
International Conference on Chemicals Management

Fourth session

Geneva, 28 September–2 October 2015

Item 5 (b) (ii) of the provisional agenda*

**Implementation towards the achievement of the 2020 goal
of sound chemicals management: emerging policy issues
and other issues of concern: proposal on highly hazardous
pesticides as an issue of concern**

Proposal on highly hazardous pesticides

Note by the secretariat

1. The secretariat has the honour to circulate a proposal on action to address highly hazardous pesticides by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) (see annex).
2. Part I of the proposal includes a draft resolution for consideration by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fourth session, while part II sets out a proposed strategy to address highly hazardous pesticides in the context of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. The proposed strategy builds extensively on existing activities, tools, mechanisms and frameworks aimed at the attainment of the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management. It defines roles and actions for all Strategic Approach stakeholders for improved results by virtue of enhanced collaboration and active participation.
3. At its second meeting, the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management discussed the issue of highly hazardous pesticides and invited FAO, UNEP and WHO to facilitate a multi-stakeholder process to develop a proposal for consideration by the Conference at its fourth session taking into account the resolutions adopted at Strategic Approach regional meetings in the regions of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, the proposal from the African region and the FAO non-paper presented at the second meeting of the Working Group, as well as relevant text from other regional meeting reports and relevant information documents of the second meeting. At its second meeting, the Working Group further requested a process of consultations by electronic means among interested stakeholders on highly hazardous pesticides.
4. A draft proposal was circulated on 17 April 2015 to Strategic Approach stakeholders for input by 18 May 2015. It was made available on the Strategic Approach website and sent to Strategic Approach focal points for input via e-mail. In response to stakeholder requests, the deadline for input was extended to 1 June 2015. Input was received from 20 stakeholders during the comment period.¹ Consideration was also given to feedback received from stakeholders after the deadline for comments had elapsed.

* SAICM/ICCM.4/1.

¹ Focal points from Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Latvia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, New Zealand, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, CropLife International, the International POPS Elimination Network, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations, Association d'Education Environnementale et de Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc and the Chemicals Branch of the United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry and Economics.

5. The draft proposal was also sent to the Bureau of the fourth session of the Conference for consideration at its face-to-face meeting held on 30 April and 1 May 2015.
6. A side event was hosted on 6 May 2015 during the back-to-back meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in order to seek input on the proposal and to discuss overall needs and challenges in moving forward. The event was attended by 65 participants.
7. The Conference may wish to review and consider the draft resolution and proposed strategy.

Annex

Proposal on highly hazardous pesticides developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization

1. The present proposal includes:
 - (a) In part I, a draft resolution on highly hazardous pesticides for consideration by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fourth session;
 - (b) In part II, a proposed strategy to address highly hazardous pesticides in the context of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.
2. The Conference may wish to review and consider the draft resolution and proposed strategy.

Part I

Draft resolution on highly hazardous pesticides

3. The Conference may wish to adopt a resolution along the following lines:

The Conference,

Mindful of the overarching goal of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as set out in its paragraph 23, of aiming to achieve, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment,

Recognizing that highly hazardous pesticides cause adverse human health and environmental effects in many countries, particularly in low-income and middle-income countries,

Noting with appreciation the revised International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management (2014) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization, which draws specific attention to highly hazardous pesticides, as well as the significant work being done by the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Health Organization and others to raise awareness, and inform and guide pesticide regulators, industry, civil society and other stakeholders on the identification and elimination of unacceptable risks from highly hazardous pesticides,

Recognizing that additional action on highly hazardous pesticides by all stakeholders will be needed in order to attain the objectives of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,

Welcoming the initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization to develop, in consultation with other stakeholders, a proposal for a strategy to address highly hazardous pesticides in the context of the Strategic Approach,

1. *Agrees* to adopt the strategy to address highly hazardous pesticides in the context of the Strategic Approach, set out in part II of the proposal on highly hazardous pesticides;
2. *Encourages* all stakeholders to undertake concerted efforts to implement the strategy at the local, national, regional and international levels;
3. *Welcomes* the offer of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization to develop modalities for international coordination in the context of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals;
4. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Health Organization and the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management to facilitate reporting by stakeholders on progress in implementing the strategy to the Conference at its fifth session.

