

University of Cape Town Contributing to Sound Chemicals Management

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The Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health Research School of Public Health and Family Medicine, University of Cape Town has been contributing to sound chemicals management through various ways including:

Hosting a Pesticide Discussion Forum. The Forum was established in 2009. It aims to encourage in-depth discussion of particular issues with regard to pesticides and regulation of pesticides in Africa. Regulators, students and resource people meet twice a month to discuss topics proposed by a member of the Forum. Topics discussed in 2013 include: reducing risks from highly hazardous pesticides, ecological risks of nanoparticles, the phase-out of endosulfan and personal protective equipment. News bulletins are created from the transcripts of these discussions and then circulated to forum members. New topics and expert presenters are being actively sought.

The Centre also runs a Post Graduate Diploma in Pesticide Risk Management, which is convened by Assoc. Prof. Andrea Rother. The diploma covers, among other topics, pesticide risk management policies and principles, the legal framework for pesticide management, obsolete

pesticide management, and risk reduction strategies. Currently there are 24 students enrolled in the programme, from countries ranging from Eritrea to Guyana. Their work experience and other diverse experiences serve to further enrich the course. More information can be found [here](#), and instructions on how to apply can be found here. Contact susan.walker@uct.ac.za

In addition, the **Pesticides-I list-server** administered by the University has over 300 subscribers who are from all over the world. List members are researchers, policy makers, government officials, NGO staff and individuals interested in the challenges of pesticide management. Scholarly articles and news stories relevant to pesticide health risks and agrochemical research are sent out daily to members. Those interested in joining the listserver should e-mail Briana O'Sullivan (briosullivan2@gmail.com) for an application form.

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PAN Ethiopia Work on E-waste

By Tadesse Amara (PAN Ethiopia)

Pesticide Action Nexus Association in Ethiopia (PAN-Ethiopia) has been coordinating the IPEN E-products working group. In the years 2012/13, PAN-Ethiopia has been working on a project entitled "Alleviating national and inter-

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Agenda for Environment and Responsible Development (AGENDA) in Tanzania is the IPEN Regional Hub for Anglophone Africa. <http://www.agenda-tz.org> / agenda@agenda-tz.org

In this region, IPEN has a total of 70 Participating Organizations in the following countries: Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia

national problems in the lifecycle of electrical and electronic waste (E-waste).” Moreover, with support from IPEN, they launched an African e-waste inventory guide at the ExCoP in Geneva in 2013.

Additionally, PAN-Ethiopia is now planning to translate the African e-waste inventory guide into Amharic and distribute it nationally for wider use in Ethiopia.

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UNETMAC Contribution in Uganda

By Ellady Muyambi (UNETMAC, Uganda)

Uganda Network on Toxic Free Malaria Control (UNETMAC), is a non- for profit NGO that functions as an umbrella organization that coordinates, supports and builds capacity for its partner organizations/members to engage in sustainable malaria control initiatives and sound chemicals management approaches, as well as sustainable community development interventions. Generally, UNETMAC strives to achieve a malaria-free world as well as a toxics-free future.

UNETMAC is currently engaged in the campaign against the re-introduction of DDT for malaria disease vector control and a court case that was filed in this regard is under review in the constitutional court. See the brief about the case [here](#). The hearing on the case took place (see an article in The Observer [here](#)) and the final verdict was also made (see information at the [Ugandan Legal Information Institute](#) and [New Vision](#)).

UNETMAC is committed to the goal of reducing and ultimately eliminating the use of DDT, as noted in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and reaching the Millennium Development Goal of halting and beginning to reverse the incidence of malaria. As such, UNETMAC calls for an urgent and continued need to control malaria and replace DDT through safe, effective and affordable alternatives. UNETMAC therefore endeavours to support a sustainable transition from DDT that has multiple benefits (including enhancing the range of options for vector control available in order to cope with emerging vector resistance patterns and support an effective malaria control), and has decided to appeal the ruling in the Court of Appeal because it has been observed that the Judges erred in their ruling. They noted that the petition did not raise any issue for constitutional interpretation, and yet this was the first issue raised in UNETMAC’s petition where the court was asked to declare whether the use of DDT the way it was done in Oyam and Apac districts of Northern Uganda contravened Article 39 of the 1995 Ugandan Constitution (as amended in 2005). UNETMAC highly believes that the case should be filed in a court that can strike a ruling on declaring the use of DDT illegal, and that is why the Constitutional Court is the preferred court.

