

The FAO Code *Grab It!* for Action

**For the implementation of the
International Code of Conduct
on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides**





The FAO Code

***Grab It!* for Action**

**For the implementation of the
International Code of Conduct
on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides**

Pesticide Action Network (PAN)

Founded in 1982, the Pesticide Action Network is an international coalition of over 600 citizens groups in more than 60 countries working to oppose the misuse of pesticides and to promote sustainable agriculture and ecologically sound pest management.

PAN Germany was established in 1984 as part of this global network and has continually been involved in initiatives to reduce the use of hazardous pesticides and to promote sustainable pest management systems on national, European and global level.

Acknowledgements

Funds for this project were made available by the Sigrid Rausing Trust (United Kingdom). This support is gratefully acknowledged.

© Pestizid Aktions-Netzwerk e.V. (PAN Germany)
Nernstweg 32, D-22765 Hamburg, Germany
Tel.: 49 (0) 40-39 91 91 00
Fax: 49 (0) 40-390 75 20
email: info@pan-germany.org
Homepage: www.pan-germany.org

Authors: Lars Neumeister & Carina Weber
Editor: Susanne Smolka & Carina Weber
Proofreading: Liz Grundy

Cover photos: © PAN Germany

© 2005 by Pesticide Action Network Germany.

ISBN: 3-9810186-3-X

Permission is granted to reproduce any and all portions of this report, provided the publisher, title and author are acknowledged.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
The 2002 Code - An NGO Success Story	6
Contents of the FAO Code of Conduct	7
Objectives.....	8
Pesticide Management.....	9
Testing of Pesticides	11
Reducing Health and Environmental Risks	12
Regulatory and Technical Requirements	15
Availability and Use	17
Distribution and Trade	18
Information Exchange	19
Labelling, Packaging, Storage and Disposal.....	20
Advertising.....	21
Monitoring and observance of the Code	22
The Country Check List: Elements for NGO Action Choose one or more.....	24

Introduction

After the international Pesticide Action Network (PAN) was founded in Malaysia in 1982, one of its activities was to call for international pesticide regulations. At that time, many of the Southern countries did not have laws, decrees or any other legal instruments to regulate the production, use and disposal of pesticides, or national and international pesticide trade. At the same time, there was a steady flow of pesticides being exported from industrialised to developing countries. These pesticides – many of which were extremely or highly toxic – were frequently used without any protective measures, by persons without access to worker protection equipment or training and even by pregnant women or children. This resulted in tremendous environmental damage and also in a high rate of serious poisonings, as well as a large number of fatalities and economic losses.

The first version of the FAO Code, adopted in 1985 and amended in 1989 to include conditions relating to the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) was, therefore, welcomed by PAN. The PIC procedure provided importing countries with information on banned and severely restricted pesticides and the right to stop imports of certain hazardous pesticides.

Among other things for example, the international discussions on the further development of the Code and on how to define the working process of the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure, lead to an increased awareness among governmental representatives. This, as well as the public awareness-raising campaigns of non-governmental organisations, created a climate which formed a basis for a diversity of projects to reduce the misuse of pesticides. But in the end, many of these initiatives seemed to be just a drop in the ocean. Today there is also no clear indication that the number of poisonings has been reduced significantly. The extent of the damage caused by pesticides is still unacceptable and today pesticide use in developing countries is expanding further. Even though there have been many different training programs all over the world, over 95 per cent of serious poisonings and fatalities still occur in developing countries - although only about 20 per cent of the global pesticide consumption takes place in these countries. It became obvious that different approaches were needed to end the toxic trail.

When the PIC was taken out of the FAO Code to become the basis for the Rotterdam Convention in 1998, the FAO took the initiative to consult extensively with governments, industry and NGOs to bring the Code up to today's standards. The result is that the Code now includes important elements called for by PAN. There are still essential shortcomings in the Code, for example there is no call for national pesticide use reduction and no call for the pesticide substitution principle, which could help phase out toxic products, and the issue of public access to information is still not dealt with in a satisfactory manner. But even so, the Code fundamentally changed its face, as will be described in the following chapter.

The Code represents the global standard for pesticide management. It is not a difficult regulation, but rather a relatively easy to read set of rules that is worth taking seriously. If the Code were to be taken at its word by all stakeholders addressed in it, a large number of incidents would not happen and manifold, often lifelong harm would be avoided. But:

The Code needs to be implemented. This again not only requires political will, but action on the spot. Each individual can grab the Code and use it to take action. This publication is not just an introduction to the current version of the Code. It is also a bridge for getting down

to initiatives. We hope that many readers choose at least one article of the Code to help implement it. Even small contributions can support a turn for the better.

