

Draft Statement on Endosulfan on behalf of Asia-Pacific Region

1. The decision to list a chemical to the Annexes of Stockholm Convention should be based on solid, objective and scientific criteria with technical bodies like POPRC applying the rigorous standards expected of a scientific body in making their recommendations. These should not be based on selective use of evidence.
2. The Asia Pacific Region is firmly of the opinion that all decisions in Stockholm Convention should be made in strict accordance with the text of the Convention and the approved Rules of Procedures in order to preserve the integrity and legitimacy of the decisions.
3. The decisions of COP and its subsidiary bodies must be by consensus and not by voting. Taking decisions on substantive matters by vote is clearly inconsistent with the Convention's Text. Further, this would set a bad precedent, undermining the cooperative character of the Convention.
4. The decisions taken under the Stockholm Convention should be within the overarching framework of sustainable development. It is explicitly recognised in the Article 13.4 of the Convention that "The fact that sustainable economic and social development and eradication of poverty are the first and overriding priorities of the developing country. Parties will be taken fully into account, giving due consideration to the need for protection of human health and the environment."
5. The Convention should seek to arrive at a decision in a manner which promotes credibility and acceptability of such decisions, encouraging voluntary compliance. Principles of transparency must be adhered to in decision making under the Convention.
6. The aforesaid principles have not been adhered to and there have been serious procedural violations in the deliberations of POPRC 6 recommending listing of Endosulfan and substantive issues raised by several parties were ignored at different stages.
7. Significant adverse health and environmental effects of Endosulfan is not established. However, POPRC chose to rely on selective use of data and contrary evidence from other studies including those of WHO/FAO was disregarded.
8. Under Annex F, POPRC is required to suggest alternatives, taking into consideration technical feasibility, costs and socio economic considerations. However, adequate data for a large number of proposed alternatives was not provided. In short, cost effective and safe alternatives have not been suggested.
9. The COP 4 has decided to list 9 new chemicals. A concrete solution to on the issue of adequate financial assistance is yet to be found. It is important to resolve this issue before adding new chemicals.
10. Taking all the above factors into consideration, the Asia Pacific group recommends that a decision on the recommendation of POPRC-6 be deferred and the COP may decide first of all to comprehensively address the issues of decision making process under POPRC and the issues of technical and financial assistance. An inter-sessional mechanism may be established for this purpose which can report to the next COP enabling it to take a decision on the issue listing Endosulfan and other related matters.