Please see some of the issues raised against DDT use by UNETMAC [here](#).

UNETMAC is also engaged in the campaign against the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), especially genetically modified foods (GMFs). Vital aspects of GMOs include the hyper use of the pesticide glyphosate,

sold under trade name Round-Up, which is not only too toxic to crops but also to human health and environment. UNETMAC has mobilized Ugandans to resist the passing of the Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill, 2012 whose purpose is to introduce GMOs on a massive scale in Uganda without any safeguards. Some issues raised by UNETMAC about GMOs can be found [here](#).

Also, as part of its effort to complement other partners in the promotion of sound management of chemicals in Uganda and realize the benefits of the [Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paints](#), UNETMAC is currently conducting a campaign against the use of lead paint by raising public awareness about the dangers posed by lead poisoning.

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SAICM Implementation in East Africa: Law Reform and Capacity Building for Sound Chemicals Management in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya

By Silvani Mng’anya (AGENDA, Tanzania)

Since its development and adoption in Dubai in February 2006, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) has embraced the perceived multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach, calling for involvement at any stage, including implementa-

tion by different actors and stakeholders around the world. SAICM is a global policy framework to foster the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

While involvement of stakeholders is a necessity, strong national legal and policy frameworks are a critical requirement to successful SAICM implementation. Therefore, there is a need for reviews, enhancement and harmonization of policies and legislation at the local, national and regional levels to support SAICM implementation. To be fully functional, the legal regime should be supported by effective enforcement by relevant government authorities, and complemented and promoted by the private sector and the civil society, with citizens monitoring the impacts of these efforts.

Three East African NGOs (AGENDA for Environment and Responsible Development (AGENDA) in

Tanzania, iLima Organization in Kenya, and National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) in Uganda) implemented a joint project in the three countries from May 2009 with collaboration and technical support from the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) (USA/Switzerland) and the International Chemical Secretariat (ChemSec) (Sweden). All five organizations are Participating Organizations (POs) of IPEN. The project, "SAICM Implementation in East Africa: Law Reform and Capacity Building for Sound Chemicals Management in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya," which is under the SAICM Quick Start Programme (QSP), aimed at strengthening SAICM implementation programs in the three countries through the strengthening of the national legal frameworks for sound chemicals management, improving implementation, monitoring and enforcement of said legal framework, and developing multi-stakeholder capacity for achieving



Silvani Mng'anya from AGENDA receiving certificate of appreciation

SAICM objectives in the region (with a focus on creating informed constituencies for legal reform, monitoring and enforcement). The project was concluded in 2013, with outputs including (but not limited to): a national report on legal gaps and elements of good legal practice; a national, multi-stakeholder workshop to introduce the national assessment reports; training modules and ToT and training workshops and reports; a regional EAC SAICM implementation meeting in Dar es Salaam and a report from the same; survey/research report on SAICM implementation-successes and failures; a report profiling case examples with recommendations for legal reform and



East Africa SAICM Stakeholders Workshop Participants

improved citizen monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to complement and reinforce government enforcement action; the publishing of a Citizens Guide for monitoring and enforcement of chemicals laws in Uganda; an assessment of information needs for different stakeholder groups and their capacity development needs for engagement in SAICM implementation; three national and regional strategic plans for capacity development; three national communications strategies; and the establishment of an East Africa SAICM stakeholders listserve.

Following the successful completion of the project, AGENDA, on behalf of the implementing organizations, was awarded a certificate of Appreciation by the UNEP during the Fifth African Regional Meeting on SAICM held in Pretoria, South Africa from 18-22 November, 2013.

