



Pesticide placed on UN list of hazardous chemicals to be eliminated



Endosulfan has been added to the list of persistent organic pollutants to be eliminated worldwide

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An insecticide widely used in agriculture for pest control has become the latest hazardous chemical to be added to the United Nations' list of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) targeted for elimination from the global market by next year, the UN Environment Programme (**UNEP**) **announced** today.

Representatives from 127 governments meeting in Geneva from 25 to 29 April agreed to add endosulfan, an organochlorine insecticide, to the POPs list because it is known to cause reproductive and developmental damage in both animals and humans. The chemical is mainly used as a pest control agent in cotton, coffee and tea farms worldwide.

The decision on endosulfan was among more than 30 measures taken by Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants to boost global action against POPs.

The parties agreed to list endosulfan in Annex A to the convention, with specific exemptions. When the amendment to the annex enters into force in one year, endosulfan will become the 22nd POP to be listed. A party may extend the phase-out period of the pesticide by five years but only for a small number of uses.

"The conference recognized that financial and technical support is required to facilitate the replacement of the use of endosulfan in developing countries and countries with economies in transition," said Achim Steiner, the UNEP Executive Director.

"In establishing a consultative process on finance for the chemicals and waste conventions, UNEP has responded to the need of those countries by seeking to make the sound management of hazardous chemicals a development priority of the green economy in which all countries can fully and fairly participate," he added.

According to Jim Willis, the newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Basel, Stockholm and UNEP-part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariats, new POPs present new challenges because of their wide commercial use.

“Parties have demonstrated that they can find creative solutions to speed the elimination of POPs and protect environment and human health from these dangerous chemicals,” said Mr. Willis.

The conference evaluated the continued need for DDT for disease vector control to combat mosquitoes, the vector of the deadly malaria parasite. Delegates saw a continued need to use DDT while effective alternatives are being sought and implemented by an increasing number of countries.

Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), announced that the facility will provide \$250,000 to help countries to update their national implementation plans in response to the adoption of new POPs to the Convention.

In total, the GEF has in recent years provided more than \$1 billion to address implementation of hazardous chemicals and waste cluster agreements.

Seven new Stockholm Convention regional centres were endorsed by the conference – in Algeria, Kenya, India, Iran, Senegal, South Africa and Russia. The Russian regional centre is conditional on the country’s ratification of the convention.

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