Part II

Proposed strategy to address highly hazardous pesticides in the context of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

I. Background

1. The present proposal for a strategy to address highly hazardous pesticides in the context of the Strategic Approach has been developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in consultation with Strategic Approach stakeholders. It responds to several elements of the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal on sound chemicals management and can therefore be considered as a component of efforts to achieve the 2020 goal.

2. Support for action on highly hazardous pesticides has been expressed through various international forums, including the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Conference and Strategic Approach regional meetings (see appendix), and the FAO Council, as well as through some of the activities undertaken under the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

II. Considerations

3. Many Strategic Approach stakeholders have called for action, guidance and support to address highly hazardous pesticides, which are a significant cause of acute poisoning, chronic health problems and environmental damage. More effective implementation of existing chemicals management mechanisms will lead to better control of highly hazardous pesticides. The Strategic Approach is ideally placed with its multisectoral and multi-stakeholder approach to launch a collaborative and participatory strategy to facilitate individual efforts by stakeholders to phase out highly hazardous pesticides. Such a strategy could bring about a significant reduction of risks from a particularly hazardous group of chemicals in the 2015–2020 period. The present strategy would therefore make an important contribution to the achievement of the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management as set out in the Global Plan of Action of the Strategic Approach and to the implementation of the overall orientation and guidance.

4. In the wider context of the United Nations, the proposed sustainable development goals call for, inter alia, efforts to promote sustainable agriculture (goal 2), healthy lives and well-being (goal 3), sustainable management of water (goal 6), decent work (goal 8), the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and halt of biodiversity loss (goal 15). In each of these goals, a call for a reduction in the use of highly hazardous pesticides would make a significant contribution by reducing exposure to, and hence adverse impacts on health and the environment from, these pesticides.

5. FAO and WHO jointly provide the secretariat for the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management, which is a panel of independent international experts that is also attended by observers from other intergovernmental organizations, the pesticide industry and non-governmental organizations. The Joint Meeting has facilitated the formulation of criteria that define highly hazardous pesticides as well as the definition of highly hazardous pesticides in the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. Highly hazardous pesticides are defined as “pesticides that are acknowledged to present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards to health or environment according to internationally accepted classification systems such as WHO or GHS or their listing in relevant binding international agreements or conventions. In addition, pesticides that appear to cause severe or irreversible harm to health or the environment under conditions of use in a country may be considered to be and treated as highly hazardous.”

6. Regarding the conditions of use, article 7.5 of the Code states that “Prohibition of the importation, distribution, sale and purchase of highly hazardous pesticides may be considered if, based on risk assessment, risk mitigation measures or good marketing practices are insufficient to ensure that the product can be handled without unacceptable risk to humans and the environment”. Other articles in the Code also recommend actions aimed at reducing risks from pesticides, for example:

(a) Article 3.6: Pesticides whose handling and application require the use of personal protective equipment that is uncomfortable, expensive or not readily available should be avoided, especially in the case of small-scale users and farm workers in hot climates; and

(b) Article 5.2.4.1: [...Pesticide industry should] make every reasonable effort to reduce risks posed by pesticides by making less toxic formulations available.

7. The need for action on highly hazardous pesticides is strongly supported by WHO data on pesticide impacts on health.^a According to WHO, highly hazardous pesticides may have acute and/or chronic toxic effects, and pose particular risks to children because of their smaller size and hence proportionally greater exposure. There is also the potential for adverse effects during crucial periods of a child's development. Chronic exposure to highly hazardous pesticides can result in effects on skin, eyes, nervous system, cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal tract, liver, kidneys, reproductive system, endocrine system and blood, and may also affect the immune system. The rising incidence of cancers and developmental disorders has been associated in the scientific literature with exposure to some groups of pesticides. The use of highly hazardous pesticides has caused health problems and fatalities in many parts of the world, often as a result of occupational exposure and accidental or intentional poisonings. Available data are too limited to estimate the global health impacts of pesticides; the global impact of self-poisoning (suicides) from preventable pesticide ingestion has however been estimated to amount to 186,000 deaths and 4,420,000 disability adjusted life years (DALYs) in 2002.

8. The evidence in the UNEP 2013 report, *Cost of Inaction on the Sound Management of Chemicals*, also supports the need for action to reduce risks from pesticides in use. In the report, it is estimated that the health costs associated with exposure to pesticides in sub-Saharan Africa in the period 2005–2020 without any preventive and risk reduction actions will amount to at least \$97 billion. Capacity among pesticide regulators in developing countries is severely limited.

