

IPEN EDCs Intervention

Thank you Madam President,

IPEN, a global network of over 700 public interest non-governmental organizations committed to achieving a toxic-free future, fully supports the inclusion of endocrine disrupting chemicals as an emerging policy issue under SAICM. I will do my best to be brief.

Earlier it was stated that we are currently at the “early phases of determining scientific information on EDCs.” This is misleading. Scientific evidence has existed for decades on the potential adverse effects of endocrine disrupting chemicals. In 2002, ten years ago, sufficient evidence existed for WHO to produce its report outlining why endocrine disrupting chemicals are of serious concern. The international community recognized the need for global action on endocrine disrupting chemicals in 2006 when SAICM participants repeatedly included the issue within the SAICM Global Plan of Action and Overarching Policy Strategy. Although we continue to shroud ourselves in a veil of sophisticated ignorance, there is ample evidence that urgent action is required.

The fact that EDCs present an unreasonable risk to human health and the environment is undeniable. In the United States alone, the cost of treating health conditions for which endocrine disrupting chemical exposures are implicated stands at over \$1 trillion per year.

According to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), 25%, or 1 in 4, of 22 identified emerging issues for developing countries and countries with economies in transition are related to endocrine disrupting chemicals. Both the recent UNEP Global Chemicals Outlook and OECD’s Environmental Outlook to 2050 emphasize that people and wildlife in the developing world will increasingly be threatened by the adverse effects of EDCs, due to projected increases in the use of chemicals such as hazardous pesticides and the use and disposal of products containing endocrine disrupting chemicals, such as building materials, textiles, children’s products and electronics.

Comprehensive information on issues related to endocrine disrupting chemicals in developing countries is virtually non-existent. In addition, neither capacity nor financial resources to generate information necessary for assessing issues related to EDCs is available in developing countries. But, the lack of information on EDCs is an urgent problem for all countries. Yet, there is no global forum for addressing EDCs, despite some ongoing work.

Like the other delegations, IPEN encourages the WHO to publish its updated report on endocrine disrupting chemicals as a matter of priority. Regarding the UNEP-WHO proposal, we welcome the suggested cooperative actions to provide greater clarity to SAICM participants and look forward to discussing the issue further in a contact group, if established.

We hope that these comments are received in the spirit of cooperation. Thank you, Madam President.