UNEP

Regionally Based
Assessment of Persistent
Toxic Substances

Mediterranean Region

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the Regional Team

17-18 May 2001, Barcelona

The Meeting, held in the premises of the Supporting Institution, Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas), in Barcelona, was attended by

Paul Whylie. UNEP Chemicals. Project Manager
Joan Albaiges. CSIC, Barcelona. Regional Coordinator
Elena deFelip. ISS, Rome.
Fouad Abousamra. UNEP, Athens.
Jean François Narbonne. U.B., Bordeaux.
Mladen Picer. RBI, Zagreb.
Jean-Pierre Villeneuve. IAEA, Monaco.
Aldo Iacomelli. EALP, Livorno
Jordi Bruno. UPC, Barcelona
Jordi Diaz. IQS, Barcelona
Jordi Dachs. CSIC, Barcelona (partially)
Ricardo Barra. EULA, Chile. Regional Coordinator for Region XI

Opening of the meeting

The RC welcomed all participants, appreciated their involvement in the Project and presented the objectives of the Meeting.
The participants made a short presentation of themselves and expressed their willingness to participate in the Project.
The Agenda enclosed as Annex 1 was adopted.

RT: Regional Team. TM: Team member. RC: Regional Coordinator. PM: Project Manager.
Overview of the project

The PM, Paul Whyliie, explained the general aims of the Project from the standpoint of its Objectives:
- Measure damages and threats of PTS
- Provide GEF and UNEP rationale to assign priorities for future action on chemical issues
- To determine differences in priority among regions

The expected results:
- Identification of sources of PTS in the regions
- Assessment of impact of PTS on human health and the environment
- Assessment of transboundary transport of PTS
  (A group of experts on modelling will be created. Individual names can be suggested)
- Assessment of root causes of PTS problems and capacity to manage regionally
- Identification of regional and global priority PTS environmental issues

The outputs:
- Establishment of a network of PTS experts
- Establishment of a management and co-ordination structure
- Twelve comprehensive Regional Reports
- One Global Report

The proposed format is:
- Approximately 160 countries slotted into the 12 regions of the globe
- Regional Co-ordinators established for each region
- 4-5 Regional Team Members to assist Co-ordinator
- Project Manager appointed at UNEP Chemicals
- A Steering Group to advise Project Manager

And the general workplan:
- Project to run for 2 years
- Data to be collected over 8 months April - November, 2001
- Country Experts to lead data collection
- Questionnaires available through all media in 6 languages
- Technical Workshops to discuss sources, environmental concentrations, effects, etc.
- A Regional Priority Setting Meeting to discuss draft Regional Report
- Small task force to prepare review paper on alternatives to PTS
- Global Priority Setting Meeting to discuss draft Global Report
- Global Report developed highlighting major issues
- Global Report provides guidance to the GEF for future action

The project will mainly be based on electronic communication, so a website has been designed as a hub for communication and information flow for scientists and others around the world.
The address is: http://www.chem.unep.ch/pts/
Discussion on the TOR for the Regional Team

The objectives, the workplan and the timetable of the Project for the region were presented by the RC and endorsed by the RT.

It was stressed the importance of the promotion of the Project within the whole region, in order to accomplish the objectives of the Contribution phase and the successful production of the Regional Report. It was also stressed that the development of the Project mainly relies on Email communication.

Both the geographical and subject coverages were considered, and each TM was assigned an area of responsibility, as follows:

- Spain & Portugal: J. Albaiges
- France: J.F. Narbonne
- Italy: E. de Felip
- Adriatic area & Turkey: M. Picer
- Greece & Eastern Med.: F. Abousamra
- North Africa: J.P. Villeneuve

Sources: J. Bruno and A. Iacomelli
- Environmental levels: J. Albaiges, J.P. Villeneuve and M. Picer
- Effects: J.F. Narbonne and E. de Felip
- Transport pathways: J. Albaiges
- Management issues: F. Abousamra, J. Bruno and A. Iacomelli

The members were requested to identify information sources in their geographical area, as well as contact persons (experts) to be invited to contribute to the Report. Focal points in countries not represented in the RT could be of great help during the contribution phase. All the information collected by the members should be centralized by the RC for further circulation within the Team.

Moreover, multinational organizations (e.g. IMO, IOC, FAO, WHO, WMO, ILO, EU DG XI,...) and industrial associations (e.g. CEFIC, Euroclor, Clean Prod. Center,...) should be contacted. Previous exchange of information with other RC will be advisable, in order to avoid duplications or troubles with the institutions. F. Abousamra offered the possibility of contacting the national coordinators for the MEDPOL Program, and to organize a presentation of the Project in their coming meeting. The members list was circulated.

