

Banff, 28 June 1999

COUNCIL RESOLUTION: 99-01

**Developing a North American Regional Action Plan for Dioxins and Furans, and Hexachlorobenzene**

THE COUNCIL:

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

REAFFIRMING Council Resolution 95-05 on the Sound Management of Chemicals, adopted on 13 October 1995, in Oaxaca, Mexico, and, in particular, 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 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 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;

FURTHER NOTING that, under this process, the Working Group has forwarded, for review and revision, nomination dossiers for dioxins and furans, and for hexachlorobenzene to the Substance Selection Task Force established by the Working Group to oversee the application of this process;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Working Group has approved, for public review and comment, the Stage III decision documents for dioxins and furans, and for hexachlorobenzene that were prepared by the Substance Selection Task Force, and that the period for public review and comment is scheduled to continue until 31 August 1999;

NOTING that the Substance Selection Task Force has recommended, in these Stage III decision documents, the preparation of a North American Regional Action Plan (the “NARAP”) for these candidate substances;

RECALLING that dioxins and furans, and hexachlorobenzene are included in the list of persistent organic pollutants identified in the Governing Council Decision 18/32 of May 1995 of the *United Nations Environment Programme*, in the *Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants* of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe developed under the 1979 *Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution*, and in Annex I to the Council Resolution 95-05 on the Sound Management of Chemicals;

RECOGNIZING that significant national and international initiatives with respect to dioxins and furans, and hexachlorobenzene are under way;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that dioxins and furans, and hexachlorobenzene are organic pollutants which are toxic, persistent and bioaccumulative and which can be transported long distances through atmospheric and aquatic pathways; and

CONVINCED that continued releases of these substances pose unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risks to the environment and human health in Canada, Mexico and the United States and that practical measures are available to reduce these risks;

HEREBY DIRECTS the Working Group to develop one NARAP for dioxins and furans, and hexachlorobenzene, taking into account:

- a) the Parties’ resource considerations, capacity building requirements and ability to enhance capacity through various funding sources;
- b) practical opportunities to cooperate in the development and timing of effective regional approaches and opportunities to encourage complementary national approaches for assessing and addressing these substances in a manner that respects the different environmental, economic, political and regulatory circumstances of the Parties;
- c) opportunities to share expertise, experience and technology for assessing and addressing the exposure to and risks of these substances to humans and the environment;
- d) the potential to utilize other Sound Management of Chemicals initiatives, such as the NARAP on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, to improve the capacity to assess the exposure to, and risks of, these substances to humans and the environment;
- e) comments received from the public during the course of the period for public review and comment on the Stage III decision document;

- f) the timing of, and information emanating from, the national and international reviews of these substances now under way;
- g) other opportunities to encourage and provide for meaningful participation of the public, and technical and policy experts, in developing this NARAP.

APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL:

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