

Opening remarks to Seminar on Biocides Management in Ukraine, 23-24 November 2017

It is with great pleasure that I have been invited to this timely event to increase awareness of the biocides management in Ukraine.

As you may know biocides, including pesticides and disinfectants, are used to control harmful and unwanted organisms and microorganisms. However, not only do they kill pathogens, they also kill non-pathogens, and thus may cause harm to humans.

There are a variety of classes of different biocide substances; at least 30% of biocides are endocrine disruptive, persistent, toxic or carcinogenic. Biocides pose a particular risk to pregnant women, unborn life, small children, or people with serious chronic illness.

Health hazards caused by disinfectants include effects on skin, eyes, respiratory system, nervous system, to name a few. Further, biocides can also pose a risk for the environment and have a severe and long-lasting impact on eco-systems.

Currently, Ukraine officially authorized more than 400 disinfectants on its market and there are no specific legal acts regulating the management of biocides in Ukraine. This is a challenge and an identified gap.

I do hope that the current Project on “strengthening capacities for sound management of biocides” will assist in addressing this gap.

Special attention should be paid to the EU legislation when drafting the needed legislation for Ukraine. As you know, the regulation of chemicals in the EU is well developed: all chemical products, including biocides are regulated by separate acts and different procedures are applied for different chemical products, where needed.

Further, a more important component that needs to be addressed by the project is the collection, analysis, and provision of evidence-based, scientifically-sound, quality information. This includes information on the dangers to the environment and human health, and the classification and labelling of biocides.

I underline that the Sustainable Development Goals, which is the new global development agenda for 2030, under the Health Goal Number 3 with target 3.9 “Substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination”.

The project is supporting Ukraine in achieving this target by 2030.

I wish you all fruitful discussions and deliberations to support the implementation of this important project.

Thank you.