Letters of formal appointment were requested by the TM to facilitate their duties within the Project. Moreover, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the supporting Institution and each TM, regarding the financial support. The terms will be discussed bilaterally.

Discussion on the questionnaires and data gathering

The Information Management System of the Project was presented and different doubts and queries concerning its implementation were clarified by the PM. The Project web site was also visited.
A crucial point, at this stage, is the data gathering through the questionnaires. Much concern was expressed about their filling by industry (e.g. on sources) and by institutions with large data sets (e.g. IFREMER). On the contrary, they could be useful for collecting unpublished data from some places, particularly in developing countries.

In order to ensure a wide participation of countries, the TM should identify, as soon as possible, experts in their area of responsibility (see previous item in the Minutes). The possibility of visiting countries or institutions was also discussed. Project presentations in other Meetings or Symposia in the region was recommended (e.g. MEDPOL, CIESM,…). Further suggestions will be welcome.

Discussion and proposals for the Regional Network of experts

Some TM indicated that the lists of POPs Focal points and Country experts contain names which are neither representative nor active in the field. Therefore, there is an urgent need for updating this information.

A true operational list of experts should be completed, as soon as possible, as it is necessary for:
- the promotion of the Project
- the distribution of questionnaires
- the request of contributions for the WS
- the distribution of the Report for review

Country experts will be identified by the TM according to the distribution of responsibilities endorsed previously and their addresses sent to the RC. An adequate list will be compiled by the RC and circulated. The PM will be informed of the relevant members for its inclusion in the website list.

Presentation of the regional literature survey

As part of the background material necessary for the Project, J. Díaz presented the results of a literature survey covering the years 1980-2000 for the candidate substances for assessment. The survey included 2082 references, easy retrievable, which were organised in a database of Reference Manager programme. Among these references, 70 were reviews about different topics on PTS in the region. The analysis of the regional database showed that PCB, DDT and dioxins and furans were the “dirty dozen” PTS that accumulate the higher number of references. A preliminary search about other PTS candidates seemed to indicate the interest of including in the assessment compounds such as PAHs, HCH (lindane), organotins, phthalates, alkylphenols and brominated flame retardants. Some temporal and geographical trends were identified and a compartment (air, water, sediment, soil/sludge, human, animals, etc.) analysis was also presented.

The major outputs of the database will be: (1) identification of regional experts as those authors who have a lot of published references about PTS, (2) background information, complementary to that of the questionnaires, for the Regional Team about sources, levels, health effects, etc. It is intended that the literature database constitutes an Annex of the Regional Report.
Following the literature presentation, the selection of priority chemicals for regional assessment was discussed. As a base for discussion were taken the list of substances distributed by UNEP-Chemicals, and the list of chemicals included in the Mediterranean strategic Action Programme, provided by the MEDPOL Unit.

It was agreed to include the following chemicals in the assessment:

- Aldrin
- Dieldrin
- Endrin
- Chlordane
- Heptachlor
- PCBs
- DDT
- Hexachlorobenzene
- Toxaphene
- Mirex
- Dioxins & Furans
- Lindane
- PBBs & PBDEs
- PAHs
- Phthalates
- Alkylphenols
- Organotin compounds

**Discussion on the Outline for the Regional Report**

The different sections of the Regional Report were discussed to clarify the contents and distribute responsibilities.

The Report should have an extension in the order of 100 pages, with the necessary annexes if required (e.g. literature survey, Workshop papers, …).

The Report should incorporate:
- materials already existing in the scientific and official literature
- data obtained through filled questionnaires
- contributed papers from Workshops or specifically requested

The TM will start to produce extended summaries and preliminary drafts for each section, even though additional information from the contribution phase will be available at a later stage and should be incorporated accordingly.

The RT is the unique responsible for the edition of the Regional Report. However, external assistance can be requested and moderately indemnized, if necessary. This can be done using the resources made available to the TM, or with those foreseen for the data gathering and the organization of Workshops, depending on the type of contribution requested. It is understood that the budget limitations require an efficient use of the resources. As soon as the external contributors are identified, a proposal of expenditure should be directed to the RC.
It was agreed that besides a general regional coverage of all the items, special emphasis should be placed in illustrating the situation in the region through specific and well defined case studies. Existing national and international programs should also be reported.

