



**Improved pesticides and chemicals management  
in the former Soviet Union  
GCP/RER/040/EC**

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**MORE FOOD  
LESS RISK**

**PESTICIDE  
RISK  
REDUCTION**



## Changes in Project Management

Management of the project has moved from the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in Budapest to the Pesticide Risk Reduction Team based at FAO Head Quarters in Rome. This follows the visit of the Results Orientated Monitoring (ROM) team to your countries, which concluded that the project would benefit from a transfer to Rome.

The project officially moved to Rome on 5 May 2014. If, as a consequence, you encountered any problems with communications over the last few months, please accept our sincere apologies.

Accompanying the move, the project has also appointed national project coordinators representing FAO at national level, who will be responsible for supporting government teams to make sure implementation of the project is a success. They are:

- Ms. Khatuna Akhalaia - Armenia and Georgia
- Mr. Yuri Solovjev - Belarus
- Ms. Indira Zhakipova - Kyrgyzstan
- Ms. Rodica Iordanca - Moldova
- Mr. Mikhail Malkov - Ukraine

Moving project management to FAO HQ in Rome has also allowed for increased technical and management support, and will greatly assist the project to meet its targets as we move forward.

More recently, the project has also seen a change in personnel with the resignation of the FAO Project Coordinator, Kevin Helps, who has left to take up a role in UNEP Chemicals, focusing on waste management issues. The role of project coordination has temporarily passed to Mr. Richard Thompson (Richard.thompson@fao.org) while a new coordinator is appointed. Ms. Oxana Perminova (oxana.perminova@fao.org) will continue to work with the project coordinator in management of the project.



## Dealing with problems from the past (Contract for Waste Management Services)

There are an estimated 200,000 metric tonnes (te) of obsolete pesticides and heavily contaminated soils across the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The project has undertaken detailed inventories of this waste and assessments of the burial sites have also been completed. A series of national Environmental Management Plans have also been developed to tackle the problem.

As a result, the project has now developed a tender for waste management services covering waste in five of the target countries. The waste volumes concerned are too large for a single entity to address, but based on risk analysis, it has been possible to prioritise waste from the most affected locations:



- Armenia (150 te)
- Belarus (300 te)
- Georgia (100 te)
- Kyrgyzstan (400 te)
- Moldova (350 te)

The tender which has been developed aims to reduce risk to public health and the environment at the local, national and global level by removing waste from storage locations, and disposing of it environmentally in line with EC and International Convention standards.

Much of the waste to be targeted is banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). These chemicals are persistent in the environment and can be transported far beyond national borders, resulting in global impact. Sites contaminated with POPs materials have, therefore, been prioritised when considering which locations will be treated as part of the contract for waste management services.



A total of 16 companies from across Europe were invited to bid for the work across the region. The closing date for bids was 31 July and FAO is now in the process of evaluating the bids based on technical and financial criteria.

It is expected that the successful bidders will be selected by the end of September, allowing work to start as planned in 2015. The value of the contracts is likely to be over EUR 2.8m, representing almost half of the funds provided to the project by European Union. It is estimated that all work on safeguarding and disposal of the wastes will be completed by the end of 2015.



## Looking towards a Sustainable future

Two events were held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 7 to 11 of July on pesticide risk reduction, protecting farmers and vulnerable social groups from pesticide poisoning and assisting policy makers to improve pesticide safety,. The meetings brought together representatives of civil society organisations, policy makers and national experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan to work together in developing legal policy recommendations for participating countries, and to initiate field research into the causes of pesticide poisoning in their countries.

Both meetings were visited by the Georgian Deputy Minister of the Ministry Environment and Natural Resources Ms. Nino Sharashidze, which meant that the aims of the project received wide coverage in Georgian news media.



## Protecting farmers and vulnerable groups from pesticide poisoning

The aim of this workshop, delivered by Rotterdam Convention (RC) and Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK), was to strengthen the capacity of civil society Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and government specialists to contribute to reducing the risk to public health and to the environment from pesticide use.

The primary focus of the workshop was to deliver training and technical support to the NGO partners from participating countries - Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Ukraine - to undertake baseline studies of pesticide exposure in their countries, with particular attention to social aspects of pesticide poisoning. The results of these studies will be used to create awareness among decision-making institutions at the national level, such as national pesticide registrars.

The other main focus of the workshop was the issue of how to raise awareness of the risks of pesticide exposure amongst those social groups most vulnerable to exposure, namely women, children and seasonal agricultural workers.



The training was designed to be active and participatory and there were many lively and interesting discussions regarding the realities of pesticide use in the different participating countries. As part of the workshop, a field trip offered the opportunity to meet with Georgian farmers and a pesticide retailer in order to put PAN UK's survey tools to the test and to discuss the farmers' concerns regarding pesticides and the risks they take.



The active participation of government representatives from relevant institutions, and Designated Authorities to the RC served the important purpose of raising awareness of the key issues addressed by the workshop, as well as fostering linkages between key NGOs and relevant government institutions.

### **Assisting policy makers to improve pesticide safety**

The second event was a regional conference and workshop aimed at developing a road map for sustainable agriculture across the region. Based on a series of national reviews in the areas of pesticide legislation, the management of pesticides throughout their life cycle and the potential to use alternatives, to the most highly hazardous pesticides, the meeting aimed to develop a series of national and regional initiatives to promote a more sustainable approach to food production and to increase uptake of practices such as integrated pest management (IPM) in the region.



### **Monitoring and evaluation: the path to continual improvement**

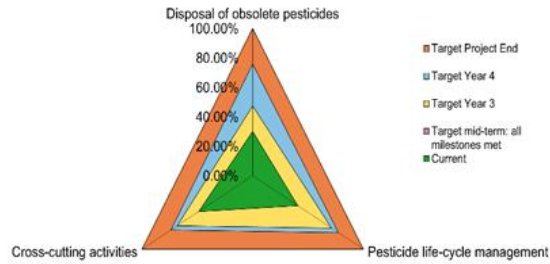
The project has worked hard to develop an easy to understand monitoring and evaluation component which is going to be managed through Green Cross Switzerland. The system is based on the indicators and milestones as presented in country operational manuals, letters of agreement with implementing partners and the logical framework and work plan as presented in the Food and Agriculture Organization reports to the European Commission. The component is designed to ensure that all activities remain on track and all outputs/outcomes are delivered.

A tracking tool has been set up, which compares planned dates for output delivery against actual date of delivery. The tool is updated on a monthly basis, and the current project status is shown in the triangle diagram below, each axis of the graph representing one of the main outcomes:

- *Disposal of obsolete pesticides* are activities ending with the safe and sound disposal of approx. 1,300 t of old stocks;
- *Pesticide life-cycle management* will lead to an improved day-to-day management of modern pesticides in countries, and
- *Cross-cutting activities* include an assessment of waste management options in the region and the production of a series of guidelines.

Almost all activities are currently within +/- 2 months of being on schedule. This is shown by the green surface covering all mid-term targets but still having to reach the bounds of the yellow surface, which is due by November 2014.

**Project status (planned vs. real) as of 14 August 2014**



## Upcoming Events



A number of regional conferences, training events and workshops are scheduled for 2014 in direct response to the recommendations of the second Steering Committee meeting held in Kiev November 2013.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 27 to 31 of October | Belarus, Minsk - Waste management workshop and round table discussions |
| 8 to 12 of December | Steering Committee Meeting – Location subject to confirmation          |

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