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Waste management status in Tanzania and in Dar es Salaam

By Dorah Swai (AGENDA, Tanzania)

Urban waste management in Tanzania is in a pathetic situation. The manner in which urban solid waste is managed in Dar es Salaam directly affects the metropolitan environment, the appearance of the city and the citizens' day-to-day lives. Although a high percentage of waste collected in Tanzania municipalities and towns households is degradable, all of what is collected is disposed of together in a common open dumpsite. Quite a limited amount of segregation hap-



Mixture of waste burnt into ash in open air

pens at the source and even at the collection point. Recyclables such as plastic bottles, metals and wood are usually the only waste streams that are picked up at the sources of generation, and even at collection and disposal points, they are sold to recycling companies or re-users. The rest of the waste is transported for disposal in a site designated by the local authority, one site for the whole Dar es Salaam city of about 4.4 million people (National Census, 2012). Usually, the site is an open area where solid waste is disposed of without adequate treatment to prevent exposure to weather conditions and scavenging. No better waste management options have been introduced despite the rapid population growth and the recent socio-economic development, which accounts for the rapid growth of solid waste in the country. According to World Bank figures, as of 2011, Dar es Salaam, the largest city in Tanzania, generates approximately 4,200 tonnes of waste daily. Some studies have confirmed that about 40% of wastes are organics from kitchens, followed by 16% plastics, 10% yard waste and 8% paper. Metals constitute 5% and ceramics / stones about 6% of the total. Disposal efforts are also constrained by the poor infrastructure, where some settlements cannot be accessed by waste collection trucks which are also few compared to the amount of waste generated. Therefore, of

the generated waste, only 40% is collected and disposed of according to the by-law of the local authority; the remaining wastes are dumped by the side or into drainage canals, streams or open spaces, thus contributing to health and environmental problems including flooding. Additionally, the National Environment Management Council banned the use of plastic bags below 30 microns and 65 microns. Adherence to the ban has failed and such plastics still form a high percentage of waste. In addition, they contribute a lot in blocking drainage systems and spread around easily, thus contributing to the filthiness of Dar es Salaam.

Opportunities for waste management services

Sorting, recycling and/or re-use opportunities are limited, except at health facilities. Almost all of what is generated ends up at a common dump site. Pugu is the only authorized dumping site for wastes from the whole city. Quite limited controls are taken, no cover materials, it is an open dump with wastes scattered across the 65 hectares.

Sinza A is one of the small administrative structures (Mtaa) in Dar es Salaam with over 8,000 people, according to the 2012 national census. It is in this Mtaa where some women have organized themselves into a group called Umoja wa Faraja Sinza 'A'. This is a group of 37 women, some of whom are widows. Besides waste collection and disposal, they also carry out other income generating activities to sustain their families' day-to-day demands. The group applied for a project to enhance their capacity on waste management from a local funder known as Foundation for Civil Society. AGENDA facilitated the training, which was designed

for its specific groups such as leaders and the members; stakeholders also participated in the training. These came from other CBOs and the Mtaa office. The training included topics such as waste definition, types, and segregation and disposal options. Re-use and recycling options and health and environmental effects resulting from open burning or dumping of solid waste were also part of the training.

Other community members were also sensitized to form waste management groups in their localities. The advantage of having these groups in place include, among others: 1) Easy to pass over knowledge to community members; 2) To sensitize community members on the importance of good sanitation; and 3) To monitor and report polluters to the Mtaa Office. The training was quite successful. Besides forming the community groups mentioned above, it helped the group to strengthen the links with the Mtaa, Ward and Municipal offices, other CBOs around the area and AGENDA.

Future plans of the group

The group has been carrying out the service with several challenges, one of which is a low income. The group noted that composting can reduce the amount of waste transported to the dump through a reduced number of trips, and they are now looking for a plot where they can start a waste composting project; however, no success has been made so far.

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“Eliminating Lead in Paints” Week of Action Activities in Nigeria

By Leslie Adogame (SRADev, Nigeria)

The Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (GAELP), a collaborative initiative run jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization, declared October 20-26, 2013 as the International Lead Poisoning Week of Action with “Eliminating Lead in Paints” as its

theme. In Nigeria, Sustainable Research and Action for Environmental Development - SRADev Nigeria (a member of GAELP)- joined the global community to mark the event.