Carina Weber

Executive Director, PAN Germany

The FAO Code






Search by Pesticides:

Search
Clear

home
programmes
resources
related sites
activities
news-events



Programmes

- ✓ International Code of Conduct
- ✓ Maximum Pesticide Residue Levels (MRLs)
- ✓ Pesticide Specifications
- ✓ Prevention/ Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides
- ✓ Prior Informed Consent – Rotterdam Convention (PIC)
- ✓ Management of Pesticides

Programmes

International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides

Revised Version adopted by the Hundred and Twenty-third Session of the FAO Council in November 2002

The International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides is the worldwide guidance document on pesticide management for all public and private entities engaged in, or associated with, the distribution and use of pesticides. It was adopted for the first time in 1985 by the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Conference. The Code is designed to provide standards of conduct and to serve as a point of reference in relation to sound pesticide management practices, in particular for government authorities and the pesticide industry.

Following the adoption of the Rotterdam Convention in 1998 and in view of the changing international policy framework, as well as the persistence of certain pesticide management problems, particularly in developing countries, in 1999 FAO initiated the update and revision process of the Code. In November 2002, the Hundred and Twenty-third Session of the FAO Council (with the authorization of the Thirty-first Session of the FAO Conference) approved the revised version of the **International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides** by Council Resolution 1/123

ARABIC	CHINESE	ENGLISH	FRENCH	SPANISH
				
				

Information relevant to the Code of Conduct

- Reports of the Meetings of the FAO Panel of Experts
- Guiding Documents on Management of Pesticides

“Of particular concern are countries where living and working conditions make pesticide use more risky.

The International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (Revised Version) focuses on risk reduction, protection of human health and the environmental, and support for sustainable agricultural development by using pesticides in an effective manner and applying IPM strategies.”

More information: <http://www.fao.org/aq/agp/agpp/pesticid/>

The 2002 Code - An NGO Success Story

With the publication of the revised version of the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (FAO Code) in 2002, the Code fundamentally changed its character. While the old FAO Code addressed *safe* pesticide use to prevent hazards, the new Code aims at prevention and minimization of potential risks.

Besides the stakeholders which have been addressed from the beginning (governments, pesticide industry and international organizations), new stakeholders are explicitly addressed: the food industry, the application equipment industry, and also lending institutions and donor agencies such as assistance funding agencies and development banks.

Training at all levels, the development and promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and alternatives to pesticides, product stewardship and the life cycle concept found entry into the objectives of the Code.

None of the 12 Articles remained unchanged and over 30 paragraphs were added. The most significant changes were made in Article 1 (Objectives), Article 3 (Pesticide management), Article 6 (Regulatory and technical requirements) and Article 9 (Information exchange). Few changes were made in Article 11 (Advertising).

New key requirements

Registration

- Establish a re-registration procedure to ensure the periodic review of pesticides.

Market / Trade

- Improve regulations in relation to collecting and recording data on import, export, manufacture, formulation, quality and quantity of pesticides
- Licensing procedures relating to the sale
- Advertisements and promotional activities should not include inappropriate incentives or gifts to encourage the purchase of pesticides

Application / use

- Establishment of services to collect and safely dispose of used containers and small quantities of left-over pesticides
- Conduct inventories of obsolete or unusable stocks of pesticides and used containers, action plans for their disposal, or remediation in the case of contaminated sites
- Disposal of any banned or obsolete pesticides and of used containers, in an environmentally sound manner
- Instructions, warnings and precautions in the appropriate language or languages

Monitoring

- Health surveillance programs
- Collection of data and maintenance of statistics on the health aspects of pesticides and pesticide poisoning incidents, and on environmental contamination related to pesticides
- Monitoring of pesticide residues in food and the environment

Contents of the FAO Code of Conduct

The FAO Code consists of 12 articles which describe in detail the responsibilities of all stakeholders who wish to comply with the Code. The 12 articles address all aspects along the lifeline of pesticides from production, via trade, advertising and use, to the disposal of pesticides, but also aspects of food safety and information exchange (see adjacent box).

Supplementary to the text of the Code, the FAO publishes pesticide management guidelines and pesticide specifications which describe individual standards in detail. The pesticide specifications serve the objective of promoting production, distribution and use of pesticides which meet basic quality requirements. Currently, specifications for 28 pesticides are accessible at the FAO website (www.fao.org). In order to support the development of these specifications, a manual on the use and development of the specifications has been published by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Specifications (JMPS).

The FAO Code

Table of Contents

- Article 1. Objectives of the Code
- Article 2. Terms and definitions
- Article 3. Pesticide management
- Article 4. Testing of pesticides
- Article 5. Reducing health and environmental risks
- Article 6. Regulatory and technical requirements
- Article 7. Availability and use
- Article 8. Distribution and trade
- Article 9. Information exchange
- Article 10. Labeling, packaging, storage, and disposal
- Article 11. Advertising
- Article 12. Monitoring and observance of the Code

The next chapters will shortly summarize the contents of the Articles, excluding Article 2 Terms and Definitions.