9. The capacity of registration authorities in developing countries to conduct risk assessment as part of the pesticide registration process is often very limited. An FAO survey found that out of 109 developing countries, 97 per cent had fewer than 6 people working in pesticide registration and regulation and that, of these, 77 per cent had no more than 2 technical staff dealing with pesticide registration. Almost no developing countries and only a few countries with economies in transition have analytical laboratories that can fully analyse pesticide formulations, including manufacturing impurities, in order to determine the quality of pesticides in use. Similarly, the lack of analytical capacity for pesticide residue testing prevents national authorities from determining the presence of pesticides in food, water, people and environmental media.

III. Ongoing work

10. Among the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC),^b substantial work is being carried out to reduce risks from pesticides, including the following:

(a) IOMC toolbox for decision-making in chemicals management: includes a module on pesticide management schemes (with a toolkit to support the evaluation of pesticide for registration purposes under development);

(b) International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management: provides a framework on pesticide management for all public and private entities engaged in or associated with production, regulation and management of pesticides. The updated International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management was approved by the FAO Conference in June 2013, and was recognized by the WHO Executive Board in January 2014. The Code serves as a point of reference in relation to sound pesticide life cycle management practices, in particular for government authorities and the pesticide industry. The Code is supported by additional technical guidelines. Specific reference is made to highly hazardous pesticides in the new Code and a technical guideline on highly hazardous pesticides is under development;

(c) FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management: provides advice on matters pertaining to pesticide regulation, management and use, and alerts to new developments, problems or issues that otherwise merit attention. In particular, the Joint Meeting advises FAO and WHO on the implementation of the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. The Joint Meeting combines the FAO panel of experts on pesticide management and the WHO panel of experts on vector biology and control. The Joint Meeting has agreed on criteria for defining highly hazardous pesticides;

^a www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/pesticides/en.

^b In particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Health Organization, the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

(d) FAO, WHO and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): all promote integrated pest management and integrated vector management as tools to achieve pest management objectives, to reduce risks from and reliance on highly hazardous pesticides and other pesticides;

(e) World Bank: in 1998 issued a safeguard policy on pest management, which is binding for all projects financed by the Bank. It stipulates that World Bank assistance related to crop protection should follow integrated pest management approaches and it does not permit the financing of formulations of products that fall in WHO hazard classes Ia and Ib, or in class II, if (a) the country lacks restrictions on their distribution and use; or (b) they are likely to be used by, or be accessible to, lay personnel, farmers or others without training, equipment, and facilities to handle, store, and apply these products properly. Compliance with this policy is actively monitored;

(f) WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides by Hazard: lists recommended hazard classifications for pesticides, based mainly on acute risk to human health (adjusted in some cases for severe hazards other than acute oral or dermal toxicity). The GHS acute toxicity hazard categories are also presented. The classification is widely used by pesticide regulators in developing countries to distinguish between more or less hazardous pesticides, and to guide the placing of hazard warnings on pesticide labels;

(g) WHO pesticide evaluation scheme (WHOPES): promotes and coordinates the testing and evaluation of pesticides for public health through the participation of Governments, research institutions, and manufacturers of pesticides and pesticide application equipment. The WHOPES recommendations guide the procurement of public health pesticides (including insecticide-treated mosquito nets) by Governments and aid agencies for vector control;

(h) Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues: provides advice on acceptable levels of pesticide residues in food. Under this joint WHO and FAO activity, toxicological data is reviewed to establish health-based guidance values for pesticides. Pesticides residue data is reviewed to determine maximum residue levels (MRLs) and these form the basis of Codex MRLs which are fundamental to international trade in food and agricultural commodities;

(i) Joint Meeting on Pesticide Specifications: recommends technical specifications for pesticides that are used in regulatory processes to determine the quality of pesticides and ensure that traded products are the same as those registered; specifications also facilitate registration of “equivalent” products from different manufacturers using the “equivalence procedure”. Appropriate use of specifications can also help to control trade in counterfeit, unregistered, adulterated or otherwise non-compliant pesticides;

(j) OECD working group on pesticides: has established an expert group on integrated pest management as part of its work on risk reduction. Its objectives are to facilitate coordination and information exchange about integrated pest management (especially thanks to the “IPM Hub” hosted on the OECD website), promote and develop policies in favour of the adoption and implementation of integrated pest management, develop indicators of on integrated pest management adoption and impact, and facilitate awareness-raising about integrated pest management among the public and food chain operators;

(k) Strategic Approach Quick Start Programme Trust Fund: is funding projects on reducing the risks of highly hazardous pesticides in two countries, with international expertise provided by FAO;

(l) Special Programme trust fund: is expected to be established in 2015 with the aim of supporting countries in strengthening national authorities and capacity to regulate chemicals, including pesticides, and thereby reduce the risks arising from their use.