During the campaign week, SRADev Nigeria’s aims were to raise awareness about lead poisoning and urge further action to eliminate lead paint to prevent childhood lead poisoning in Nigeria through the following activities: courtesy visit to the IPWA (major paint manufacturer) that’s housed in the office of the Executive Secretary, Paint Manufacturers Association; advocacy visit to the government regulatory agency, General Manager, Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency on the need for immediate regulatory action; and a NGO stakeholder sensitization seminar where a NGO statement of action was released to the media and subsequently distributed to key government bodies, regulators, consumers association, paint manufacturers trade unions, etc.

The climax of the successful event was the very colourful outdoor campaign mounted on major streets in Lagos by secondary/primary school children carrying various placards with lead-free messages. The event attracted the public and helped to raise a lot of awareness. A national TV station (AIT) also covered the event on the streets with some other media reports: **My Daily News**, **Civil Society News**, and **Daily Independent**.

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Public street campaign by students

Lead poisoning awareness in Tanzania

By *Silvani Mng'anya* (AGENDA, Tanzania)

Lead is one of the chemicals of concern, a heavy metal with a bluish-grey colour. It has a low melting point, easily moulded and shaped, and can be combined with other metals to form alloys. For these reasons, lead has been used by humans for millennia and is widespread today in products as diverse as: pipes; storage batteries; pigments and paints; ceramic glazes; vinyl products; weights, shot and ammunition; cable covers; radiation shielding; solder, stained glass, crystal vessels, jewelry, toys and in some cosmetics.

Lead poisoning occurs through inhalation of lead particles generated by burning materials containing lead, e.g. during smelting, informal recycling, stripping leaded paint and using leaded gasoline; and ingestion of lead-contaminated dust, water from leaded pipes, and food (from lead-glazed or lead-soldered containers).

Lead in the body is distributed to the brain, liver, kidney and bones. It is stored in the teeth and bones, where it accumulates over time. Human exposure is usually assessed through the measurement of lead in blood.

Lead is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems and is particularly harmful to young children. Childhood lead exposure is estimated to contribute to about 600,000 new cases of children developing intellectual disabilities every year.

Lead exposure is estimated to account for 143,000 deaths per year, with the highest burden from poi-

soning occurring in least developing and developing countries.

There is no known level of lead exposure that is considered safe. Lead has had serious consequences for the health of children. At high levels of exposure, lead attacks the brain and central nervous system to cause coma, convulsions and even death. Children who survive severe lead poisoning may be left with mental retardation and behavioural disruption.

AGENDA joined as a contributor to the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint, a voluntary collaborative initiative to focus and catalyze the efforts of a diverse range of stakeholders to achieve international goals to prevent children's exposure to lead from paint and to minimize occupational exposures to lead paint.

AGENDA participated in the International Week of Action on Prevention of Lead Poisoning (October 20-26th 2013) by raising awareness through media and other stakeholders. Media coverage included print and electronic in English and Kiswahili, such as:

The way lead in paint is detrimental to human beings;

Dar needs law to control lead paint;

Fahamu risasi katika rangi na athari zake; and

Rangi zenye Madini ya risasi tishio

There was also Radio France International (RFI - Swahili service), which broadcasts to more than eight countries, including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, parts of Burundi, southern Rwanda, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, northern Zambia, southern

Sudan, and part the Comoros. The RFI Swahili coverage "**Madini ya risasi na athari zake**" was broadcast in January 2014.

Further work on lead paint in Tanzania will be done during the implementation of the project "Lead Paint Elimination in Africa," which will be executed by IPEN POs in Tanzania, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Ivory Coast (where major activities will be implemented) and a few other African countries. UNEP is the implementing agency, with financial support from the GEF. The project is slated to start in mid 2014.

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Reducing Mercury Exposures and Transitioning Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Miners Away from Mercury Use in Tanzania

By *Haji Rehani* (AGENDA, Tanzania)

AGENDA for Environment and Responsible Development (AGENDA), with support from Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), carried out a study on "Reducing Mercury Exposures and Transitioning Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Miners Away from Mercury Use in Tanzania". The project, which was completed in March 2013, focused on building upon the outcome of previous initiatives; particularly in capacity-building and awareness-creating on the existing technologies on improved gold recovery, minimising mercury releases, and mercury-free technologies. Capacity-building activities involved small scale miners, gold

shop owners, mining officers and key government officials as well as policy makers. The project involved the following activities:

Dissemination of mercury alternative technologies; Dissemination of mercury emission reduction technologies; Awareness-creation on the impacts of mercury to human health and the environment for stakeholders and general public; and Tailor made training to AGENDA on project management (logical framework and result-based management).

