochure to promote the ratification of the Maputo Convention as well as a letter from the Commissioner of Rural Economy and Agriculture urging its ratification was sent to AUC Member States. As a result, 7 countries (Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Tchad and Togo) have expressed their readiness to initiate processes of ratification. DRC nominated a Maputo Convention Focal Point. The Africa Hub is working with the Speaker of the House of Uganda to host a colloquium to guide Parliamentarians (Francophone and Anglophone) to better

mainstream MEAs into national development policies and plans from 4 - 6 June 2012 in Entebbe, Uganda. Brochures and policy briefs on MEAs-related issues will be disseminated at the event. One of the briefs deals with the need for Africans to synergize the implementation of the 3 Rio Conventions (CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD). As of April 2012, 40 persons registered in the Hub's Database of African Experts on MEAs. For further information, please contact the African Hub Coordinators: Ms. Fatoumata Ndoeye (fnjallow@yahoo.com) and Mr. Livingstone Sindayigaya (sindayigaya@yahoo.com).

Caribbean Hub (CARICOM)

Dr. Thérèse Yarde joined the Caribbean Hub as Coordinator, beginning of April 2012. From 28 May to 1 June, a regional negotiation skills training workshop was successfully held in Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis as a follow-up to a previous negotiations training. Its agenda responded to the call from member states to focus on MEAs concerned with biodiversity, climate change, oceans management and governance. The Hub also convened a regional MEAs enforcement workshop for customs officials, to be held 26-27 June in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Criteria and guidance have been finalized for the selection of Caribbean best practices and success stories related to MEA implementation and environmental sustainability and countries have been invited to submit cases for consideration.



Project Coordinator Dr. Thérèse Yarde and colleague Shunae Samuels fixing ACP MEAs banner during Negotiation Skills Training Workshop, St. Kitts and Nevis, 28 May - 1 June 2012.

Also, studio production has commenced on a DVD feature about the ACP MEAs project in the Caribbean. For further information please contact Dr. Thérèse Yarde (tyarde@caricom.org).

Pacific Hub (SPREP)

The Pacific Hub has been substantially strengthened by its restructure and most of the project is delivered through the new Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division. National negotiation skills training has been carried out in Vanuatu 14 - 16 February, Kiribati 7 - 9 March, and Palau 2 - 4 May. The project also supported two MEA regional activities: preparatory meeting for the Ramsar COP11, Palau 26 - 30 March, and the first Oceania meeting for CITES, Fiji 5 - 7 March. An exciting new initiative began in January to develop a regional environmental monitoring framework. This includes a centralized regional database which will facilitate information management, allowing easy periodic state of the environment reporting at both national and regional levels. A vision document was drafted at a workshop held 21 - 23 March, Fiji, and is currently under review.

Mainstreaming activities continue strong. Training was given to Samoa on monitoring, indicators and databases to support their state of the environment review, 16 - 27 April, building on the IEA training given in 2011. Visits have been made to three of the four States of Micronesia to assist the development of mainstreamed EIA guidelines: Kosrae 15 - 18 May, Pohnpei 21 - 24 May and Chuuk 28 - 31 May. The first UNCCD NAP alignment workshop was held for Fiji, 28 - 29 March. In the next quarter work includes national negotiation skills training in Nauru (6 - 8 June) and Tuvalu (23 - 26 July), assisting Yap State of Micronesia to mainstream EIA guidelines, and finalizing the regional monitoring and reporting framework proposal for endorsement by SPREP Members. For further information please contact the Pacific Hub coordinator Dr. Jill Key (Jillk@sprep.org).

URC

The UNEP Risoe Centre organized the 4th National Workshop on Capacity Building for CDM implementation in Havana, Cuba on 10-12 April 2012. The workshop was attended by 35 selected experts from leading sectors dealing with financial and regulatory aspects of the CDM in Cuba. The country continues work towards approving and registering at least 4 PDDs by the end of the year. From 30 May - 1 June 9 ACP MEAs-CDM participating countries attended Carbon Expo in Cologne, Germany. Carbon Expo is The World's leading international Trade Fair and conference for Emissions Trading, Carbon abatement solutions and clean technologies. During the three days 19 representatives from the participating countries had the opportunity to exhibit their national CDM project portfolios; interact with main carbon market actors; identify business opportunities with CERs buyers and CDM investors and get updated on the latest trends and developments

of the carbon markets by attending the conferences. For further information please contact the UNEP Risoe Centre Coordinator Ms. Miriam Hinojosa (milh@risoe.dtu.dk).