11. The chemicals and waste conventions and mechanisms which contribute significantly to pesticide risk reduction are as follows:

(a) Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade: supports countries in making informed decisions through the prior informed consent procedure about the import and use of certain particularly hazardous pesticides. It provides mechanisms for countries to report adverse impacts on human health and/or the environment from severely hazardous pesticide formulations under conditions of use. The Convention obliges its parties to notify on final regulatory actions that have been taken to prohibit or severely restrict pesticides as a result of their adverse impacts;

- (b) Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants: supports countries in eliminating production, use and inadvertent releases of persistent organic pollutants. Sixteen of the chemicals currently addressed by the Convention are pesticides;
- (c) Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal: aims to reduce hazardous waste generation and promote the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes, including waste from pesticides. Technical guidelines and manuals have been developed under the Convention with the aim of assisting countries in the environmentally sound management of pesticides waste;
- (d) Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer: aims to eliminate the production and use of ozone depleting substances, one of which (methyl bromide) is a pesticide;
- (e) Minamata Convention on Mercury: aims to eliminate the use of mercury in pesticides, biocides and topical antiseptics;
- (f) Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals: helps countries to classify chemicals that present both acute and long-term hazards to health or the environment more precisely and label them more clearly. Application of the Globally Harmonized System to pesticides helps to better inform users on their hazards and therefore to make more informed choices.

12. However, the listed conventions deal with specific subgroups of chemicals whereas the Strategic Approach addresses all chemicals. Therefore, highly hazardous pesticides that are not addressed by the above-mentioned conventions should still be identified and acted upon under a Strategic Approach highly hazardous pesticides strategy.

IV. Main stakeholder groups

A. Regulatory authorities

13. Government and regional authorities charged with regulatory control over pesticides and pesticide registration have a primary role in addressing highly hazardous pesticides. They can initiate reviews of registered pesticides and alter the registration status to restrict or cancel their use. They can also facilitate concerted national or regional action to review plant and health protection needs, enforce pesticide legislation, including inspection at border crossings and at points of sale, and develop policies.

B. Agricultural extension services and public health advisory services

14. Agricultural extension services and specialized crop protection services usually have a good overview of the type of pesticides that are being used, for what reason and in what manner. As such, they may be able to provide information to regulators on the remaining legal and illegal uses of highly hazardous pesticides, use circumstances and possible alternatives. They also should play a key role in educating farmers on alternatives or other risk reduction measures. Public health advisory services have a key role in ensuring that pesticides recommended or procured for disease vector control are appropriate and effective for the required situation, while minimizing risks to human health and/or the environment.

C. Health services and poison control centres

15. Through health services and poison control centres, ministries of health have a major role in assembling data about poisoning incidences that can point at highly hazardous pesticides that require attention. Information about pesticides and areas of use that are associated with high incidences of poisoning would allow for targeted interventions.

D. Farmers' organizations and networks

16. Farmers are the ultimate managers of pests in agriculture and the main users of pesticides; they are the ones who need to understand the risks of using highly hazardous pesticides and possible alternatives in order to make informed decisions and take action to reduce the risks of adverse impacts on their health and the environment. There are extensive local networks of farmers that sometimes extend to the national, regional and international levels. Such networks may have a deep and broad knowledge of integrated pest management based on agro-ecological approaches or on organic farming. Such knowledge, derived from years of experience, both in farming without highly hazardous pesticides and in assisting other farmers, could help inform stakeholders' efforts to phase out highly hazardous pesticides. The sharing of knowledge is best carried out through a farmer-to-farmer sharing and learning process via a community of practice, such as the FAO farmer field school programmes.

Study tours for farmers, YouTube interviews, social media applications, among other things, can also play a useful role.