Awareness-creation activities were carried out by demonstration of various Best Available Techniques (BATs) and Best Environmental Practices (BEPs). Technologies demonstration and dissemination were carried out to artisanal and small scale miners, mining officers and key government officials. These activities included dissemination of awareness materials as well as live demonstration in small scale mining centres within the Lake Victoria Zone. In addition to that, new information concerning techniques used by miners in improving their work was also shared among participants and hence provided

wider sharing of current and new information and developments in the global arena. This involved 30 participants representing miners, extension officers and policy makers, with a good number of small scale miners that were onlookers who were interested in the demonstrated technologies.

It was noted that many miners are aware of the dangers posed by mercury. However, limited information among miners on appropriate alternatives to mercury as well as limited support from the government (extension services from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals) has led to continuing use of the mercury without abatement technologies and crude gold recovery technologies. In addition to that, miners were highly motivated on the prospects of improving efficiency while reducing risks from mercury exposure and promised to share information about the alternative technologies with their colleagues to improve their livelihoods and health.

AGENDA recommends:

1. More efforts should be put into research on appropriate mercury

alternative technologies for successful mercury phase-out;

2. More capacity-building on BATs / BEPs in order to improve miners' livelihoods;
3. Efforts should also be put into facilitating miner-to-miner (locals and international) sharing experiences on BATs / BEPs for easy adoption; and
4. More experience-sharing initiatives to mining extension officers and policy makers on BATs / BEPs, as well as mercury alternatives and mercury emissions reduction technologies.

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Mercury Measuring in Educational, Health and Artisanal and Small Scale Mining in Tanzania

By Haji Rehani (AGENDA, Tanzania)

AGENDA for Environment and Responsible Development (AGENDA), with support from Zero Mercury Working Group (ZMWG), carried out a study in four regions (Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Geita and Mbeya) that focused on measuring mercury levels in the air within healthcare settings and artisanal & small scale gold mining centres within Tanzania. The study covered a total of 21 healthcare centres that included 12 hospitals, 9 dental clinics, and 14 small scale gold mining centres, and measurements were taken using a mass spectrometer mercury analyser (Lumex RA 915). In most of the health care centres, mercury is still in use in equipment, products and dental filling processes. Mercury exposure to patients and dental sections work-



Makongolosi Chunya ASGM



Amana Hospital, Dental Section

ers, as well as medical equipments store keepers, is derived from mercury emissions from dental filling processes, leaking of mercury vapour emissions from medical equipments, and products that contain mercury. Mercury exposure to miners and nearby communities in small scale gold mining is derived from the gold ore amalgamation process using elemental mercury as well as panning and burning of mercury–gold amalgam in the open air without recovery systems.

Measurements that were taken within the healthcare centres showed varied levels of mercury in the air. In the wards, dumping sites, and open spaces, mercury in the air was noted to be low, ranging from 4ng/m³ to 200ng/m³, while the amount of mercury found in the store rooms was high, as many stores are closed with no ventilation; hence low frequency of air exchange. In the dental sections and dental clinics, mercury was noted to be moderately above the WHO limits in the facilities that have high ventilation with open, big windows, while mercury levels were very high in the facilities with low ventilation or with closed windows, as well

as those that use air conditioning equipment such that air exchange frequency is low. Levels of mercury in the dental rooms seemed to be higher during the dental filling process than in situations when fillings were not be done. The level would shoot up to 9,655ng/m³ during the mercury amalgam filling, while the maximum allowable indoor exposure level of mercury is 300ng/m³ (WHO-World Health Organisation). This shows that patients and dental workers inhale a lot of mercury during filling. In small scale gold mining areas, it was also noted that in the open burning areas mercury levels were too high comparing to amalgamation, washing and other areas. The level shot up to >50,000ng/m³ in open burning areas (of gold –mercury amalgam) as well as in the general open area within mining centres.

Generally, it was observed that artisanal and small scale mining centres/areas showed the highest levels of mercury and privately owned dental hospitals came second, while the government owned dental hospitals came third.

