

SYNOPSIS OF TRANSBOUNDARY TRADE IN POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Capacity Building Support Document for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Programs

Purpose

Consistent with the goals of the Fourth International Conference on Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, its international sponsors, and the Executive Planning Committee, this document provides an overview of environmental issues related to transboundary trade in hazardous waste, pesticides, and ozone depleting substances. It provides a general introduction to environmental problems, policy issues, and potential solutions associated with legal and illegal trade in these substances. Information in this document will help environmental decision makers understand these issues and allow for more informed development of environmental policies and programs for effective management and enforcement of trade in potentially hazardous substances.

Scope

For each of three types of substances — hazardous waste, pesticides, and ozone depleting substances — the document provides background information and definitions of terms, discusses potential negative impacts of uncontrolled trade, planning and monitoring compliance promotion and enforcement programs to address potential problems, and an annotated bibliography for additional information.

Subject Areas

The document describes production and use of each of these substances in developed and developing countries as well as potential impacts of each substance on human health and the environment. The scope and nature of illegal transboundary trade also is reviewed where evidence exists with which to document it. Major issues framing current national and international discussions about use and trade in these substances are then analyzed. Finally, the document provides examples of national and international approaches to control the environmental impacts of these trade flows.

Although issues surrounding production, use, and trade, differ for each of the three categories of substances, general environmental management approaches, such as the use of multi-lateral treaties and agreements governing trade, the development of import and export control systems (information collection, monitoring, and inspection), and international policing methods, are quite similar, regardless of the substance being traded.