E. Trade unions and agricultural workers organizations

17. Agricultural workers and pesticide applicators run the highest risk of exposure to highly hazardous pesticides in the course of their daily work, particularly with limited or no personal protection or information about the hazards of the pesticides they use. Agricultural workers' organizations therefore have a key role to play in addressing highly hazardous pesticides. Trade unions and agricultural workers' groups and networks at the national, regional and international levels run campaigns for safer and healthier working conditions and environments. These efforts to create awareness and to curtail the exposure of workers to highly hazardous pesticides are important areas of action. The work of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations in Africa, which involved training and the monitoring of poisoning cases on large-scale plantations with an aim of enhancing compliance with the International Labour Organization conventions and the FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct, provides a good example.

F. Private sector

18. The pesticide industry, which manufactures and formulates pesticides, plays an important role in presenting them to national regulatory authorities for registration and in promoting sales through marketing, advising and advertising. Other companies may also import, distribute and sell pesticides. At each step of the production, distribution and sales chain, companies can make decisions about which products will be made available. Such decisions can also influence the formulation of pesticides, size and type of packaging, and who the product is sold by and to whom. In their business planning, companies can respond to global concerns and shift away from highly hazardous pesticides in favour of less hazardous products.

19. CropLife International, the organization representing the research-based pesticide producers, has made a commitment to act with its members and other partners to identify, assess and mitigate risks from pesticides that meet a modified set of criteria for highly hazardous pesticides.^c Such actions can contribute to overall risk reduction strategies and the aspiration of the Strategic Approach community of reducing risks from highly hazardous pesticides in a foreseeable timescale.

20. Other private sector entities should be invited to contribute to risk reduction efforts, including owners and operators of primary agricultural production facilities (plantations, greenhouses, farms, etc.), providers of biological controls and other non-chemical pest management inputs.

21. There is a particular role for food, fibre and renewable raw material processors, large-scale retailers and private standards organizations which determine protocols for growers that include instructions related to pest and pesticide management. Reasons for these entities to eliminate highly hazardous pesticides from the production chain include residue requirements in the country of destination (for instance, many highly hazardous pesticides are no longer registered in the European Union, which means that any residues of such compounds on agricultural produce would lead to its rejection for import) or corporate or consumer demand related to socially and environmentally responsible production.

G. Civil society

22. Non-governmental organizations within the Strategic Approach community have highlighted the need for action on highly hazardous pesticides in order to protect the health of pesticide users and rural communities exposed to pesticides in their living and working environments, consumers of food carrying pesticide residues and the environment, including biodiversity that is vital to sustainable agricultural production.

23. The Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) have proposed that highly hazardous pesticides should be explicitly listed to better inform pesticide regulators and users; that alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides, particularly non-chemical ecosystem approaches to pest management, should be identified and information about them disseminated; that regulator capacity in developing countries should be strengthened to prioritize action to be taken to replace highly hazardous pesticides; and that farmers should be encouraged and supported to replace highly hazardous pesticides with sustainable, non-chemical pest management strategies.

^c See SAICM/OEWG.2/INF/21, annex I.

24. It is noted that in developing countries there are few non-governmental organizations working, or with the requisite capacity, to conduct activities for evaluating and monitoring the performance and use of pesticides at the local level. The present strategy also seeks to encourage Governments, the private sector and academia to develop and strengthen this type of work by non-governmental organizations.

H. Academics and scientists

25. Academics and scientists have highlighted the need to phase out highly hazardous pesticides, and play an important role in providing information both about the impacts of highly hazardous pesticides and effective agro-ecosystem approaches to pest management.

V. Gaps

26. Gaps remaining and implications for the 2020 goal, listed in order of the 11 basic elements of the overall orientation and guidance, include:^d

- (a) Some countries still lack an effective legal framework and institutional capacity to address pesticides through their life cycles;
- (b) Limited enforcement mechanisms and capacity means that highly hazardous pesticides continue to be legally or illegally available, widely used and often inappropriately used;
- (c) Incomplete implementation of international instruments relevant to highly hazardous pesticides, including the Rotterdam Convention, the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management and the environmentally sound management and disposal of pesticide wastes under the Basel Convention;
- (d) Limited coordination mechanisms among relevant stakeholders and between the agriculture, health and environment sectors in many countries;
- (e) Poor systems for collection and sharing of highly hazardous pesticide data among all relevant stakeholders as well as limited research on the impacts of highly hazardous pesticides and alternatives thereto;
- (f) Inconsistent industry engagement in addressing risks from highly hazardous pesticides across their life cycles;
- (g) Poorly addressed or neglected socioeconomic factors and development planning can encourage the use of highly hazardous pesticides, particularly if they are lower cost;
- (h) Insufficient capacity for highly hazardous pesticide risk assessment and risk reduction in many developing countries;
- (i) Absence of, or very limited, capacity to deal with poisoning and chemical accidents involving highly hazardous pesticides;
- (j) Inadequate national monitoring and assessment of the impacts of highly hazardous pesticides on health and the environment, and lack of global data;
- (k) Low awareness of environmentally sound and safer alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides, especially at the local level (e.g., in farms), where awareness of such alternatives may be absent.

