



Information on recommendations of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Management regarding SAICM

I. Introduction

1. The Panel of Experts on Pesticide Management (Panel of Experts) was created in 2004 by the Director-General of FAO following the adoption of the revised version of the *International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides* (Code of Conduct). The Panel of Experts is the statutory body of the Organization on all matters pertaining to pesticide management and advises FAO on policy and technical issues related to the implementation of the Code of Conduct, among others. Its second session was held from 7 to 10 November 2006 in Rome.
2. The Code of Conduct is the worldwide guidance document on pesticide management. The revised version of the Code of Conduct was adopted by the FAO Council in 2002. It 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 health and the environment. The pesticide industry and public interest groups are committed to supporting the implementation of the Code of Conduct. It hence serves as a framework and point of reference for the judicious use of pesticides for all those involved in pesticide matters.
3. Under agenda item CL 131/17 (New International Developments on Pesticide Management), the FAO Council is requested to consider the **Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management** (SAICM), which was adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in February 2006, in particular with respect to the sound management of pesticides. The relationship and opportunities for synergies between SAICM and the Code of Conduct were addressed by the Panel of Experts during its last session.
4. The Panel of Experts discussed suggested activities under SAICM, and the role that the Code of Conduct could play in the achievement of SAICM's objectives. It addressed possible overlaps between the Code of Conduct and SAICM, and expressed its concerns about duplication of efforts. It also discussed opportunities that SAICM might generate for the necessary strengthening of collaboration between the sectors involved in the implementation of sound pesticide management, in particular agriculture, health and environment, both at national and international levels. Finally, the Panel of Experts discussed the lack of participation of the agricultural sector in the negotiations that led to the adoption of SAICM, and suggested ways of strengthening future engagement of this sector.
5. The Panel also considered the **Global Plan of Action** (GPA) for the implementation of SAICM and noted that many of its proposed activities overlap with the provisions of the Code of Conduct. To further clarify the relationship between the GPA and the Code of Conduct, FAO was asked to prepare a document comparing the two, based on the working paper discussed during the meeting, for circulation in relevant fora¹

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The above-mentioned comparison between the FAO Code of Conduct and the SAICM Global Plan of Action is available at the documents desk..

II. Recommendations made by the 2nd Session of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Management regarding SAICM

6. Following the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) at the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM), the Panel discussed the role of the agricultural sector and of the Code of Conduct in the implementation of SAICM. The Panel *emphasized* that:

- the multi-sectorial approach of SAICM provides opportunities for coordination and collaboration on strengthening sound pesticide management, among the agriculture, health and environment sectors, as well as with the labour and trade sectors;
- the objectives of SAICM and those of the Code of Conduct overlap to a very large extent, as the overall objective of SAICM is “to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment”, while the Code of Conduct “addresses the need for a cooperative effort between governments ... to promote practices that minimize potential health and environmental risks associated with pesticides, while ensuring their effective use”, and as such demonstrates that pesticide management should be considered a part of chemicals management as well as sustainable agricultural development;
- the Code of Conduct is the globally accepted guidance document on pesticide management for all public and private entities within SAICM, since the Code of Conduct has been adopted by all FAO members, the pesticide industry, public interest groups and other stakeholders;
- the Code of Conduct, with its supporting policy and technical guidelines, can serve as a good example for the management of other groups of chemicals due to its comprehensive and coherent nature;
- the agricultural sector has not been actively engaged in the SAICM process, which has largely been driven by the environment sector. In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts on pesticides, there is a need for the agricultural sector to become more engaged in SAICM;
- the present mechanisms for the implementation of SAICM, for example the Quick Start Programme, provide only limited opportunities for the agricultural sector to strengthen pesticide management at the national level.

7. Therefore, the Panel *recommended* that, within SAICM:

- a) FAO Members promote the central role of the Code of Conduct for the sound management of pesticides;
- b) FAO Members enhance the representation and active participation of the agricultural sector at national, regional and international levels;
- c) FAO Members, at the national level, strengthen the coordination between the relevant sectors, in particular agriculture, health and environment, in order to make optimal use of existing structures and mechanisms on pesticide management, and so make best use of the opportunities under SAICM;
- d) FAO continue to look for synergies in implementing sound pesticide management with other IOMC organizations, in particular WHO and UNEP, so that a unified approach towards their Members is ensured, as promoted by SAICM.

8. The Panel *noted* that the participation of the agricultural sector and of FAO in SAICM requires the targeted mobilization of resources.