



**Stockholm Convention
on Persistent Organic
Pollutants**

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**First assembly of the Global Alliance for the development
and deployment of alternatives to DDT for diseases vector control**
Geneva, 26th April 2011

Report of the First Assembly of the Global Alliance for Alternatives to DDT

Background

1. The Global Alliance for the development and deployment of products, methods and strategies as alternatives to DDT for disease vector control was endorsed by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting (Decision SC-4/2) as described in the business plan (document UNEP/POPS/COP.4/6/Rev.1).
2. The strategic direction and priorities of the Global Alliance for alternatives to DDT are governed by the Alliance Assembly. The Steering Committee acts as the decision making body between the meetings of the Alliance Assembly while its strategy is implemented through Thematic Groups, supported by a small Coordinating Team, to address a specific goal or challenge.
3. The Alliance Assembly comprises members of the Global Alliance representing government agencies and other stakeholder organizations including academic and research institutions, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, international financial institutions, private sector groups and professional experts who are committed to the development and deployment of alternatives to DDT. Its members benefit from expertise, networking, reports and other materials, provided by the Global Alliance.
4. The first assembly expects enhanced cooperation and advocacy by the Global community towards developing and deploying alternatives to DDT for disease vector control. Among other things, the assembly will review its strategy towards achieving the goals and the progress made so far in implementing the activities.
5. The impact of the Global Alliance on reducing reliance on DDT for disease vector control depends critically on its ability to generate interest and goodwill and secure continued financial support. The Alliance assembly provides the opportunity for enhanced collaboration among key stakeholder groups towards proactive support.

I. Opening

6. The first assembly of the Global Alliance for the Development and Deployment of Products, Methods and Strategies as Alternatives to DDT for Disease Vector Control was held at the Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG) in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday 26 April 2011, during the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention.

7. The Assembly was opened by Mr. Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 26 April. In his opening statement, Mr. Cooper said that despite all efforts malaria remained one of the world's tragedies. He said that according to the World Health Organization, 225 million people were affected by malaria with approximately 800,000 fatalities each year hence all means were needed to combat the disease. The Stockholm Convention had addressed the issue when it was adopted given that currently DDT was a chemical response to control the vector. Based on the WHO recommendations, and as agreed by the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, DDT was still required currently under certain settings. At present there is no deadline for when that use would end. He noted that all stakeholders were seeking safe and affordable alternatives that could be adapted or used in all countries or circumstances. He looked forward to continued cooperation with the variety of institutions that made up the Global Alliance.

II. Organizational matters

(a) Election of Officers

8. The Assembly elected Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany) and Ms. Noluzuko Gwayi (South Africa) to serve as Co-chairs of the first assembly. In their opening statements the co-chairs said that all stakeholders needed to scale up funding towards the search for alternatives to DDT. They stressed that populations must continue to be protected from malaria but while DDT continued to be used as an effective, cheap, long-lasting and popular control method, alternatives must be sought whether chemical or non-chemical and those alternatives should be cost-effective, safe and managed in a holistic way.

(b) Adoption of the Agenda

9. The Assembly amended the order of the agenda to take up issues related to financial support and enhanced cooperation (agenda item 4) directly following the report on the establishment of the Global Alliance (agenda item 3 (a)). The Assembly adopted the agenda as set out in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/1.

III. Matters relating to the implementation of the Global Alliance

(a) Report on the establishment of the Global Alliance

10. The Secretariat introduced the relevant documentation on matters related to DDT including the activities undertaken by the Secretariat for the establishment of the global alliance (UNEP/POPS/COP.5/4). He noted that an Interim Steering Committee had been established based on the selection criteria provided in the business plan of the Global Alliance and three meetings held to guide the establishment of the Global Alliance, the official launch of which had taken place at the Extraordinary Conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions in Bali, Indonesia in February 2010. He said that the Interim Steering Committee had proposed the establishment of five thematic groups to address the nine challenges identified in the business plan of the Global Alliance for alternatives to DDT (UNEP/POPS/COP.4/6.rev1) as follows:

Cost-effectiveness of alternatives to DDT;

Strengthening of in-country decision making on integrated vector management;

Malaria vector resistance patterns and mechanisms;

Reducing barriers to bringing new non-chemical methods into use;

Reducing barriers to bringing new chemicals and products to market.

