

**Report of the Inception Workshop for a Pilot Project
on Monitoring Severely Hazardous Pesticide Formulations in Sri Lanka
for the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention**



Kandy, Sri Lanka

27-29 September 2011

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Background

Article 6 of the Rotterdam Convention contains a provision for developing countries and countries with an economy in transition to propose severely hazardous pesticide formulations (SHPF) causing human health or environmental problems under the conditions of use in the country. When the Secretariat receives such a proposal it is to be published in the PIC Circular for information exchange among Parties, and to be forwarded to the Chemical Review Committee as a candidate chemical for listing in Annex III of the Convention.

This activity aimed at strengthening the national capacity in monitoring and reporting on pesticide poisoning in Sri Lanka. The experience gained may be shared with other countries in the Asia and Pacific region.

Sri Lanka has experience in pesticide poisoning monitoring and there is existing collaboration between health and agriculture sectors. In the past, the monitoring programmes focused on self harm using pesticides. According to the studies, most suicides were caused by pesticides due to easy access to highly hazardous substances. The results of early studies led to banning or severely restricting some highly hazardous pesticides in the 1980s and 1990s. The pilot project aimed to build on existing experience and link up to relevant ongoing programmes. It focused on occupational exposure of pesticides.

Objectives

The objective of this pilot activity was to strengthen the national capacity and collaborative efforts for monitoring, data collecting and reporting on pesticide poisoning cases and to enable Sri Lanka to submit proposals for SHPFs. At the national level, the findings should feed back to policy and regulatory decisions and ultimately contribute to pesticide risk reduction in order to protect human health and environment.

Outcomes

Taking part in the workshop were participants from the Department of Agriculture of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Office of the Registrar of Pesticides, Provincial Agriculture Department, South Asian Clinical Toxicology Research Collaboration (SACTRC), Peradeniya University, National Poison Information Centre, Ministry of Environment, FAO regional office for Asia and Pacific, an NGO (Vikalpani), FAO Headquarters and the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat.

Ms. L.U.N. Sumanasekera, the Director of the Department of Agriculture Technology, representing the Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. N. Dissanayake, the Director of the Rice Research Institute, representing the Director General of Agriculture and Dr. Anura Wijesekara, the Registrar of Pesticides addressed opening remarks to welcome all participants. Ms. J. Marasinghe, Research Officer from the Office of the Registrar of Pesticides presented an overview of experience in the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention in Sri Lanka.

The agenda (Annex 1) included a series of plenary presentations and break out groups working on case studies. The Secretariat made presentations on the objectives and approach of the pilot project; overview of the Rotterdam Convention; information requirements and process for submission of an SHPF under Article 6; lessons learned, and other issues to be taken into account such as gender. Through the presentations and discussion participants gained a better understanding of the procedure and benefit of the Convention, which set the stage for the subsequent work.

When preparing a proposal for an SHPF, Designated National Authorities (DNAs) may collect the information directly or draw upon technical expertise from any relevant source, e.g. community health monitoring centres, hospitals, farmers associations, farmer field schools and NGOs. Standard incident report forms have been developed by the Secretariat to facilitate the collection and reporting of human health and environmental incidents caused by pesticides. Therefore, the involvement of different agencies and sectors is the key to success.

Dr. Indika Gawarammana from SACTRC gave presentations on past and current work on monitoring intentional poisoning cases in the country; the long standing collaboration between health sector and pesticide regulatory authority. He is one of the leading toxicologists in the monitoring work undertaken in Sri Lanka. He also gave a presentation on how the findings of the monitoring led to and backed up policy and regulatory decisions, as well as observed impact in improving the situation after the banning and restriction of some HHP. Dr. Indika brought in a team of toxicologists from hospitals in four provinces that are motivated and committed to play a key role in the pilot project. Monitoring on occupational exposure is a new, important area of work for his team, hence this workshop was seen as an opportunity to extend their experience. In addition, they have been actively looking for funds for monitoring on chronic effects of pesticide poisoning.