Objectives

Article 1 on the objectives of the Code describes a number of general objectives and defines the aims of the standards set by the Code. The overall objective of the code is the minimization of potential risks associated with pesticides. The Code therefore aims to establish *voluntary standards* of conduct for governments, the pesticide industry and others engaged in, or associated with, the distribution and use of pesticides. Further objectives are to strengthen the cooperation between governments of exporting and importing countries and to give high priority to training activities related to each article of the Code.

The standards of conduct set forth in the Code:

- encourage responsible and generally accepted trade practices;
- assist countries which have not yet established regulatory controls on the quality and suitability of pesticide products needed in that country to promote the judicious and efficient use of such products, and address the potential risks associated with their use;
- promote practices which reduce risks in the handling of pesticides, including minimizing adverse effects on humans and the environment and preventing accidental poisoning resulting from improper handling;
- ensure that pesticides are used effectively and efficiently for the improvement of agricultural production and of human, animal and plant health;
- adopt the "life-cycle" concept in addressing all major aspects related to the development, regulation, production, management, packaging, labelling, distribution, handling, application, use and control, including post registration activities, and disposal of all types of pesticides, including used pesticide containers;
- are designed to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) (including integrated vector management for public health pests);
- include references to participation in information exchange and international agreements identified in Annex 1, in particular the *Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade* (shortly called PIC Convention).

Message from industry

CropLife International, the global federation of the pesticide industry, led by the world largest pesticide companies and the European Crop Protection Association (ECPA), officially complies with the Code. Compliance with the Code is a condition to become a CropLife member, ECPA even requires compliance in its constitution.

(Personal communication with CropLife International and ECPA, 1st of March 2005)

Pesticide Management

Article 3 on pesticide management divides the responsibilities for the management of pesticides among all parties. It states that governments have the overall responsibility to regulate pesticides in their countries and that they should ensure the allocation of adequate resources for this mandate.

Special emphasis is given to the responsibilities of governments of pesticide exporting countries, industry and traders to respect circumstances in countries that

- are lacking technical expertise in the assessment of relevant data on pesticides;
- have limited or no regulatory schemes; and
- do not maintain advisory services.

Article 3 describes in detail, practices that industry, traders and governments of exporting countries should follow.

The Article also stresses the need for farmers' education, development of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)¹ and pesticide alternatives which pose a low risk.

Furthermore, the issue of protective equipment under conditions of poverty and hot climates, safer application methods and the prevention of resistance are addressed.

Grab it! ...ask your government

- What type of educational material is available to pesticide users, farmers, farmers' organizations, agricultural workers, unions and other interested parties?
- What is being done towards the development and promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)?
- What is being done to encourage the development of pesticide alternatives posing fewer risks, such as biological control agents and techniques and non-chemical pesticides?

¹ **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** means the careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment. IPM emphasizes the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms.
(Source: FAO Code of Conduct Article 2)

NGO Action – Information on Alternatives

PAN Germany's **Online Information Service for Non-Chemical Pest Management in the Tropics (OISAT)** is a platform for information dissemination and information sharing and the integration of online information into training and extension services, to ensure an effective information flow from web to field, by collaborating with relevant networks. Additionally, it aims at building a network of organisations and individuals to further improve the value of OISAT and to support the use of information offered via OISAT in the field.

OISAT offers easy to read web-based information, relevant for small scale farmers in the tropics, on how to produce key crops using affordable preventive and curative non-chemical crop and pest management practices in a way that prevent pests and diseases by using non-chemical pest control measures.

More information: <http://www.oisat.org/>



Testing of Pesticides

According to **Article 4** on the testing of pesticides, the manufacturers of pesticides that wish to comply with the FAO Code are responsible for ensuring that each pesticide is adequately and effectively tested by recognized procedures and test methods. Such tests need to be conducted in accordance with sound scientific procedures and the principles of good laboratory practice. The results of the tests should be available for assessment by the government authorities responsible and label claims and use directions should truly reflect the outcome of the tests.

Manufacturers also have the responsibility to provide, at the request of a country, methods for analysis and necessary analytical work, to give advice and assistance in the training of technical staff involved in analytical work, and to conduct residue trials prior to the marketing of agricultural products.

Article 4 also points out that the pesticide industry and governments should collaborate in post-registration surveys to determine the fate of pesticides and their effects under field conditions.

Governments should ensure controls over the quality and contents of pesticides offered for sale or export are enforced.

Exporting governments and international organizations should take action to assist developing countries in establishing analytical laboratories with adequate resources and capacities.

Message from the field

'In 2003 in Kcharkiv (Eastern Ukraine) it was revealed that local farmers bought a lot of the fungicide "Skor", spending \$95.000. After use of this "fungicide", farmers did not observe the expected results. Chemical investigation reported the absence of an active ingredient in the containers. In reality, the farmers had got coloured water instead of a well-known fungicide. Fortunately, the liquid sold did not contain any hazardous substances and did not have an adverse impact on the environment.'