11. Each group had a core team of experts and had held meetings between September 2010 and February 2011 to establish plans of action and strategies for the implementation of activities. Based on the outcomes of those meetings the Secretariat had conducted a training workshop on strengthening country capacities to implement integrated vector management (UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGIVM.1/5), developed a review of the current status of implementation of integrated vector management (UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGIVM.1/4) and held an international public health pesticides workshop (UNEP/POPS/DDT/IPHP.1/3). The Secretariat had also coordinated a poster competition on Innovative Alternatives to DDT organized by Biovision Foundation and created two working groups in the POPsSocial online social network. Currently, he said, the Global Alliance had 83 members. He expressed his appreciation for the support and technical guidance extended by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the implementation of activities under the Global Alliance to date.

12. The Assembly took note of the information provided by the Secretariat.

(b) Report on the progress of the implementation of the Global Alliance

13. Mr. David Kapindula, Chair of the Interim Steering Committee introduced the relevant documentation on the implementation of activities of the global alliance containing the reports of the three meetings of the Interim Steering Committee (UNEP/POPS/DDT/GAISC.1/6/Rev.1 and UNEP/POPS/DDT/GAISC.2/8 and UNEP/POPS/GAISC.3/2) as well as a proposal by the interim steering committee for the functional structure of the global alliance (UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/4). Mr. Kapindula briefed the Assembly on progress achieved during the meetings. He noted that in addition to developing the aforementioned proposal, the Committee had reviewed the progress of the five thematic groups and identified key entities and initiatives engaged in activities that could offer collaboration or support for implementing the proposal.

14. Mr. Kapindula described progress in the work of the five thematic groups. The thematic group on cost-effectiveness concluded that the main activity to be undertaken was an examination of the evidence and current practices on cost-effectiveness, including knowledge gaps, with the aim of developing tools and interventions to support an accurate evaluation of cost components in decision-making on disease vector control options. The report of the group's first meeting is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGCE.1.2 and its medium term plan is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGCE.1.3 respectively.

15. The thematic group on strengthening of in-country decision-making on integrated vector management concluded that the main activities to be undertaken were pilot testing of the integrated vector management training module developed by WHO; a review of the current status of implementation of integrated vector management by countries to identify specific activities and priorities for intervention by the thematic group; and advocacy for the establishment and implementation of integrated vector management by national vector control programmes in disease endemic countries. The report of the group's first meeting is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGIVM.1.2 and its medium term plan is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGIVM.1.3.

16. The vector resistance work stream of the WHO Roll Back Malaria programme was established as the core team of the thematic group on malaria vector resistance patterns and mechanisms. Participants at its first meeting developed an overview for donors on activities of national vector control programmes to facilitate consideration of vector resistance management, a minimal resistance-monitoring package for national malaria control programmes and insecticide resistance management planning. A summary of the thematic group on vector resistance is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGVR.1.

17. The thematic group on reducing barriers for bringing new non-chemical methods into use decided to develop a web-based mechanism for compiling information on non-chemical options for vector control to facilitate their promotion, including a peer-review process for further validation. It also decided to examine the perception and acceptance of non-chemical alternatives to DDT by countries, policymakers and communities with the aim of identifying measures for overcoming barriers to their adoption. The report of the group's first meeting is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGNONC.1.2 and its medium term plan is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGNONC.1.3.

18. The major outcome of the meeting of the thematic group on reducing barriers to bringing new chemicals and products to market included pilot testing of work-sharing and harmonized registration system for public health pesticides in selected disease endemic countries to learn lessons and for advocacy. The draft report of the first meeting is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGCHM.1.2 and its medium term plan is contained in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA/TGCHM.1.3.

19. He said the Interim Steering Committee, at its third meeting, agreed on the following four priority action points to be promoted during the first Alliance Assembly for collaboration and support by the donor community:

(a) Develop a harmonized registration system for new vector-control chemicals and products, commencing with a pilot study in selected disease-endemic countries;

(b) Strengthen entomological capacity at all levels especially at the country level, and the capacity of WHO to manage new vector control products, technologies and resistance management strategies;

(c) Collect evidence on public health values of interventions (including field trials and studies of cost-effectiveness) with emphasis on non-chemical, non-commercial, community-based and environmental interventions;

(d) Develop advocacy and resource material in order to promote public awareness, understanding, and participation in IVM and related cultural and programmatic practices.