VI. Taking action on highly hazardous pesticides

27. FAO and WHO are finalizing guidelines for taking action on highly hazardous pesticides, whose main steps include:

- (a) Identification of highly hazardous pesticides in use by comparing the list of registered pesticides against highly hazardous pesticide criteria;
- (b) Conduct of a needs and risk assessment for the identified highly hazardous pesticides;

^d A more detailed treatment of gaps is available in the note by the secretariat on analysis by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals of efforts to implement the Global Plan of Action of the Strategic Approach (SAICM/OEWG.2/INF/5).

(c) Establishment and implementation of appropriate risk mitigation measures. Risk mitigation measures can be of a regulatory or administrative nature and can vary from prohibition of products to training in the proper use of products.

28. Where possible, priority should be given to the introduction of integrated pest management or integrated vector management that makes optimal use of agro-ecological approaches and reduces reliance on pesticides. This approach is explicitly supported by a broad range of international policy documents, including those of FAO, WHO, World Bank and the OECD Development Assistance Committee. The validation and sharing of information on integrated pest management-based or integrated vector management-based alternatives for use of highly hazardous pesticides should therefore be a key element of any action to address highly hazardous pesticides.

29. The key to reducing risks from highly hazardous pesticides, which rests with Governments, is the adoption of the necessary legislation and establishment of appropriate pesticide regulatory authorities at the national or regional levels. For countries with limited resources, collaborating for regulatory work with regional partners is particularly recommended. Authorities must be empowered to make and implement informed decisions about pest management policies and about which pesticides or other pest management measures may be used in their countries and for what purposes.

A. Alignment of efforts under the Strategic Approach

30. Strategic Approach stakeholders should acknowledge the ongoing work to raise awareness and inform and guide pesticide regulators, industry, civil society and other stakeholders on the identification and elimination of unacceptable risks from highly hazardous pesticides. In some cases, these existing initiatives are already financed and only minor orientation is needed to align such initiatives to the objectives of the present proposal and the Strategic Approach Global Plan of Action and overall orientation and guidance.

31. In order to ensure coherence, Strategic Approach stakeholders should be guided by:

(a) The definition of “highly hazardous pesticides” contained in the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management adopted by the FAO Conference and recognized by the WHO Executive Board;

(b) The criteria for highly hazardous pesticides developed by the FAO/WHO independent expert panels meeting (Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management);

(c) The forthcoming guidelines on highly hazardous pesticides, which are under advanced development by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management.

32. Most pesticide regulators and users are in the agriculture and health sectors, which are not well represented in the Strategic Approach forum. The strategy provides a means to facilitate the participation of these sectors in the Strategic Approach.

B. Main focus areas for concerted action

33. The reduction of risks from highly hazardous pesticides is the focus of several work areas and activities in the Global Plan of Action and several elements of the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management. Stakeholders undertaking activities to address highly hazardous pesticides should ensure that they can link their actions to the Global Plan of Action and the overall orientation and guidance in order to support reporting of progress towards the attainment of their targets.

34. Awareness-raising is required in order to:

(a) Raise the awareness of pesticide regulators and other relevant Government authorities, farmers, the private sector, consumers, workers, trade unions, health-care providers, research and development institutions, academia and the press (mass media) about the risks of highly hazardous pesticides, the availability of safer alternatives and the desirability of making a transition to more sustainable agro-ecological approaches to pest management;

(b) Identify and share information about viable alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides, including cultural and environmental management measures, biological controls, biopesticides or less hazardous pesticides;

(c) Identify and share information about risk reduction measures in cases for which highly hazardous pesticides cannot be replaced and continue to be used.

