

## Side event

### Considering socio-economic impacts of chemicals management: protecting vulnerable groups from hazardous pesticides

Wednesday, 13 May 2015 from 1:15-2:45 p.m., CICG Room 4, Geneva

**Objective:** Through an interactive dialogue, the event will highlight how actors can join forces to address the socio-economic impacts of chemical exposure on vulnerable populations, with particular focus on pesticides.

#### Agenda

##### **Moderator: Mr. Jacob Duer**

Coordinator, Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, and Secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) United Nations Environment Programme

**1.15** Opening remarks  
**Mr Rolph Payet**, Executive Secretary  
 Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

#### **Panel discussion<sup>1</sup>**

**1.25-1.35** **Government role in protecting vulnerable populations**  
 Ms. Leticia Carvalho, Director, Department of Environmental Quality  
 Ministry of Environment, Brazil

**1.35-1.45** **An integrated approach to protecting children from pesticides**  
 Ms. Jacqueline Demeranville, Officer, Social Protection Division  
 Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN

**1:45-1:55** **Engaging with labour stakeholders**  
 Mr. Simon Steyne, Head of Social Partner Engagement, Partnerships & Advocacy  
 International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour  
 International Labour Organization

**1:55-2:05** **Case example - Addressing the social dimensions of pesticides use in the former Soviet Union**  
 Mr. Richard Thompson, Officer, Plant Production and Protection Division  
 Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN  
  
 Mr. Keith Tyrell, Director  
 Pesticide Action Network – United Kingdom

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<sup>1</sup> The panellist will be given 2 minutes to provide an introductory message. Following the introductory message, the panellists will be asked targeted questions by the moderator. The panellists have been asked to provide examples of concrete solutions at different levels that contribute to social and economic development.

## Interactive discussion

2:05 – 2:40 Dialogue between the panellists and the audience

## Summary and closure

2:40 Summary by the Moderator

## Background:

The sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential and integral cross-cutting element of sustainable development and is of great relevance to the sustainable development agenda.

Children, and other vulnerable groups such as women of child-bearing age and workers, risk exposure to hazardous pesticides in agriculture and their environment.

Poverty exacerbates this vulnerability, as poor populations are exposed to hazardous substances due to factors such as where they live, the types of livelihoods in which they are engaged, their low level of education or awareness of toxics-related risks, their lack of or limited access to health care and their poor levels of nutrition.<sup>2</sup> The consequences can range from sickness that may interfere with an individual's ability to work to severe illnesses.

Information on labour conditions and pesticide patterns of use and exposure can support decision making on pesticide regulation and risk reduction measures rooted in local realities.

Sound management of pesticides and collaboration between actors, including those in agriculture, environment, health and labour, provides concrete opportunities for alleviating poverty and protecting human health.

*The event will be in English*

*Light refreshments will be offered before the session*

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<sup>2</sup> In addition, people living in poverty have little possibility to protect themselves or to avoid exposure; they live and work in contaminated areas out of necessity, not choice. They often know they are exposing themselves and their families to toxic chemicals, but short-term survival trumps longer-term consequences. See GAHP, 2013, p. 15; World Bank, "Toxics and Poverty: The Impact of Toxic Substances On the Poor in Developing Countries" (2002), pp. 1 and 6; and IFCS, Poverty Reduction and the Sound Management of Chemicals: A Thought Starter" (2006), p. 9.