(Source: 'Pesticides – Hot Issues, NGO Objectives and Actions Needed in Central and Eastern Europe', PAN Germany, 2004)

Reducing Health and Environmental Risks

Article 5 on the reduction of health and environmental risks states that governments should implement a pesticide registration and control system and periodically review the pesticides marketed in their country.

Data on health aspects of pesticides and pesticide poisoning incidences need to be collected and health surveillance programs should be conducted. Health workers, physicians and hospital staff should be trained in the treatment of suspected pesticide poisonings. National or regional poisoning information and poison control centers are to be established.

In order to obtain information on contamination, pesticide residues in food and the environment should be monitored and specific incidences should be reported.

Governments, in cooperation with the pesticide industry, should ensure that pesticides are sold physically segregated from other merchandise to prevent contamination and/or mistaken identity.

Furthermore, cooperation between governments and industry should aim at reducing pesticide risks by promotion of proper and affordable personal protective equipment, ensuring safe storage of pesticides and the establishment of services to collect and safely dispose of used containers and left-over pesticides.

Biodiversity needs to be protected and the adverse effects of pesticides on the environment and on non-target organisms ought to be minimized.

It is the responsibility of industry to cooperate with governments in the periodic reassessment of pesticides, to provide poison-control centers and medical practitioners with information about pesticide hazards and suitable treatment of pesticide poisoning.

Industry also should make every reasonable effort to reduce risks posed by pesticides, particularly by:

- making less toxic formulations available;
- introducing products in ready-to-use packages;
- developing application methods and equipment that minimize exposure to pesticides;
- using returnable and refillable containers where effective container collection systems are in place;
- using containers that are not attractive for subsequent reuse and promoting programs to discourage their reuse, where effective container collection systems are not in place;
- using containers that are not attractive to or easily opened by children, particularly for domestically used products; using clear and concise labeling.

Message from a family

'At just eight years of age, Modachirou Inoussa already helped his parents in the cotton fields, and the 29th July 2000 started as a day like many others. Modachirou had worked hard and ran back to the house feeling thirsty. Finding nothing to drink, he set off to search for his parents. On his way, Modachirou found an empty container, and scooped up some water to drink from a ditch. That evening he did not return home. A village search found his body next to the empty Callisulfan bottle innocently used to quench his thirst.'

(Source: 'Cotton pesticides cause more deaths in Benin', Pesticides News No. 52, June 2001, pages 12-14, PAN UK)

- halting the sale and recalling products when handling or use pose an unacceptable risk

With regard to the special circumstances in developing countries, Article 5 describes what needs to be done by manufacturers and governments when production facilities are set up in these countries.

Article 5 also asks all stakeholders to avoid unjustified confusion and alarm among the public, to consider all available facts and conduct responsible information dissemination on pesticides and their uses.

Grab it! ... ask your government

- Are there any health surveillance programs set up to investigate the health status of people exposed to pesticides?
- What is being done to investigate cases of pesticide poisonings?
- Are there any poison information and poison control centers, or are there any plans to establish those in the near future?
- What type of data/ statistics on health aspects of pesticides and pesticide poisoning incidences are collected or maintained?
- What regulatory measures have been enforced to protect biodiversity and minimize the adverse effects of pesticides on the environment (water, soil and air) and on non-target organisms?
- What type of information is being gathered regarding environmental contamination by pesticides?
- Are there any programs to monitor pesticide residues in food and the environment? If so, are the collected data publicly available?

NGO Action – Capacity Building

After the political change in Central and Eastern Europe and tremendous changes in agricultural production, PAN Germany realized the major need for more awareness-raising regarding the use of pesticides, for capacity building and mutual co-operation among NGOs in Central and Eastern European countries and for coordination with NGOs in other parts of Europe.

Therefore, PAN Germany has initiated the transfer of information and dialogue among NGOs in CEECs. It has organized strategic planning meetings and workshops on pesticide issues and sustainable alternatives, in order to strengthen their capacity for action. In addition, small grants have supported NGO projects at a national level in CEECs and a large number of publications were produced and translated into key languages by PAN Germany, partly in co-operation with NGO partner organizations in CEECs.

More Information: www.pan-germany.org



Regulatory and Technical Requirements

Article 6 sets up provisions for governments regarding necessary legislation, enforcement, data collection and international trade.

Governments should introduce legislation for the regulation of pesticides and make provisions for its effective enforcement. They should strive to establish pesticide registration schemes, including a re-registration procedure and conduct risk evaluations and make risk management decisions. Regulations should be improved and edited in relation to collecting and recording data on import, export and production. Additionally, data on use, quality and quantity of pesticides need to be collected to properly assess possible adverse effects.

- Pesticide application and personal protective equipment should only be allowed to be marketed when it complies with established standards.
- Illegal trade in pesticides should be detected and controlled.
- Pesticide residues caused by Good Agricultural Practices in agricultural products should not present a trade barrier.

