

Ottawa, 19 June 2002

COUNCIL RESOLUTION: 02-07

**Developing a North American Regional Action Plan (NARAP) on Lindane**

THE COUNCIL:

RECALLING the Parties' commitment to the sound management of chemicals, as guided by *Agenda 21*, which was adopted during the 1992 United Nations' Conference on Environment and Development;

REAFFIRMING Council Resolution 95-05 on the Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC), adopted on 13 October 1995, in Oaxaca, Mexico, and the decisions and commitments to develop regional action plans for priority persistent and toxic substances of concern to Canada, Mexico, and the United States;

RECALLING that a North American Working Group for the Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC Working Group), composed of two senior officials selected by each Party, whose duties pertain to the regulation or management of toxic substances, was established under Council Resolution 95-05 to work with the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) to implement the decisions and commitments set out in that resolution;

NOTING that, under the guidance of the SMOC Working Group, a Criteria Task Force has developed a *Process for Evaluating Candidate Substances for Regional Action Under the Sound Management of Chemicals Initiative* in response to Council instructions to develop refined criteria for identifying persistent and toxic substances for regional action;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the SMOC Working Group has approved the *Final Decision Document on Lindane Under the Process for Identifying Candidate Substances for Regional Action under the Sound Management of Chemicals Initiative* that was developed by the Substance Selection Task Force and finalized following public consultation;

NOTING that the Substance Selection Task Force has recommended to the SMOC Working Group that a NARAP for lindane be prepared;

NOTING that the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada have recently cooperated on a review of the available scientific data regarding lindane under the North American Free Trade Agreement Technical Working Group on Pesticides;

OBSERVING that lindane is one of the most abundant and pervasive organochlorine insecticide contaminants in the environment and has been shown to be transported from temperate zones to colder northern environments, including the Arctic;

FURTHER OBSERVING that lindane can bioaccumulate to moderately to highly toxic levels in biota, wildlife, and humans and that under conditions of long-term exposure, the bioaccumulation of lindane can be greater than its metabolism in animals;

NOTING that children are placed at increased risk through the direct application of lindane-containing products utilized for head lice and scabies control when less toxic alternatives exist;

FURTHER NOTING that drinking water quality and aquatic organisms are placed at increased risk from the direct disposal of lice and scabies treatment into sewer systems that cannot cost effectively remove lindane before discharging to receiving streams;

NOTING that efforts to reduce or eliminate uses of lindane in North America will reduce risks of exposure to specific sub-populations (i.e., workers who use lindane, northern aboriginal populations, pregnant women, and children), contribute to lower levels of lindane in the ambient environment, and ideally, reduce costs associated with human health care;

FURTHER NOTING that coordinated North American stewardship of lindane will assist the three countries in promoting reductions from sources outside of North America that contribute to levels of lindane in the North American environment;

CONVINCED that continued use of lindane may pose unreasonable risks to the environment and human health in Canada, Mexico, and the United States;

RECALLING that lindane is a Level II substance scheduled for virtual elimination in the *Canada-United States Strategy for the Virtual Elimination of Persistent Toxic Substances in the Great Lakes*;

RECALLING that lindane is included in the Annex II list of persistent organic pollutants identified in the 1998 *Aarhus Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants* of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe developed under the 1979 *Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution*;

HEREBY:

DIRECTS the SMOC Working Group to develop a NARAP on lindane, taking into account:

- a) the Parties' resource considerations, capacity-building requirements, and ability to enhance capacity through various funding sources;
- b) opportunities to share expertise, experience, and technologies for assessing and addressing the exposure to and risks of lindane to humans and the environment;
- c) the potential to utilize other SMOC initiatives, such as the NARAP on environmental monitoring and assessment, to monitor levels in the environment and humans, to improve the capacity to assess the exposure to, and risks of, these substances to humans and the environment;
- d) comments received from the public during the course of the period for public review and comment on the decision document;
- e) comments of the Substance Selection Task Force letter of transmittal of 5 July 2001, to the SMOC Working Group, with respect to the need to improve inventories (for both the alpha- and gamma-isomers of hexachlorocyclohexane (HCH), and as regards the nature of products and the extent to which they remain available, for example, via public health, veterinary, agricultural, and residential uses), and taking into account releases to all environmental media;
- f) approaches to meaningful participation from the public, technical, and policy experts in developing the NARAP and, in particular, giving consideration to the public health sector, children's health professionals, and aboriginal peoples; and
- g) any relevant information emanating from North American and international reviews of these substances that are currently underway, while recognizing that such reviews should not delay action within North America.

APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL:

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