

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

AGRICULTURE AND DANUBE WATER POLLUTION PRODUCTS AND ACTIVITIES: REPORTS

2. PESTICIDE USE IN THE DANUBE RIVER BASIN

REPORT TITLE

Inventory of Agricultural Pesticide Use in the Danube River Countries (February 2004)

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- > Historical overview of pesticide use in the DRB
- > Overall DRB pesticide consumption from 1989-1997, and in 11 countries
- > List of EU and international laws affecting pesticide use
- > List of authorized and unauthorized pesticides in DRB
- > List of problems in use and 'bad agricultural practices'
- > Impacts on human health and environment, including an extensive list of Chemical Fact Sheets
- > List of possible mechanisms for controlling pesticide pollution
- > Suggestions for policy reform for pesticide pollution control
 - EU context: EU policy, EAP, financial incentives, 'Quality Assurance Schemes'
 - Wider DRB context
- > List of proposed practical actions for pesticide pollution control
- > Four overall recommendations for policy reform for DRB national governments

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is based on national assessments of pesticide use in 11 Danube countries. It begins with an overview of pesticide use in the DRB, including how historical factors have led to recent use decreases and new pressures pushing for increased use. Overall consumption from 1989 to 1997 is described, followed by a list of EU and international laws affecting pesticide use, and which pesticides are authorized in the EU. Here it is noted that the availability of data is poor.

The overall consumption of specific pesticides in each country is provided with information on the characteristics of use. A number of problems and bad practices in use are then listed including the illegal trade of banned substances, poor storage, over-application, the drifting of pesticides into adjacent areas and poor timing for application.

The environmental and human impact of specific pesticides were studied, using national experts as well as existing literature on the subject. An extensive list of 'Chemical Fact Sheets' were added as annexes to show the environmental and human toxicity of a number of pesticides.

The potential for controlling pesticide pollution is then presented including a lengthy list of possible mechanisms such as training, taxes and permits.

Suggestions for potential policy reform for pesticide pollution control are divided between those within an EU context and those in a wider DRB context. Within the EU, stress is laid on the adoption of EU policies regulating pesticide use, especially the Water Framework Directive (EAP) and EU Rural Development Regulation. The EU's Environmental Action Programme pushes for progressive reforms in pesticide use. Financial incentives for pollution control follow such as EU agri-environmental schemes, and SAPARD funding for countries approaching EU accession.

Significant attention is put on EU 'on-farm Quality Assurance Schemes', an increasingly attractive incentive for farmers. These offer consumers assurance of the level of pesticides used in food production, especially through organic farming. One example is the 'Euro-Retailer Produce Working Group (EUREP)' which has developed a set of standards and procedures for inspecting and certifying farmers who follow so-called 'good agricultural practice' (GAP). A table in the reports summarises the mandatory requirements relating to pesticides for farmers and growers complying with the EUREP-GAP Fresh Produce Protocol – for example, in choosing chemicals, training, chemical storage and disposal.

In the wider DRB context, potential for policy reform includes encouraging national governments to implement Integrated Crop Management (ICM) and Integrated Pest Management Standards, the compulsory training and licensing of farmers and farm advisers, performance standards, eco-audits and behavioural change efforts.

A section on proposed practical actions for pesticide pollution control follows, with 12 sets of suggestions such as choosing sites for optimal plant growth, hygienic measures, training in recognizing pests, using non-chemical measures, and using safe plant protection equipment. The report ends with four overall recommendations for policy reform: reducing harmful substances and the most dangerous pesticides, better control of the use and distribution of pesticides, encouraging proper use and promoting organic farming.

To view or download the report, visit the DRP website at:

http://www.undp-drp.org/drp/en/activities_1-2_-3_agriculture_fr_phase1.html