The provisions regarding industry's responsibility comprise an objective pesticide data assessment to enable governmental authorities to make risk management decisions and to provide regulatory authorities with relevant new or updated information. Article 6 also expects industry to provide data on import, production and export, as well as assistance to governments when problems occur. Marketed products should be equivalent to registered products and quality and purity should be verified.

Technical assistance funding agencies, development banks and bilateral agencies should be encouraged to give high priority to requests for assistance from developing countries, which do not yet have the facilities and expertise for pesticide management and control systems.

Message from the pesticide market

'Around 30 percent of pesticides marketed in developing countries (...) do not meet internationally accepted quality standards. They pose a serious threat to human health and the environment (...) 'These poor quality pesticides frequently contain hazardous substances and impurities that have already been banned or severely restricted elsewhere,' said Gero Vaagt, FAO Pesticide Management Group. Such pesticides, he added, often contribute to the accumulation of obsolete pesticide stocks in developing countries'.

When the quality of labelling and packaging is also taken into account, the proportion of poor-quality pesticide products in developing countries is even higher. 'The labelling, often written in improper language fails to provide data on the active ingredient, application, date of manufacture and safe handling of the chemical,' (...) 'Falsely declared products continue to find their way on to markets for years without quality control (...)'.

(FAO/WHO: Amount of poor quality pesticides sold in developing countries alarmingly high, Press Release 01/05, 2001)

Grab it! ... ask your government

- What is being done to promote the use of proper and affordable personal protective equipment?
- What provisions have been implemented to ensure safe storage of pesticides at both warehouse and farm level?
- What provisions have been implemented to establish services to collect and safely dispose of used containers and small quantities of left-over pesticides?
- Are there any efforts to improve regulations in relation to collecting and recording data on import, export, manufacture, formulation, quality and quantity of pesticides?
- How are data on the import, export, manufacture, formulation, quality, quantity and use of pesticides collected and recorded?
- Are there any regulations which require the authorization of pesticide application and personal protective equipment to comply with internationally established standards prior to marketing?
- What is being done to detect and control illegal trade in pesticides?

Availability and Use

Article 7 on the availability and use of pesticides requires that responsible governmental authorities develop legal instruments on the availability of pesticides that are compatible with existing levels of user training and expertise.

Additionally, hazardous pesticides should be labelled with well-recognized hazard symbols. The type of formulation and the method of application should be taken into account for risk management measures.

Article 7 describes two regulatory tools for restricting pesticides a) not registering a product or, as a condition for registration, b) restricting the availability to certain groups of users.

Governments and industry are asked to label and package publicly available pesticides in consistency with the FAO guidelines and appropriate national regulations.

Prohibition of the importation, sale and purchase of highly toxic and hazardous products, may be desirable if other control measures or good marketing practices are insufficient.

Message from the village

On October 22, 1999, 24 of the village's 48 children were poisoned and killed when they drank a powdered milk substitute, part of their school lunch, which had been contaminated by an organophosphate pesticide.

Following a nine-month investigation, a Peruvian Congressional Subcommittee has issued its final report on the poisoning deaths caused by the organophosphate pesticide methyl parathion of 24 children in the remote village of Taucamarca in October 1999. The Subcommittee concluded that there is significant evidence of administrative and criminal responsibility on the part of Ministry of Agriculture, and of criminal responsibility on the part of the agrochemical company Bayer.

(Pesticide Action Network Latin America and Red de Accion en Alternativas al uso de Agroquimicos: Bayer Responsible in Pesticide Deaths of 24 Children in Peru, August 30th. 2002)

Distribution and Trade

Article 8 on the distribution and trade in pesticides, requires governments to develop regulations and implement licensing procedures relating to the sale of pesticides.

Measures aimed at preventing repackaging or decanting of any pesticide into food or beverage containers should be established, and authorities should rigidly enforce punitive measures that effectively deter such practices.

Article 8 supports a market-driven supply process, opposed to centralized purchasing, to reduce the potential for accumulation of excessive stocks.

Governments need to ensure that subsidies or donations do not lead to excessive or unjustified use, which may divert interest from more sustainable alternative measures.

The pesticide industry should ensure that pesticides entering international trade conform to international rules and guidelines. It should also ensure that pesticides produced for export or by subsidiary companies are of the same quality and meet the same standards as those applied to comparable domestic products.

Importing agencies and national or regional formulators should cooperate in order to achieve practices that reduce the risks posed by pesticides, and to collaborate with authorities in stamping out any malpractice within the industry.

Industry and trade are required to recall pesticides should they present an unacceptable risk, to train persons involved in sale and ensure that these persons hold the appropriate government license, if available, and have access to sufficient information.

Industry and trade should provide a range of package sizes and types appropriate for the needs of small-scale farmers and other local users, to discourage sellers from repackaging products in unlabelled or inappropriate containers.

Grab it! ... ask your government

- Are there regulations requiring licensing procedures relating to the sale of pesticides?