The study therefore recommended the following:

- a. The Tanzanian government should ratify the Minamata Convention soon, as well as take the leading role in minimising mercury emissions and eventual elimination;
- b. There is a need to improve ventilation as well as frequency of air exchange in dental filling rooms;
- c. Dental doctors should provide adequate advice on mercury health risks to patients receiving dental fillings;
- d. Government ministries should consider changing their procurement policies in order to successfully phase-out mercury products and equipment by focusing on alternatives;
- e. Awareness-creation on artisanal and small scale gold mining recovery technology and mercury emissions reduction technologies should be shared among stakeholders;
- f. More research needs to be carried out on mercury alternatives technologies for gold recovery, and best available technologies and best environmental practices for artisanal and small scale gold mining should be disseminated; and
- g. More propagation to miners on existing mercury alternative technologies for artisanal and small scale gold mining and gold recovery should occur.

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Project on Mercury Treaty Implementation in Nigeria

By Leslie Adogame (SRADev, Nigeria)

Since December 2013, SRADev Nigeria has been implementing a 6-month national project aimed at preparing Nigeria to ratify and implement the mercury treaty. The overall goal of the project is to facilitate a concerted national effort through “priority setting/enabling activities” that would help to strengthen capacities towards efficient and effective ratification and implementation of the Mercury Treaty in Nigeria.

The first phase of the project is Lumex testing being carried out in Lagos, Ibadan and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Mercury testing activities kicked off with a training session by AGENDA staff in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in December 2013. Fieldwork by SRADev Nigeria is being carried out in hospitals where measuring devices (thermometers and sphygmomanometers) are used, stored and disposed; in dental clinics within hospitals both public and private; universities where dentistry is taught; places where measuring devices are discarded (such as waste incinerators at hospitals, landfills, or via open burning); and other areas of public interest that could raise awareness. The second phase entails promoting phase-out policies for mercury use in products by: looking for every source of data on import or production of mercury products in Nigeria and the availability of alternatives now and projected by 2020; analysing the situation above and preparing a summarized report on Mercury Products in Nigeria; conducting a gap analysis towards strengthening the legal framework for Mercury

Treaty obligations for the products sector - to be mainstreamed into the national legislation for sound chemical management and improved implementation of the Treaty; and organising a stakeholder feedback meeting to receive comments and solicit views on next concrete steps to comply with Convention product obligations.

Before completion in May/June 2014, the project, sponsored by European Environmental Bureau/Zero Mercury Working Group on behalf of SSNC, will also feature media and NGO outreach and awareness raising and other activities aimed at initiating work towards the development of a National Action Plan on artisanal and small scale gold mining.

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The Minamata Convention on Mercury: What Does it Mean?

By Rico Euripidou (groundWork, South Africa)

The text of the “Minamata Convention on Mercury”, which was agreed in Geneva at the concluding leg of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury, was presented for adoption and opened for signature at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries Diplomatic Conference. This took place in Kumamoto and in Minamata, Japan, from 9 to 11 October 2013. 139 governments adopted this Convention text.

In Japan, South Africa, along with 93 other governments, signed the Convention. By signing the Minamata Convention, South Africa

has demonstrated its commitment to implementing the controls and reductions of mercury identified in the Convention.

The Minamata Convention broadly provides for controls and reductions in mercury across a range of products, processes and industries where mercury is used, released or emitted. The Treaty also addresses the direct emissions of mercury from coal combustion, mining, supply and trade, export and import of mercury, as well as safe storage of waste mercury.

More importantly, this Treaty is the first new global convention on environment and health for almost a decade. Coming at a time when multilateral negotiations face serious challenges - the failed climate change negotiations are a case in point - the Mercury Treaty give us new hope on intergovernmental cooperation on global environment issues. However, many have expressed that the devil may lie in the details, and add that reducing mercury use and environmental levels won't be a quick and easy process.

The World Health Organization Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan stated, “With the signing of the Minamata Convention on Mercury we will be going a long way in protecting the world forever from the devastating health consequences from mercury. Mercury is one of the top ten chemicals of major public health concern and is a substance which disperses into and remains in ecosystems for generations, causing severe ill health and intellectual impairment to exposed populations.”