Ms. Abubaker from FAO-RAP presented FAO's approaches for community-based monitoring of pesticide hazards and exposure; and FAO's regional programme on IPM and Pesticide Risk Reduction. She also gave a presentation on behalf of the NGO Vikalpani on the activities of PAN-AP in the absence of the representative who unfortunately attended the workshop for only half a day. Ms. Abubaker presentation brought in new perspectives to the audience and raised awareness of ecologically sound plant protection through IPM. While there is a lot of data in monitoring through hospital and poisoning centres in Sri Lanka, there is little experience on community based approach. Participants from provincial agriculture department are interested in working on community based approach. However, it was also recognized that the pilot project may not be able to cover all aspects and this may be dealt with in a follow up activity.

As a key outcome of the workshop, a detailed work plan (Annex 2) for the field data collection of the pilot project on monitoring SHPFs was developed and adopted, including where, what, who, how and when. Four provinces were selected to be monitored over one crop season, not only through hospitals but also involving a field visit by doctors and a field survey by agriculture inspectors in each province. The Office of the Pesticide Registrar (also the DNA) will coordinate the activities in close collaboration with the health sector, provincial agriculture department and the University. The role of each stakeholder was defined. At the field level, the pilot project includes an awareness raising campaign on pesticide risk.

Agenda

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Session 1 Opening of the meeting	
Opening remarks by Host Government	
Introduction of participants	
Purpose and objectives of the workshop	<i>Secretariat</i>
Logistic arrangements	<i>Host</i>
Session 2 Introduction to the Rotterdam Convention and Article 6	
Overview of the Rotterdam Convention	<i>Secretariat</i>
Provisions on proposals of severely hazardous pesticide formulations (SHPF) - Article 6 of the Convention - procedure - information requirements	<i>Secretariat</i>
Experience in the implementation of the RC in Sri Lanka	<i>DNA of Sri Lanka</i>
Q&A	
Session 3 Information requirement and form for proposal of SHPF	
Introduction of information requirement and standard form for proposal of SHPF	<i>Secretariat</i>
Case study	<i>Break out group</i>
Discussion and wrap up of day 1	
Session 4 Identify information sources and methodologies for data collection	
Initial experience on the programme of SHPF under the Rotterdam Convention	<i>Secretariat</i>
Sri Lanka's experience in pesticide poisoning data collection from clinics	<i>D. Indka Gawarammana</i>
Experience in community based pesticides poisoning data collection	<i>FAO regional office</i>
Brainstorming on pilot field activity for data collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the key players? • What are the best data collection methods to be compatible with the information requirements of the Rotterdam Convention? • How should the region for the pilot activity be chosen? • When is the best time frame to conduct the field activity? • What background information, awareness raising material or training is needed to support the field activity 	<i>Break out group</i>
Session 5 Plan for field data collection, validation and reporting	

Develop workplan for data collection, validation and for the preparation of the report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare a detailed Workplan (What, Who, How, When). A matrix-table will be provided by the secretariat to structure the discussion. 	
Session 6 Pesticide risk reduction	
FAO activities on pesticide risk reduction in the region	<i>FAO regional office</i>
Influence of pesticide regulation on acute poisoning in Sri Lanka	<i>D. Indka Gawarammana</i>
Session 7 Conclusion	
Review and finalize workplan, indicate budget and tasks assignment	
Workshop evaluation Conclusion and closing remarks	

Work plan for field data collection

1. Target population

Define location	5 hospitals covering 5 districts: Anuradhapura, Matara, Kurunegala, Pollonnaruwa, Peradeniya
Why selected	- Agricultural districts - Research infrastructure in place already - High incidence of pesticide poisoning
Target group	1. Symptomatic patients presenting to hospitals following occupational exposure to pesticides 2. Pesticide applicators identified in the field – 5 villages, 1 village per district
Number	1. Unknown 2. Minimum 10
Selection criteria	Farmers or pesticide applicators