Message from the south

"Over 30 000 tons of toxic pesticide waste in Latin America - The scale of toxic chemical waste from unused and obsolete pesticides in Latin America is far bigger than previously estimated" the FAO said in a statement today. "Previous FAO estimates, based on information provided by countries, suggested a total of about 10 000 tons of chemicals requiring disposal in the region," said Mark Davis, coordinator of FAO's obsolete pesticides programme.

"Since that time a more frightening picture has begun to emerge indicating that stocks are far higher and are currently estimated to be between 30 000 and 50 000 tons," he added. (...) the FAO has organized a regional training programme for nine South American countries. Government regulators, emergency service staff, industry representatives and NGOs learned how to safely and effectively complete a detailed inventory and environmental risk assessment of obsolete pesticides, and how to design and supervise a cleanup operation. However, the FAO Obsolete Pesticides Programme has no further funds to support such work in the Latin America region, Davis said. The Organization is therefore now calling for donor funding to build capacity in the region and to ensure that it complies with the highest international standards."

(Source: FAO Press release 30.05.2005)

Information Exchange

Article 9 encourages governments to establish or strengthen networks for information exchange on pesticides through national institutions, international, regional and sub-regional organizations and public sector groups.

International information exchange is requested in cases of a ban or severe restriction, but also to communicate scientific, technical, economic, regulatory and legal information concerning pesticides, including toxicological, environmental and safety data.

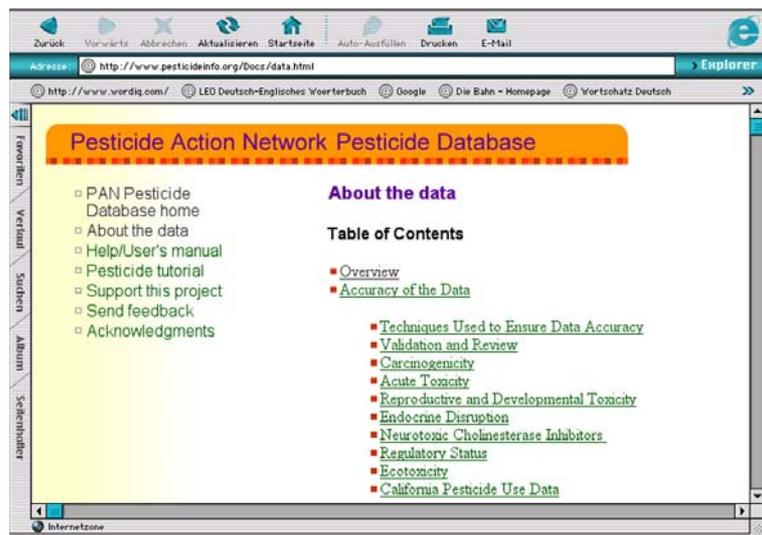
Legal frameworks should be established to ensure transparency and public participation in the regulatory process.

All stakeholders are asked to share information on pesticide residues and related actions and to collaborate to ensure that countries have sufficient information to meet the objectives of the FAO Code.

NGO Action – Pesticide Information

The online PAN Pesticide Database

under www.pesticideinfo.org brings together a diverse array of information on pesticides from many different sources, providing human toxicity (chronic and acute), ecotoxicity and regulatory information for about 6,400 pesticide active ingredients and their transformation products, as well as adjuvants and solvents used in pesticide products.



Most of the toxicity information comes directly from official sources such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), World Health Organization (WHO), National Toxicology Program (NTP), National Institutes of Health (NIH), International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the European Union (EU), and the State of California.

All information is backed up by rigorous scientific studies and most of the data are taken from official sources of weight-of-the-evidence-type evaluations when they are available. When official lists do not exist, a variety of original data sources that refer to the peer-reviewed scientific literature are presented.

Labelling, Packaging, Storage and Disposal

Article 10 aims at achieving correct labelling, preventing unsafe disposal and stockpiling, but also at the elimination of stockpiles. In detail, the Article requires that all pesticide containers should be clearly labelled in accordance with applicable guidelines, at least in line with the FAO guidelines on good labelling practice. Packaging, storage and disposal of pesticides should at least conform in principle to the relevant international guidelines or regulations.

Industry is encouraged to label pesticides according to registration requirements and to include recommendations, appropriate symbols and pictograms whenever possible, in addition to written instructions, warnings and precautions in the appropriate language or languages.

Warnings against the reuse of containers, instructions for the safe disposal or decontamination of used containers and relevant information on the age and the storage stability of the product, should be included in the label information.

Governments and industry should work together to prevent stockpiling of unused pesticides and to register and eliminate such stockpiles.

Grab it! ... ask your government

- When are inventories of obsolete or unusable stocks of pesticides and used containers going to be published?
- Are there any action plans for environmentally friendly disposal of obsolete or unusable stocks of pesticides and used containers, or remediation in the case of contaminated sites?
- What is being done to prevent the accumulation of obsolete pesticides and used containers?