The responsible persons for each section will be:

1. Preface and Introduction
   J. Albaiges

2. Source Characterisation
   J. Bruno and A. Iacomelli

3. Environmental Levels, Toxicological and Ecotoxicological Characterisation
   i) Concentrations of PTS in biotic and abiotic compartments
      Spain & Portugal: J. Albaiges
      France: J.F. Narbonne
      Italy: to be selected
      Adriatic area & Turkey: M. Picer
      Greece & Eastern Med.: F. Abousamra
      North Africa: J.P. Villeneuve
   ii) Concentrations of PTS in humans
       E. De Felip
   iii) Evidence of harmful effects
       In the ecosystem: J.F. Narbonne
       In humans: E. De Felip
   iv) Comparison of measured data with health or environmental (including food) quality criteria
       J.F. Narbonne, E. De Felip
   v) Existence of regionally derived ecotoxicological data and appropriate test species;
       J.F. Narbonne

F. Abousamra offered the information existing in the MAP Unit in Athens generated by the MEDPOL project.

E. De Felip and A. Iacomelli will look for the information existing in WHO and FAO, respectively.

4. Assessment of Major Pathways of Contaminants Transport
   J. Albaiges, J. Dachs

5. Preliminary Assessment of the Regional Capacity and Needs to Manage PTS
   i) Capacity to monitor PTS
      J.P. Villeneuve
   ii) Existing regulation and management structures addressing PTS
   iii) Status of enforcement in the region
      F. Abousamra
   iv) Examples of alternatives or measures for reduction;
   v) Technology transfer issues;
      J. Bruno, A. Iacomelli

6. Conclusions
   (All)
The following schedule for the delivery of background materials was adopted:

10 July 2001. Extended index of each section, including basic information sources.
15 April 2002. First draft of each section, incorporating the materials from the contribution phase (questionnaires and workshop papers).
30 April 2002. Summary of the information or technical gaps, research needed, conclusions, etc.
2 September 2002. Second draft of the Report, including conclusions and priorities for action.

Discussion on the organization of the Technical and Priority Setting Workshops

The timetable for the Workshops was reviewed and found that December is not the best period for organizing meetings. Therefore, it was proposed to move them to the first months of 2002, according to the following schedule:

**WS 1. Assessment of PTS sources and PTS concentration in the environment**
4-8 February 2002
Athens (Greece).
Chairpersons: F. S. Civili and J. Bruno

**WS 2. Assessment of (eco)toxicological impact of PTS and transboundary transport**
25-28 March 2002 (or 2-5 April)
Rome (Italy).
Chairpersons: E. DeFelip and J. Albaiges

**WS 3. Regional Priority Setting Meeting**
26-29 June 2002
France (?)

The WS may have a duration of 3 days, plus one day for discussion within the Regional Team. Parallel sessions could be organized in case of unrelated topics to be discussed. The exact dates should be confirmed by the local responsible.

About 15 participants can be invited for WS 1, and 2, and 30 for WS 3 Other participants can also be accepted at their own costs. A balance between government, academia and industry presentations should be ensured. These experts will be identified by the Regional Team and invited to attend, with a written contribution.

The WS should be regionally advertised for open contributions. The publication of the Proceedings in a specialized Journal can be envisaged in order to attract the interest of participants and the promotion of the Project.

The 2nd and 3rd Regional Team Meetings will be organized at the end of April and September, respectively, and the places proposed were Dubrovnik (Croatia) and Barcelona.
Summary and other business

The PM and the RC acknowledged the attendance of all TM and expressed the best wishes for the development of the Project in the region.

A summary of the Workplan is shown below.

WORKPLAN: SUMMARY OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country level contribution phase</td>
<td>April 2001-November 2001</td>
<td>Assembled data on PTS from all countries involved in the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Regional Team Meeting</td>
<td>17-18 May 2001</td>
<td>Meeting report. Agreement on development of report. Team members responsibilities established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed index of each section</td>
<td>10 July 2001</td>
<td>To be circulated within the RT before summer. This will include the information sources to be considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive summary of each section</td>
<td>10 December 2001</td>
<td>To be circulated within the RT before the end of the year (8-10 pages each).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop on sources and environmental concentrations</td>
<td>4-8 February 2002</td>
<td>Athens (Greece). Chairpersons: F. S. Civili, J. Bruno Draft chapters for Regional Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Regional Team Meeting</td>
<td>25-27 April 2002</td>
<td>Dubrovnik (Croatia). First draft report. Data gaps and conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Priority Setting Meeting</td>
<td>26-29 June 2002</td>
<td>France (?). List of regional priorities. for Regional Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Regional Team Meeting</td>
<td>16-20 September 2002</td>
<td>Barcelona (Spain) Second draft report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final draft of Regional Report</td>
<td>September-October 2002</td>
<td>Review and editing of the Regional Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print report</td>
<td>25 October 2002</td>
<td>Copies of Regional Report for each country in the region, for each member of the team and 10 copies for GEF/UNEP. Three copies of the Report to be made available on CD Rom to UNEP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>