20. Following the introduction by Mr. Kapindula a short question and answer session was held. It was noted that while there currently was no true alternative that provided the same action as DDT with the same socio-economic effectiveness, several new compounds that might be appropriate substitutes were being developed, in particular new formulations that outlasted DDT in indoor residual spraying. It was stressed that there was no uniform recipe for malaria vector control and DDT played the role of a fallback when some newer methods were not effective. It was highlighted that a great threat to malaria control was vector resistance and it was therefore suggested that to protect vector susceptibility a wide range of insecticides and diversity of tools would be necessary.

21. The Assembly called for additional members to join the Global Alliance and highlighted the need for additional funding. It was urged that work undertaken should not overlap or duplicate work on related work being undertaken in other intergovernmental bodies and forums.

(c) (i) Adoption and approvals: Approval of the implementing strategy

22. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/4 containing the proposal by the Interim Steering Committee on the strategy and functional structure of the Global Alliance. In response to a request for clarification the Secretariat informed the Assembly that the Global Alliance would not undertake substantive activities in the field. The Secretariat would have a coordinating role with substantive activities being funded by voluntary contributions.

23. The Assembly approved the implementing strategy and functional structure of the Global Alliance and requested the Secretariat to coordinate with the chairs of the thematic groups to update the strategy and to make it available to members of the Alliance.

(c) (ii) Endorsement of the composition of the Steering Committee and members' declaration

24. The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/5 containing a list of members of the Interim Steering Committee and UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/3 containing the members' declaration. He noted that, according to the Alliance business plan, the Assembly had to endorse the composition of the Steering Committee based on the criteria for selection specified therein. He enumerated the members and proposed that, with the inclusion of an additional member from the Western European and other States region, the members of the Interim Steering Committee be elected to serve in the Steering Committee.

25. The Assembly endorsed the composition of the Steering Committee as proposed in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/5.

26. The Secretariat noted that the members declaration served as an understanding and agreement of the members on goals and challenges to be addressed under the Global Alliance and steps required to address them.

27. The Assembly adopted the members' declaration as proposed in UNEP/POPS/DDT/GA.1/3

IV. Financial support and enhanced cooperation

28. The Secretariat introduced the agenda item and noted that the work of the Global Alliance had to be organized in a manner that respected its non-involvement in funding and executing programmes on the ground, yet addressed expectations that it would trigger significant action in support of the development and

deployment of alternatives to DDT. He said that the Alliance provided an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the development and deployment of alternatives to DDT through a flexible and inclusive mechanism. Partners would be able to contribute at the advisory level and/ or at the technical level through the implementation of activities.

29. As the coordinating body for the Global Alliance the Secretariat functions include:

Providing organizational and logistical support for the Global Alliance including functioning of the alliance Assembly, Steering Committee and Thematic Groups;

Facilitating communication, exchange of information and learning materials, and maintaining an information database on the development and deployment of alternatives to DDT;

Administrating and coordinating commitments entered into all stakeholders as approved by the Steering Committee.

30. He said the Secretariat would also seek support for the implementation of activities of the Global Alliance that fall within the mandate of the technical assistance programme. The Secretariat also coordinates the activities for which financial contributions are earmarked by the donors and channelled through the Secretariat.

31. He acknowledged the support of the Governments of Germany, India, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America as well as the Biovision Foundation, the International POPs Elimination Network, CropLife, and the research team led by Dr. Steve Lindsay from London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine on Assessment of cost-effectiveness of DDT as a component in Gambia who provided financial, in-kind and technical expertise contributions extended for activities of the Global Alliance in 2009 and 2010.

V. Venue and date of the Second Assembly of the Global Alliance

32. Considering the synergies and benefits of having held the first Assembly of the Alliance during the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention, the co-chair suggested that the second Assembly be held during the sixth meeting of the Conference.

33. The Assembly agreed to hold the second Assembly during the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention.

VI. Other matters

34. A small ceremony took place to award the prizes for the winners of the poster competition on Innovative Alternatives to DDT used for Malaria Vector Control. Eight posters were selected from an open call for submissions. Two prizes were awarded to Mr. Harrysone Atieli of Kenya and Mr. Emmanuel Chanda of Zambia. The prizes were handed out by Mr. Andreas Loebell, Focal Point Health, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Mr. David Ogden, Coordinator, Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention.

VII. Closure of the meeting

35. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Assembly was declared closed at 8.15 p.m. on Tuesday 26 April.