In South Africa, Eskom's power generation accounts for some 75% of the total mercury emissions, with power generation in the Highveld making a significant contribution.

In relation to mercury in particular, Eskom is estimated to release approximately 30–40 tonnes of mercury emissions from the its coal-fired electricity sector (Pirrone, N et al., “Global mercury emissions to the atmosphere from anthropogenic and natural sources”. *Atmos. Chem. Phys.*, 10, 5951–5964, 2010). A conservative estimate of annual health benefits is some \$39–\$47 per gram of atmospheric mercury emissions eliminated (Pacyna, J et al. 2010, “An assessment of costs and benefits associated with mercury emission reductions from major anthropogenic sources”. *J Air Waste Manag Assoc* 60 (3): 302–315).

More recently, a new study in the EU considered lost IQ costs due to mercury exposure. The IQ benefits from controlling mercury pollution were translated into economic impacts based on the calculated current lifetime income benefits from a higher IQ level. The report states that there is little doubt that global benefits substantially exceed \$20 billion.

Now that the global Mercury Treaty has been named the Minamata Convention on Mercury, we have a duty to the people of Minamata that their tragedy and their determination (which inspired the governments of the world to agree the Minamata Convention last January) were not in vain.

Achim Steiner, the Executive director of UNEP, succinctly sums this up thus: “The faster the international community signs, adopts and ratifies the Minamata Convention on Mercury - beginning this week in Japan - the faster its provisions will come into force and the greater the tribute to the extraordinary people of this remarkable city”.

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Reducing Impacts of Toxic Chemicals in Products to Human Health and Environment in Tanzania

By Euphrasia Shayo (ENVIROCARE, Tanzania)

Environment, Human Rights Care and Gender Organization (ENVIROCARE) in Tanzania has been implementing a program titled “Reducing Impacts of Toxic Chemicals in Products to Human

cians, business owners (wholesalers and retailers), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and producers/manufacturers. These groups represent a targeted 785,000 beneficiaries, including 160,000 men/boys and 625,000 women/girls, manufacturers, supplier and consumers. The project covered seven selected Tanzania regions, including Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Mwanza, Mbeya, Dodoma, Kilimanjaro and Arusha, and the fieldwork was done in July and August, 2013. The regions represent the five zones (Northern, Central, Eastern, Southern and Lake Zone) in Tanzania.

Research conducted under the program found that most of the people



Cosmetic products commonly used by consumers

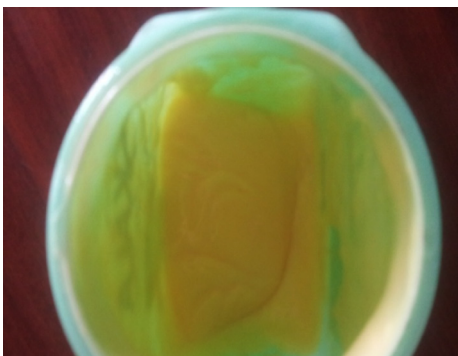
Health and Environment in Tanzania.” This project aims to reduce human health and environmental risks from chemicals in products and textile industries in Tanzania by 2015. The program involved 10 groups of stakeholders, including policy makers, law enforcers, decision makers, consumers, children, medical professionals and techni-

are aware of cosmetics that contain toxic chemicals. At the same time, some people do not have the knowledge to differentiate cosmetics and medicines (steroids). Through the inventory study, ENVIROCARE realized that most of cosmetic consumers, especially women, use medicines like Mediven, Betasol, Diprosone, Betacort, and Epiderm

cream, etc., which all contain steroids and should be applied under medical consultation from a doctor.

ENVIROCARE analyzed cosmetics for chemical composition in Sweden by Eurofins Environment Testing Sweden AB. Most of the cosmetics that were analyzed were consumed by the participants of the workshop that ENVIROCARE organized; though they did not know whether the cosmetics contained toxic chemicals or had any effects on their bodies. This shows the immediate need to educate the community and consumers about the effects of using cosmetics containing toxic chemicals and need to change their attitudes.

