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Management of agro-chemicals for improved public and environmental health

This is the first of six information sheets on improving agro-chemical management in the Caribbean. This sheet introduces a new strategy launched by the Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean, and sets the context for further work by outlining the key recommendations and signposting further information.

1. Strategy overview

The Strategy for Improved Agro-Chemical Management in the Wider Caribbean outlines the ten key prioritised management recommendations that have been developed with the Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC).

The strategy translates these recommendations into actions that may be undertaken at the regional and national levels to harmonise pesticide control measures, to support and finance existing institutions, to improve collaboration, and to promote good agricultural practices through information, training, and outreach work.

The strategy provides detailed guidance on developing health and environmental monitoring plans and on research and planning that should be undertaken in support of these activities. It makes recommendations on sustainable financing, capacity building, and communication and education programmes that are required in support of its objectives.

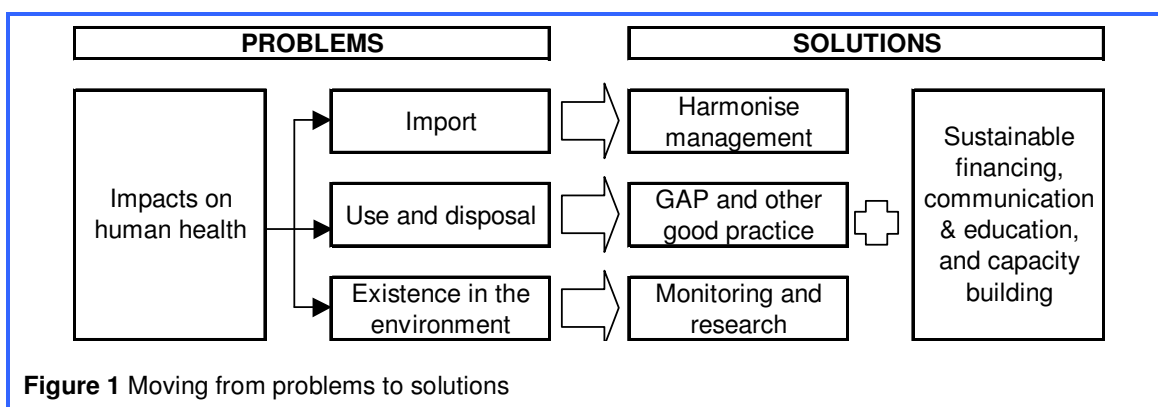


Figure 1 Moving from problems to solutions

2. Priority recommendations

Harmonised agro-chemical management

1. Harmonised procedures for agro-chemical management should be adopted throughout the Wider Caribbean:
 - Model legislation on pesticides and toxic chemicals should be ratified and adopted. This will dictate the administration, use, and monitoring of agro-chemicals.
 - Administrative procedures should reflect the requirements of the harmonised legislation and be promoted.
 - A locally owned and managed database should be developed for harmonised administration and information sharing.

- Regionally acceptable (or national) standards for Maximum Residue Limits should be established, in the absence of which the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)/ World Health Organisation (WHO) Codex Alimentarius standards should be applied where possible.
- Regional environmental reference sites need to be established.

Supporting the system for agro-chemical management

2. Sustainable financing and cost recovery mechanisms must be investigated and, where necessary, novel and creative means found to develop capacity, and to fulfil all the functions of the various institutions involved in all aspects of agro-

chemical management. External sources of funding must be explored and fully utilised.

3. Communications experts should be engaged for communication, education, and training purposes; change-management concepts should be applied.
4. Undertake an institutional analysis and evaluation of the capacity and resource needs of Pesticide Control Boards (PCBs) and other relevant executing agencies (e.g. extension services, monitoring and research agencies, medical laboratories) throughout the Wider Caribbean. Duplication of effort should be minimised.
5. PCBs must be adequately staffed and financed to administer and implement national legislation relating to agro-chemicals. There should be a dedicated full-time staff. The composition of the Board of Directors should include representation from the private sector and persons with experience in ecological issues and the fate of agro-chemicals in the environment.

GAP and other good practice measures (mitigation of pollution)

6. GAP and other good practice codes of conduct for agro-chemical use need to be implemented, particularly for domestic products not already covered by existing arrangements.

Informing management decisions (monitoring and research)

7. Promote implementation and further research on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Management of Pests and Pesticides (IMPP) as a means of improved pesticide management.
8. Socio-economic analyses, including cost-benefit analyses, should be conducted for different farming practices, including options for agro-chemical use (e.g. IPM).
9. Carefully designed public health monitoring plans must be developed. Ensure adequate analytical capacity to enable monitoring for compliance with standards for public health (i.e. medical and food residue monitoring laboratories).
10. Carefully designed long-term environmental monitoring plans must be developed (from the farm to the sea).

Further information

This strategy was developed in collaboration with the Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC), based upon the findings of three years of research and upon ten key prioritised management recommendations. It incorporates international obligations such as those defined in the Cartagena Convention and its Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities.

The strategy and all other documentation are available from <http://www.mragltd.com>. Select the Land Water Interface option in the left-hand panel and then select the project R7668.

Other information sheets in the series are:

2. The fate of agro-chemicals in the land-water interface in St. Lucia and Jamaica: Environmental monitoring
3. The quantification and toxicity of agro-chemical imports into St. Lucia and Jamaica
4. The on farm use of agro-chemicals and associated soil management and farming practices in St. Lucia and Jamaica
5. Harmonisation of agro-chemical management in the Caribbean
6. Management options for the use of agro-chemicals.

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