Message from the farmers market



Re-used pesticide container at a farmers market in Bulgaria 2004

Advertising

Article 11 allows industry most of the responsibility for correct advertising. However, governments are requested to control that advertising does not contradict label directions and precautions. The list of 'dos' and 'don'ts' for the industry in Article 11 regarding advertising contains 18 items, for example:

- advertisements must not contain any statement or visual presentation which, directly or by implication, omission, ambiguity or exaggerated claim, is likely to mislead the buyer, in particular with regard to the "safety" of the product, its nature, composition or suitability for use, official recognition or approval.
- claims as to safety, including statements such as "safe", "non-poisonous", "harmless", "non-toxic" or "compatible with IPM," are not made without a qualifying phrase such as "when used as directed".
- no guarantees or implied guarantees, such as "more profits with..." or "guarantees high yields," are given, unless definite evidence to substantiate such claims is available.
- Advertisements and promotional activities should not include inappropriate incentives or gifts to encourage the purchase of pesticides.

Message from the pesticide market



Syngenta's advertisement for the herbicide Gramoxone Gold Cap containing the active ingredients Paraquat in Thailand promises a truck, motorcycles and other prizes, when participating in a competition, and violates Article 11 of the FAO Code.

(PAN Asia & Pacific, Press release 28/07/2004)

Monitoring and observance of the Code

Article 12 deals with the publication and promotion of the Code among all stakeholders. Observation and monitoring of the provisions of the Code are encouraged.

Article 12 points out that the pesticide industry should cooperate fully in the observance of the Code and promote the principles and ethics expressed by the Code, irrespective of a government's ability to observe the Code.

NGOs and other interested parties are invited to monitor activities related to the implementation of the Code and report these to the FAO.

Message from the pesticide disposal



Cleaning up of an unsafe pesticide stockpile in the Poltava region in the Ukraine during an awareness raising NGO campaign in 2005

(Source: Sustainable Development and Ecological Research Center , SDEEC).

Guidelines specifying the provisions of the Code

- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (1989)
- Guidelines for legislation on the control of pesticides (1989)
- Guidelines for retail distribution of pesticides with particular reference to storage and handling at the point of supply to users in developing countries (1988)
- Guidelines for the management of small quantities of unwanted and obsolete pesticides (1999)
- Guidelines for the registration and control of pesticides (1985 & 1988)
- Guidelines on crop residue data (1985)
- Guidelines on efficacy data for the registration of pesticides for plant protection (1985)
- Guidelines on good laboratory practice in pesticide residue analysis. Codex Alimentarius. Volume 2a, Part 1. (2000)
- Guidelines on good practice for aerial application of pesticides (2001)
- Guidelines on good practice for ground application of pesticides (2001)
- Guidelines on minimum requirements for agricultural pesticide application equipment (2001)
- Guidelines on organization and operation of training schemes and certification procedures for operators of pesticide application equipment (2001)
- Guidelines on personal protection when using pesticides in hot climates (1990)
- Guidelines on pesticide residue trials to provide data for the registration of pesticides and the establishment of maximum residue limits (1986)
- Guidelines on post-registration surveillance and other activities in the field of pesticides (1988)
- Guidelines on procedures for the registration, certification and testing of new pesticide application equipment (2001)
- Guidelines on standards for agricultural pesticide application equipment and related test procedures (2001)
- Guidelines on the initial introduction and subsequent development of a simple national pesticide registration and control scheme (1991)
- Guidelines on the organization of schemes for testing and certification of agricultural pesticide sprayers in use (2001)
- Guidelines on the registration of biological pest control agents (1988)
- Manual on Development and Use of FAO and WHO Specifications for Pesticides. First Edition (2002)
- Manual on the submission and evaluation of pesticide residues data for the estimation of maximum residue levels in food and feed (1997)
- OECD guidance for country data review reports on plant protection products and their active substances (« monograph guidance »). Revision 1 (2001)
- OECD guidance for industry data submissions on plant protection products and their active ingredients
- OECD principles on good laboratory practice (as revised in 1997) (1998)
- Pesticide storage and stock control manual (1996)
- Provisional guidelines on prevention of accumulation of obsolete pesticide stocks FAO Pesticide Disposal Series N°2 (1995)
- Provisional guidelines on tender procedures for the procurement of pesticides (1994)
- Provisional technical guidelines on the disposal of bulk quantities of obsolete pesticides in developing countries. FAO Pesticide Disposal Series N°4 (1996)
- Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods - Model Regulations. Tenth revised edition (1997)
- Recommended methods of sampling for the determination of Pesticide Residues. Codex Alimentarius. Vol. 2, 2nd edition (1993)
- Revised guidelines on environmental criteria for the registration of pesticides (1989)
- Revised guidelines on good labelling practice for pesticides (1995)
- Specifications for plant protection products (from 1970 to Present)
- UNO Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods - Model Regulations. Tenth revised edition (1997)
- WHO Specifications for pesticides used in public health. 7th edition (1997)

The Country Check List: Elements for NGO Action - Choose one or more

In order to comply with the FAO Code, a number of obligations must be fulfilled by governments, industry and other stakeholders. NGOs can play an active role in urging governments to comply with the provisions of the Code or to urge companies to comply with the provisions of the Code.

