



Cooperative Agenda for Children's Health and the Environment in North America

Draft for Public Consultation

Presented on behalf of the Trilateral CEH Team by:

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Asthma and Respiratory Diseases

Rationale:

- Asthma and respiratory disease affect millions of children in North America and in some regions have reached epidemic proportion.
- Coordinated approach needed to address asthma and other respiratory diseases



Asthma and Respiratory Diseases

1.1 Assessing the Impact of Diesel Exhaust at Congested Border Crossings [ongoing]

Objective: Assess the impact of diesel exhaust and other particulates on the severity of asthma, allergies, and respiratory health among susceptible and healthy children or other sensitive subpopulations residing along congested NAFTA trade corridors.

What: Develop a methodology to assess population exposures to the diesel exhaust component of the ambient air pollution along congested NAFTA trade corridors and apply it to test three hypotheses:

- Exposure to diesel exhaust at environmental concentrations is associated with increased respiratory events and inflammatory and allergic reactions in asthmatic children or other sensitive subpopulations.
- The association of diesel exposure with health outcomes is stronger in asthmatic children than in healthy children.
- Diesel exhaust particles are more strongly associated with respiratory health outcomes than with particles emitted by gasoline vehicles.



Asthma and Respiratory Diseases

1.2 Working with Pilot Communities on Asthma Prevention [under consideration]

Objective: Empower communities in Mexico, Canada and the United States to reduce the incidences of asthma by adapting existing educational materials and services to meet specific, regional/local needs.

What: Identify 3-4 communities to work with as pilot communities using existing asthma programs and services. Including:

- Conduct a needs assessment in all 3-4 border communities to identify the specific needs of each of those communities for reducing incidences of asthma.
- Provide support to these communities to establish a coordinated approach to managing asthma through infrastructure development and implementation of programs.
- Launch the pilot communities
- Track outcomes and results in each of the pilot communities and develop a report that other communities can use to replicate this initiative.



Asthma and Respiratory Diseases

1.3 Developing a Framework for Asthma Surveillance [under consideration]

- **Objective:** Improve asthma surveillance systems to enhance the understanding of asthma in North America
- **What:** Develop a common methodology for conducting periodic surveys taking into account risk factors specific to each country. The individual countries would conduct the surveys.



Effects of Lead

Rationale:

- Lead is a heavy metal that is toxic to many body systems, particularly the nervous system. For some of these effects no safe level of lead exposure has been found.
- The unborn and young children are at particular risk due to high lead absorption coupled with rapidly developing systems.
- Council Resolution 00-10 identified the effects of lead including lead poisoning as one of the priorities for collaborative action among the three parties.



Effects of Lead

2.1 Assisting Cottage Industries to Reduce/Eliminate the Use of Lead [planned]

- **Objective:** To reduce lead exposures by accelerating the adoption of technologies within cottage industries that will reduce or eliminate the use of lead.
- **What:** A program to assist cottage facilities in selected industries (e.g., pottery/ceramics, battery recycling, lead shot and sinkers) to reduce/avoid the use of lead through implementation of pollution prevention measures, as a means of reducing potential lead exposures among children via the local environment and/or products.



Exposure to Toxic **Substances including Pesticides**

- 3.1 Integrating CEH into the Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC) Program [ongoing]**

- 3.2 Special *Taking Stock* Report on Toxics and Children's Environmental Health [ongoing]**



Exposure to Toxic Substances including Pesticides

3.1 Integrating CEH considerations into the Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC) Program [ongoing]

- **Objective:** Ensure that SMOC activities, including the substance selection process and the North American Regional Action Plans on priority substances as well as the NARAP on monitoring and assessment, take exposures and risks to children into consideration.



Exposure to Toxic Substances including Pesticides

3.2 Special *Taking Stock* Report on Toxics and Children's Environmental Health [ongoing]

- **Objective:** To increase the awareness of CEH issues among the interested public and stakeholder groups such as industry, community groups, environmental organizations, government officials, academics and others.



Strengthening the Knowledge Base for Long-Term Solutions

Rationale:

It is important to be able to measure children's environmental health for two reasons.

- First, scientific information is needed to design management strategies and policies that are protective of children, and
- Second, scientific information is needed to assess the effectiveness of risk management strategies, once they have been implemented.



Strengthening the Knowledge Base for Long-Term Solutions

5.1 Facilitate Collaboration on Longitudinal Cohort Studies [planned]

- **Objective:** To facilitate collaboration among the 3 countries on the longitudinal cohort studies, including facilitating the participation of governmental officials/researchers from all three countries in planning meetings and other events related to the development of the studies.
- **What:** Support participation of Mexico and Canada to the U.S. National Children's Study planning work.



Strengthening the Knowledge Base for Long-Term Solutions

5.2 A Framework for North American Indicators of CEH [planned]

- **Objective:** To provide decision-makers and the public with periodic, understandable information on the status of key parameters related to children's health and the environment in North America as a means of measuring and promoting change.
- **What:** The development and periodic publication of a core set of indicators on children's environmental health in North America



Strengthening the Knowledge Base for Long-Term Solutions

5.3 Report on the Economic Impacts of Children's Environment Related Illnesses [under consideration]

- **Objective:** To provide decision-makers and the public with information on the economic costs associated with not addressing children's environmental health problems.
- **What:** Publish a report on the economic impact of children's environmental health illnesses in North America. The first report could focus on children's illnesses that are associated with environmental exposure to harmful chemicals and pollutants, and/or the costs associated with childhood asthma, developmental disorders, and childhood cancer.



Public Information, Outreach and Education

Rationale:

- Public (parents, care givers, educators, etc.) have key roles to play in improving CEH
- Awareness, knowledge and access to information are essential for informed action
- Opportunity to build on existing networks and collaborate with key intermediaries to improve information access, provision and exchange



Public Information, Outreach and Education

6.1 Partner in the Production of Global Video on CEH [ongoing]

Objective:

To increase public awareness of environmental threats to children's health and preventive strategies

What:

Development of video documentaries and news releases, through collaboration among WHO, Television Trust for the Environment (TVE), CEC, other partners



Public Information, Outreach and Education

6.2 Working with Health Professionals [under consideration]

Objectives:

- To improve the ability of health professionals to provide information and advice on CEH issues; improve the flow of information among health professionals in the 3 countries

What:

- Work with existing groups/networks (e.g. IJC Health Professionals Task Force, Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units) to promote exchange of information/expertise.
- Possible activities: build upon IJC HPTF training materials, conference, newsletter; foster development of trilateral networks of health professionals; share risk communication case studies



Public Information, Outreach and Education

6.3 Communicating CEH Issues and Concerns [ongoing]

Objective:

To inform the interested public and stakeholder groups in North America about CEH issues, with focus on existing work areas of the CEC

What:

Integration of CEH issues and information into CEC publications and communication initiatives



We want to hear from you!

Comments and suggestions on the Draft Cooperative Agenda are also welcome in writing.

Please send your comments to the CEC Secretariat by **22 March**:

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Pollutants and Health

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