Stand of ACP MEAs-CDM participating countries at Carbon Expo in Cologne, Germany, 30 May - 1 June.

SAICM Quick Start Programme

The Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme (QSP) met in Geneva on 7-8 May 2012 to review the outcomes of the programme's evaluation. Considering the evidence in the report, the Executive Board is recommending the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management to extend the programme for a limited time. The ACP projects under the QSP are progressing well. One of them on "Institutional capacity building for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs and Awareness-raising on POPs issues" is implemented in the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda. It is funded by the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund (QSPTF) of SAICM. Project activities started on 1 December 2010 and will be finalized in the course of 2012. The international agency responsible of the project implementation in the two countries is the UNEP Stockholm Convention Secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland. An important outcome of this project has been the development of a draft Chemicals Management Policy in Rwanda along with several awareness raising activities on PCBs and pesticides. For further information, please contact the SAICM Secretariat (saicm@unep.org).

FAO

A national training and supervision workshop on the inventory of obsolete pesticides was organized in Burkina Faso, 27 February - 10 March 2012. Eleven technical officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation received theoretical and on-site practical training on inventory. In Benin inventory data on pesticide obsolete stocks were consolidated in geo-referenced maps at the national training on the use of the

Pesticide Stock Management System (PSMS) held in Cotonou, 23 April - 18 May 2012. On 11-13 April 2012, the first national workshop to identify technical and institutional needs for the strengthening of the national capacity to reduce pesticide risks to human health and the environment was held at Kribi, Cameroon. Twenty participants from three Ministries (Agriculture, Environment and Public Health), research institutes, civil society and industry attended the event. As a result, an action plan to address country priorities on pesticide life cycle management was developed. The outcome of the workshop also informed the finalization of the project document on the 'Elimination of POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) and obsolete products and strengthening pesticide management in Cameroon' approved by the Global Environment Facility in February 2012. For further information please contact Coordinator Mr. Mark Davis (mark.davis@fao.org).

UNCCD GM

The Global Mechanism (GM) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) agreed on the elaboration of the regional resource mobilisation strategy for sustainable land management. The preliminary report and the next steps were validated during a workshop held 4-6 April 2012 in Mauritius.



Regional Resource Mobilisation Strategy Workshop for Sustainable Land Management in Mauritius, 4-6 April 2012.

On 19-20 April 2012, the regional harmonised strategy for the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative implementation, developed by the African Union with the support of the GM and partners, was technically approved. At the same time, the GM supports South-South cooperation between Haitian and Dominican civil

societies through a Dominican-based NGO, the CEDAF. For further information please contact Coordinator Mr Youssef Brahimi (y.brahimi@global-mechanism.org).

Green Week 2012, 22-25 May 2012

"Water" was the topic of this year's 12th edition of Green Week, the biggest annual conference on European Environmental Policy, held in Brussels. In over 40 sessions, the conference addressed the sustainable use of water and the protection of rivers, seas and oceans from pollution. The ACP MEAs project supports the sustainable use and management of water through enhancing the capacity of ACP countries to negotiate and implement multilateral environmental agreements. The project was presented at the UN stand to EC staff and other participants from national, international and non-governmental organizations. For further information, please contact Mr. Daniel Nixdorf, UNEP Brussels Office (daniel.nixdorf@unep.org).

Joint ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly in Horsens, Denmark, 23-30 May 2012

UNEP presented the ACP MEAs Project to members of parliament in ACP countries and the European Parliament in a side-event of the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly on 29 May 2012. The event attracted important policy and decision-makers in ACP countries and the EU. The joint ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly is an advisory body to promote dialogue and consultation between the people of the EU and ACP countries. For further information please contact Mr. Mamadou Kane, UNEP Project Coordinator (mamadou.kane@unep.org).



Mr. Louis Michel, Member of the European Parliament and ex-European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, with Project Coordinator Mr. Mamadou Kane at the ACP MEAs stand in Horsens, Denmark, 29 May 2012.

This newsletter is published quarterly and includes opinion pieces by the programme partners as well as an update of latest developments. For more information on ACP MEAs please contact:

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