Check the status quo regarding implementation of the FAO Code

The first thing to do would be to check the situation in your country. Find out who in your government is responsible for the Code. Ask your government what is being done to implement the provisions of the FAO Code. Just send a letter. You can also ask others to ask your government – the more the better.

The following suggestions for questions to pose to governmental agencies are the result of PAN Germany's experience in Central and Eastern European countries and they address major issues in these countries. These questions can, of course, be amended and adapted to suit the specific situation in your country.

- What type of educational material is available to pesticide users, farmers, farmer organizations, agricultural workers, unions and other interested parties?
- What is being done towards the development and promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)?
- What is being done to encourage the development of pesticides alternatives posing fewer risks, such as biological control agents and techniques and non-chemical pesticides?
- Are there any health surveillance programs in place, which investigate the health status of people exposed to pesticides?
- What is being done to investigate cases of pesticide poisonings?
- Are there any poison information and poison control centers, or are there any plans to establish those in the near future?
- What type of data/ statistics on health aspects of pesticides and pesticide poisoning incidences are collected or maintained?
- What type of information regarding environmental contamination by pesticides is being gathered?
- Are there any programs to monitor pesticide residues in food and the environment? If so, are collected data publicly available?
- What is being done to promote the use of proper and affordable personal protective equipment?
- What provisions have been implemented to ensure safe storage of pesticides at both warehouse and farm level?
- What provisions have been implemented to establish services to collect and safely dispose of used containers and small quantities of left-over pesticides?

- What regulatory measures have been enforced to protect biodiversity and minimize adverse effects of pesticides on the environment (water, soil and air) and on non-target organisms?
- Are there any efforts to improve regulations in relation to collecting and recording data on import, export, manufacture, formulation, quality and quantity of pesticides?
- How are data on the import, export, manufacture, formulation, quality, quantity and use of pesticides collected and recorded?
- Are there any regulations requiring an authorization of pesticide application and personal protective equipment to comply with international established standards prior to marketing?
- What is being done to detect and control illegal trade in pesticides?
- Are there regulations requiring licensing procedures relating to the sale of pesticides?
- When are inventories of obsolete or unusable stocks of pesticides and used containers going to be published?
- Are there any action plans for environmentally friendly disposal of obsolete or unusable stocks of pesticides and used containers, or remediation in the case of contaminated sites?
- What is being done to prevent the accumulation of obsolete pesticides and used containers?

You have got answers?

When you receive the answers from your government, follow up with action. Make weaknesses in the regulation and enforcement public and show examples of the adverse effects of bad policy. Demand the implementation of the FAO Code.

Build alliances

Build a coalition of several NGOs and write an open letter to all the appropriate ministries, and send a copy of the letter to the FAO and to journalists.

Build an NGO Network for information and concerted action - sometimes a joint letter to a ministry makes the difference.

Take the FAO and the Code seriously

Take Article 12.9 of the Code seriously and monitor and report activities related to the implementation of the FAO Code and report these to the Director-General of the FAO.

Other related PAN Germany Publications

This publication is part of PAN Germany's activities to support NGO capacity building in Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs).

A series of publications about pesticides in Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic were published in 2003.

These four publications focus on the evaluation of authorised pesticides regarding their human and environmental toxicity.

The **Pesticide Action Handbook** provides more information on pesticide regulation in the European Union and critically reviews it. This publication is also available in Russian and Polish.

Moving towards Pesticide Reduction ...realising Best Agricultural Practice in Central and Eastern Europe presents an overview of different concepts such as Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) and Integrated Crop Management (ICM), and shows the steps necessary to move plant protection practices away from 'bad practices' to good and 'best practices'. This publication is also available in Russian, Bulgarian, Armenian and Polish.

Pesticides - Hot issues, NGO Objectives and Actions Needed in Central and Eastern Europe gives examples of 'Hot Issues, identified on the basis of NGO's experiences and their activities in these areas - necessary actions are demanded' (Russian, Bulgarian).

Facts & Figures, Agriculture in Central and Eastern Europe provides an overview on agricultural structures, pesticide use and residue data in the five EU member states: Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria (Russian, Slovenian).

The Rotterdam (PIC) Convention and the Stockholm (POPs) Convention are the most important legally binding international pesticide regulations. In two different publications PAN Germany gives an introduction to these conventions, which have been translated into English, German, and Russian.

All publications are available at:

www.pan-germany.org

www.pan-germany.org/english.htm

www.pan-germany.org/projekte/moe/ceecs.htm