During the training workshop, ENVIROCARE also learned that most of the cosmetic consumers are women and about 78% of women are using local mixed cosmetics (mikorogo). For example, they mix Qartem (for treating malaria), jik (bleaching agent), white cement, any cream with Clobetasol or Betametasol (a steroid), Movate cream (containing Hydroquinone), battery acid, and 4 Jaribu soaps (containing mercury), and boil the mixture for about 10 minutes. Thereafter the contents are then sold. There is a larger market for mixed cosmetics than others in the shops because the mixed cosmetics respond quickly and makes someone so soft and shiny.



Mixed cosmetics (with toxic chemicals) "mkorogo"



Participants at first workshop

Side effects caused by the cosmetics containing toxic chemicals include allergic reactions, irritant and contact dermatitis.

Baby feeding bottles

The tests for baby feeding bottles were also done with analysis in Sweden by Eurofins Environment Testing Sweden AB. The testing involved samples of baby feeding bottles manufactured in UK and China and purchased in Tanzania. For each test, one sample of feeding bottle from UK and China respectively was tested. Test period was November 2013. Please contact ENVIROCARE for specific test results if you are interested.

The findings were quite new (as such research had never before been conducted in Tanzania) and shocking, as most of the community members were not aware that baby feeding bottles contain toxic chemicals (phthalates). ENVIROCARE did a small amount of research in Facebook groups, especially those dealing with mother-

hood, in order to see how many are using feeding bottles. Surprisingly, all women said that they are using these bottles for their children from the time they are just born through 5 years of age. From this research ENVIROCARE surmised that more than 60% of children use these feeding bottles to drink milk, juice, water, etc.; therefore it is high time to educate and provide alternatives to baby feeding bottles like using spoons and drinking glasses, etc., or, when buying bottles one should buy those labeled "PCB (Polychlorinated Biphenyls) free."

Workshops and Trainings

ENVIROCARE conducted two workshops and one training in relation to the study.

The first workshop, "Reduce the impact of toxic chemicals in products to human health and environment in Tanzania" was held on 5th December, 2013. It aimed at raising awareness about the study and reporting on the research done, and it involved 45 participants grouped as

NGOs (ENVIROCARE and AGEN-DA); government institutions (National Environment Management Council, Tanzania Bureau of Standards, Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority, Government Chemist Laboratory Agency and Muhimbili National Hospital); private sector (KCMC Hospital) and five affected people.

The second Workshop, "Chemical Management Committee" was held on 31st January, 2014. It aimed at formulating a chemical management committee on reducing the impact of toxic chemicals in products to human health and environment in Tanzania. The committee will be responsible in campaigning, which will be conducted as the study activities are being achieved. This workshop attracted 20 participants including NGOs, government institutions, the private sector, and six affected people from Magomeni and Tegeta in Dar es Salaam.

A training for consumers, manufacturers, salon workers and suppliers was held in March, 2014 and aimed at providing training about the upcoming campaigning and raising awareness, lobbying and advocating

the study in Tanzania. It involved 39 participants from NGOs, government institutions, the private sector, and 30 affected people.

Recommendations

There is a lot is to be done as far as awareness is concerned for consumers, manufacturers and suppliers on chemicals in products. Awareness raising through education can change people's attitudes on toxic chemicals in products and hence accept their culture, thus maintain and respect their natural skin. Also, there is a need to do more research on baby products, as this has not been done previously and this might have affected our children. The presence of specific policy on chemicals in products is also important, as it will regulate the manufacturing, supply and importation of these products to reduce and restrict the use and importation of toxic chemicals in products.

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NGO work in Burundi

By Nshimirimana Jean Donatien

Propreté, Environnement et Santé (PES) in Burundi has recently participated in an inventory of POPs in agriculture and health. The organization also carried out a week of "No pesticides use in Burundi" from 20 to 30 March. This was done through organization of radio programs sensitizing the population on the adverse effects of pesticides on their health and the environment. PES is also planning some activities on the elimination of lead in paint. However, the major challenge in this case is funding sources.

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IPEN's global network is comprised of more than 700 public interest, non-governmental organizations in 118 countries. Working in the international policy arena and in developing countries, with international offices in the US and Sweden, IPEN is coordinated via eight IPEN Regional Hub Offices in Africa, Asia, Central / Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. IPEN works to establish and implement safe chemicals policies and practices that protect human health and the environment around the world.

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