

10

Quote of the Quarter

“Dioxin is diabolic....I call it the Darth Vader of toxic chemicals. It disrupts many systems. You don't want it in your neighborhood.”

epidemiologist Richard Clapp
Boston University School of Public Health

Partners in Conservation

Fundacion Ecologica Universal (FEU). One of GEF's most active partners is this Argentina-based NGO. Created in 1990, FEU seeks to foster sustainable development by mobilizing a network of NGOs, media, and other stakeholders to develop science and information-based policies and strategies. It also strives to achieve attitudinal change by enhancing public awareness and promoting clear, accurate environmental information. As the GEF-NGO network's regional focal point for Latin America, FEU is represented by its president, Ms. Liliana Hisas. It actively disseminates GEF information to regional NGOs and stakeholders, and has coordinated the preparation of regional surveys and position papers presented to the GEF Council.

Hisas also was actively involved in developing the medium-size projects (MSPs) and has produced *“Promoting Strategic Partnerships Between the GEF and the NGO Community”*—a strategic paper that seeks to strengthen the GEF-NGO relationship. FEU has coordinated workshops to identify MSPs in Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador. Its contribution has helped make the nations of Latin America among the most active recipients of GEF's medium-size projects. For more information, contact Liliana Hisas at Fundacion Ecologica Universal, Sarmiento 1334, Buenos Aires (1041), Argentina. Tel-Fax: (54-11) 4373-0552, E-mail: info@feu999.org.

Did You Know?

The initial targets for phase-out in the INC process are 12 dangerous POPs, the so-called “Dirty Dozen.” They are: 1) aldrin, 2) chlordane, 3) DDT, 4) dieldrin, 5) dioxin, 6) endrin, 7) furans, 8) heptachlor, 9) hexachlorobenzene, 10) mirex, 11) polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and 12) toxaphene. Once dispersed, POPs travel thousands of miles and persist for generations by entering the food chain and accumulating in plant and animal tissues.

The DDT Debate

Four decades ago, Rachel Carson, an American marine biologist of great vision, triggered the DDT debate with her book, *Silent Spring*. By exposing DDT's lethal effects—apparent in the devastated reproductive systems of songbirds such as the robin and the bald eagle—the book triggered a DDT ban in the United States and other developed countries. This ban did not, however, curb export of DDT from developed to developing countries. Nor could it stop chemical manufacturers from relocating their DDT production facilities to developing countries. Now, many developing countries are both the main producers and users of DDT, including its biggest consumers, China and India.

There is an emerging consensus in the global community to ban DDT by 2007. But this proposal has pitted anti-malaria health workers and environmentalists against each other. The former group considers it unwise to ban DDT, a potent insecticide, in a world where 300 to 500 million new cases of malaria are contracted and 2.7 million people die yearly from malaria. On the other hand, environmental NGOs note that there are alternatives to DDT that will neither be developed nor used as long as DDT is promoted, sold, and subsidized as the world's primary form of malaria control. Because of these conditions, GEF has supported the development of new initiatives to evaluate cost-effective alternatives to DDT in malaria-prone sites of Central America.

If the payoffs of the initial DDT ban are measures of the expected results, banning DDT by 2007 at a slow, incremental pace is both practical and pragmatic.

**WANTED:
Your Contributions**

We are looking for contributions to our Partners in Conservation column. Write to us and tell us about your organization (in less than 200 words).

The GEF publishes this quarterly newsletter in English, French, and Spanish. It is distributed electronically or, on request, via mail. For more information or to submit story suggestions, please contact Hemanta Mishra at the coordinates below.
Tel: 202-473-0508. Fax: 202-522-3240. E-mail: hmishra@worldbank.org.

Global Environment Facility, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433 USA

