

International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management

Report by the Secretariat

1. The International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management has been developed under the guidance of the WHO and FAO expert panels on pesticide management with the support of the legal offices of the two organizations and input from the United Nations Environment Programme.
2. The Code provides a voluntary framework for the comprehensive management of pesticides throughout their life cycles. Its main objective is to establish voluntary standards of conduct for all public and private entities engaged in or associated with the management of pesticides (see Annex). The Code is designed for use within the context of national legislation. It describes the shared responsibility of many sectors of society to work together, and addresses the need for cooperation between governments of countries that export pesticides and those that import pesticides in order to minimize potential associated health and environmental risks. The Code promotes training and capacity-building aimed at facilitating the implementation and observance of its provisions.
3. The Code is based on the FAO's previous International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. That Code, however, did not place a particular emphasis on the public health aspects of pesticides. The new International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management encompasses sound management of pesticides from a public health perspective and gives attention to the protection of humans, animals and the environment from risks of pesticides.
4. The text of the Code, finalized in the 6th FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management (Rome, 9–12 October 2012), was adopted by the 38th FAO Conference in resolution 3/2013 in June 2013. The Conference noted that full consultation among all FAO Members and stakeholders had been carried out, including through a joint meeting of the Bureau of the FAO Committee on Agriculture and the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management.
5. The FAO Conference also welcomed the proposal that the Code be adopted by the governing bodies of WHO and UNEP.
6. The Code will provide support to the continuing joint efforts of WHO and FAO in building the capacity of both their Member States for the sound management of pesticides, as was requested by the Health Assembly in resolution WHA63.26 on improvement of health through sound management of obsolete pesticides and other obsolete chemicals.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

7. The Board is invited to take note of the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management.

ANNEX

INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT ON PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT

Article 1. Objectives of the Code

1.1 The objectives of this Code are to establish voluntary standards of conduct for all public and private entities engaged in or associated with the management of pesticides, particularly where there is inadequate or no national legislation to regulate pesticides.

1.2 The entities which are addressed by this Code include governments, international organizations, pesticide industry, application equipment industry, traders of pesticides, pest control operators (PCOs), food industry and other industries that use or have an interest in pesticides, pesticide users, and public-interest groups such as environmental groups, consumer groups and trade unions.

1.3 The Code is designed for use within the context of national legislation as a basis whereby relevant entities addressed by the Code may determine whether their proposed actions and/or the actions of others constitute acceptable practices.

1.4 The Code describes the shared responsibility of many sectors of society to work together so that the benefits to be derived from the necessary and acceptable use of pesticides are achieved without significant adverse effects on human and animal health and/or the environment. To this end, all references in this Code to a government or governments shall be deemed to apply equally to regional groupings of governments for matters falling within their areas of competence.

1.5 The Code addresses the need for a cooperative effort between governments of pesticide exporting and importing countries to promote practices that minimize potential health and environmental risks associated with pesticides, while ensuring their effective use.

1.6 The Code recognizes that relevant training at all appropriate levels is an essential requirement in implementing and observing its provisions. Therefore, entities addressed by the Code should give high priority to relevant training and capacity building activities related to each Article of the Code.

1.7 The standards of conduct set forth in this Code:

1.7.1 encourage responsible and generally accepted trade practices;

1.7.2 assist countries which have not yet established regulatory controls on the quality and suitability of pesticide products needed in that country to promote the judicious and efficient use of such products and address the potential risks associated with their use;

1.7.3 promote practices which reduce risks throughout the lifecycle of pesticides, with the aim of minimizing adverse effects on humans, animals and the environment and preventing accidental poisoning resulting from handling, storage, transport, use or disposal, as well as from the presence of pesticide residues in food and feed;

1.7.4 ensure that pesticides are used effectively and efficiently and in a manner that contributes to the sustainable improvement of agriculture, public and animal health and the environment;

1.7.5 adopt the “life-cycle” approach to management of pesticides to address all major aspects related to the development, registration, production, trade, packaging, labelling, distribution, storage, transport, handling, application, use, disposal and monitoring of pesticides and pesticide residues as well as management of pesticide waste and pesticide containers;

1.7.6 are designed to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Vector Management (IVM);

1.7.7 promote participation in information exchange and international agreements identified below, in particular the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL POLICY INSTRUMENTS

International policy instruments in the field of chemical management, environmental and health protection, sustainable development and international trade, relevant to the Code

1. International policy instruments which address one or more aspects of the life cycle of a pesticide include, but are not limited to, the ones listed below. Some have direct operational implications for pesticide distribution and use, while others provide a more general policy context. Dates of entry into force are given for those instruments that were legally binding at the time of adoption of the revision of this Code.
2. International policy instruments with direct operational implications for pesticide management¹
 - The Codex Alimentarius, and more specifically the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues, operational since 1966;
 - The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, adopted in 1987 and entered into force in 1989, and its subsequent amendments;
 - The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, adopted in 1989 and entered into force in 1992;
 - The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, adopted in 1998 and entered into force in 2004;
 - The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, adopted in 2001 and entered into force in 2004.

¹ Detailed references are given in Annex 1 of the Code.

3. International policy instruments that provide a general policy context for pesticide management
- The Convention concerning Safety and Health in Agriculture, ILO, adopted in 2001 and entered into force in 2003;
 - The Convention concerning Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work, adopted in 1990 and entered into force in 1993;
 - Convention concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, ILO, Geneva, 1999;
 - The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, proclaimed by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992;
 - Agenda 21 – Global Programme of Action on Sustainable Development, and more specifically chapters 14 (Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development) and 19 (Environmentally Sound Management of Toxic Chemicals, Including Prevention of Illegal International Traffic in Toxic and Dangerous Products), adopted in 1992;
 - The Convention on Biological Diversity, adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1993;
 - The Convention concerning the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents, adopted in 1993 and entered into force in 1997;
 - The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and The World Food Summit Plan of Action, adopted in 1996;
 - The World Health Declaration and Health-for-all in the 21st Century, adopted in 1998;
 - The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, adopted in 2006 by the International Conference on Chemicals Management; and
 - The Globally harmonized system for the classification and labeling of chemicals (GHS).

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