2. Project implementation - identify key steps, e.g.

Steps	Lead	Date	Budget required
1. Assemble team	ROP	15 October 2011	
1.1 List of contact points from agriculture sector prepared and circulated	ROP	15 October 2011	No
2. Ethical clearance	SACTRC	31 October 2011	No
3. Data collection tools and accompany material prepared	Secretariat and ROP	15 October 2011	
3.1 Reproduction of Secretariat package	ROP	15 October 2011	Yes
4. Blood sampling materials	SACTRC and ROP	November 2011 to March 2012	Yes
5. Awareness raising	Department of agriculture	November 2011	
5.1 Field visits			Yes
5.2 Community meetings			Yes
6. Data collection - data entry	SACTRC and ROP	November 2011 to March 2012	
6.1 Hospital based collection	SACTRC	November 2011 to March 2012	Yes
6.2 Data collection by agriculture field officers and auditing	Department of agriculture	November 2011 to March 2012	Yes
6.3 Five x 1-day field data collection by doctors Anuradhapura, Matara, Kurunegala, Pollonnaruwa, Nuwara Eliya	SACTRC and Department of agriculture	November 2011 to March 2012	Yes
6.4 Blood sample analysis and shipping	SACTRC	April to May 2012	Yes

Steps	Lead	Date	Budget required
7. Supervisory field visits, feedback from community	ROP	November 2011 to March 2012	
7.1 ROP office			Yes
7.2 Field agriculture officers			Yes
8. Progress review meeting	All	December 2011/ January 2012	Yes
9. Data analysis	SACTRC	April to May 2012	Yes
10. Finalization and reporting - Publication of findings	ROP and SACTRC	May 2012	
10.1 Report			Yes
10.2 Publication			Yes

List of participants

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Name	Organization/Designation/Contact information
Ms. L.U.N Sumanasekera, Director/ Agriculture Technology representing Mr. K.E Karunathilake in his absence	Secretary/ Ministry of Agriculture
Dr. D.M.N. Dissanayake, Director/ Rice Research Institute, representing Mr. K. Mankotte Director General of Agriculture in his absence	DOA/ Director General
Dr. G.A.W. Wijesekara	Office of the Registrar of Pesticides/ Registrar of Pesticides
Ms. J.P. Marasinghe	Office of the Registrar of Pesticides/ Research Officer
Ms. Linda Abubaker	Asia Regional IPM Programme FAO regional office for Asia and the Pacific Bangkok, Thailand E-mail: AlmaLinda.Abubaker@fao.org
Mr. M.B. Dissanayake	DOA/ Provincial Director- Central
Ms. Kusum Seneviratne	DOA/ Deputy Director-N' Eliya
Mr. Rathnasiri	DOA/ Provincial Director -Southern
Ms. Nalika Rupasinghe	DOA/ Deputy Director - Hambantota
Mr. Hiran Perera	DOA/ Deputy Director –Inter Provincial- Hambantota
Mr. P. Wijeratne	DOA/ Provincial Director -Northwestern
Mr. O.P. Kithsiri	DOA/ Provincial Director -NorthWestern
Mr. Laxman Premanath	DOA/ Provincial Director -NorthCentral
Mr. Athula Kithsiri	DOA/ Deputy Director - A'pura
Dr. Indika Gawarammana	SACTRC, Uni. Peradeniya
Mr. Fahim	SACTRC, Uni. Peradeniya
Mr. Shahmy	SACTRC, Uni. Peradeniya
Dr. Prasad Perera	SACTRC, Pollonnaruwa
Dr. Jayani Sirisena	SACTRC, Anuradhapura
Dr. Danuka Alahakoon	SACTRC, Matara
Dr. Ganga Wickramasinghe	SACTRC, Kurunegala
Dr. Dhanushka Gayamal	SACTRC, Peradeniya
Dr. T.Sivananthawerl	Uni. Peradeniya/ Statistician
Mr. Evans	Representative/ FAO-Sri Lanka
Dr. Vajira Palipana	Dept. of Labour/Occupational Health
Dr. Hirimuthugoda	National Poison Information Centre
Ms. Sarojini Jayasekera	Central Environment Authority/ Actg. Director

Name	Organization/Designation/Contact information
Ms. Menu	'Vikalpani' - Non Governmental Organization
Ms. Shiromi Gamage	Office of the Registrar of Pesticides
Mr. S.H.M.C.S. Kularatne	Office of the Registrar of Pesticides
Mr. B.P.C. Sampath	Office of the Registrar of Pesticides
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DOA- Department of Agriculture

SACTRC- South Asian Clinical Toxicology Research Collaboration