35. Facilitating the identification of highly hazardous pesticides is important to facilitate the identification of highly hazardous pesticides in use through cross-referencing to highly hazardous pesticide criteria.
36. Capacity-building in regulatory control is required to:
- (a) Support Governments in strengthening pesticide registration schemes, risk assessment and review of registered pesticides;
 - (b) Support Governments in strengthening of the regulatory framework with regard to manufacturing, formulation, distribution, storage, sale, use and disposal of highly hazardous pesticides;
 - (c) Support Governments in the development and adoption of effective enforcement mechanisms as part of the regulatory system for pesticides;
 - (d) Support access to suitable laboratory facilities in order to facilitate adequate analysis of pesticide products and residues;
 - (e) Provide assistance to health and occupational health professionals in identifying, diagnosing, treating and reporting pesticide poisonings to promote efficient surveillance and identification of highly hazardous pesticides.
37. Piloting and the mainstreaming of alternatives are crucial to:
- (a) Provide assistance to small-scale and large-scale farmers to enable them to phase out highly hazardous pesticides, or prevent unacceptable risks from highly hazardous pesticides that cannot be replaced, while maintaining their agricultural livelihoods;
 - (b) Support the design and implementation of appropriate prevention-based programmes to phase out highly hazardous pesticides and replace them with sustainable and less hazardous pest management tools and methods based on integrated pest management and integrated vector management.

C. Aspects to be considered in terms of implementation

38. The concerted efforts of all stakeholders will be important to implement the strategy at the local, national, regional and international levels. Stakeholders undertaking activities to address highly hazardous pesticides are encouraged to link their actions to the Global Plan of Action and the overall orientation and guidance to support coordinated implementation and reporting of progress.
39. International and (sub)regional inter-governmental bodies stand to play an important role in the implementation of the strategy. FAO, UNEP and WHO have offered to develop modalities for international coordination in the context of IOMC. The Strategic Approach secretariat has offered to provide a simple stakeholder coordination mechanism that will allow stakeholders to record their past, ongoing or planned activities in order to prevent duplication and maximize opportunities for collaboration and synergies. This mechanism would also enable achievements to be registered.
40. Progress in implementing the strategy will need to be tracked in order to guide the work. FAO, UNEP, WHO and the Strategic Approach secretariat have offered to facilitate reporting by stakeholders on progress in implementing the strategy to the Conference at its fifth session.
41. The strategy will support the alignment of activities already funded in order to enhance synergies. For the long-term sustainability of informed pesticide registration based on risk assessment, countries need to have rational cost-recovery schemes. However, additional funding will be needed for initial investment and to address highly hazardous pesticides already in use. Sources of such funding may include; the UNEP Special Programme to support institutional-strengthening of national regulatory capacities; examining existing and already financed initiatives for opportunities to orient activities in line with the needs identified in the strategy; exploring the opportunities presented by Global Environment Facility (GEF) financing for the Strategic Approach and inviting GEF to provide advice on any additional opportunities from their other programmes. Input is invited from all stakeholders in order to further finance the implementation of the present strategy.

Appendix

List of documents of particular relevance to the development of the proposed strategy on highly hazardous pesticides

1. Report of the International Conference on Chemicals Management on the work of its third session (SAICM/ICCM.3/24, paras. 194 and 195)
 2. Report of the fifth African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (Resolution C. Highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs)) (SAICM/RM/Afr.5/7)
 3. Report of the fourth Asia-Pacific regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM/RM/AP.4/7, paras. 41, 42)
 4. Report of the fifth Central and Eastern European regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM/RM/CEE.5/9, paras. 46 and 47 and annex 2)
 5. Report of the fourth Latin American and Caribbean regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM/RM/LAC.4/11, annex IV)
 6. Information note on highly hazardous pesticides prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (see SAICM/OEWG.2/10)
 7. Analysis by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals of efforts to implement the Global Plan of Action of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and key issue papers (see SAICM/OEWG.2/INF/5)
 8. Paper by CropLife International on its approach to managing highly hazardous pesticides (see SAICM/OEWG.2/INF/2)
 9. Submission by the Pesticides Action Network and the International POPs Elimination Network on highly hazardous pesticides (see SAICM/OEWG.2/INF/24)
 10. "Addressing highly hazardous pesticides: possible next steps for SAICM": non-paper prepared by FAO, 16 December 2014 (second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group)
-