

## **HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS AND PESTICIDES PROGRAMME**

### **Background Information.**

The Gambia, being primarily an agricultural country, imports significant quantities of agro-chemicals and pesticides to enhance its agricultural productivity. Chemicals and pesticides are used to prevent and control pest diseases. Their indiscriminate sale is rampant. However, if chemicals are not properly managed could result to significant adverse effects to human health and the environment.

The possible adverse effects range from respiratory tract infection, skin and liver infections to human cancer. it can also have damaging effects on our plant and animal life. To minimize these effects the Government of The Gambia enacted an Act called the Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides Control Management Act in 1994 and then called for the creation of the Hazardous Chemical and pesticide Board.

### **THE REGISTRAR**

The office of the registrar implements the decision of the Chemical and Pesticides Control Management Board, maintains a register on the status of pesticides and chemicals imported, issues licences and certificates, and executes the day-to-day administration of pesticides and chemicals. it also implements International Notification Schemes. The Office which is located at the NEA headquarters, on the corner of Allen and Fitzgerald Streets in Banjul, is open to the general public, Mondays to Fridays during regular Working hours, or can be contacted by letter or by telephone.

### **REGISTRATION OF PESTICIDES AND CHEMICALS**

No person shall import, manufacture, formulate, offer, hold stock, sell, use or advertise any chemical, or pesticide which has not been registered, provisionally cleared, or authorized in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

No person/business should engage in the manufacturing, import, wholesale, retail, warehousing or commercial application of pesticides/chemicals without obtaining the necessary license from the Board

No person shall use or require another and pesticides person to use a chemical or pesticide in a manner or for a purpose contrary to the manner or purpose permitted by the Board.

A person who requires or permits another person to use a chemical or pesticide shall provide and require that other person to use such facilities and clothing conducive to the safe handling of such chemical or pesticide.

### **OFFENCES AND PROCEEDINGS**

(1) A person who

- (a) knowingly gives false information in an application for the registration of a chemical or pesticide;

- (b) manufactures, imports, exports or sells an unregistered pesticide or banned chemical or pesticide contrary the provisions of sections 10, 13, 15 and 20;
- (c) contravenes sections 17, 18, and 19; or
- (d) carries on the business of a commercial chemical or pesticides applicator without a license contrary to section 23 of this Act,

Commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred and fifty thousand dalasi or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding five years, or both.

(2) A person who










- (a) manufactures, exports, imports, stores, distributes, transports, or sells or offers for sale any chemical or pesticide without a license issued under this Act, or
- (b) manufactures, exports, imports, stores distributes or sell any chemical or pesticide at premises different from those licensed for the purpose under this Act,

Commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dalasi or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding four years, or both.

#### **EFFECTS OF PESTICIDES ON HEALTH**

Synthetic Chemicals and Pesticides are used in The Gambia in various sectors such as; agriculture, education, manufacturing industry, construction, research, textile etc. Even though they are very beneficial to humans, they possess certain hazards to humans and the environment. Photo below shows some of the hazards associated with chemicals.

# GHS PICTOGRAMS

<b>Health Hazard</b> Carcinogens, respiratory sensitisers, reproductive toxicity, target organ toxicity, germ cell mutagens 	<b>Flame</b> Flammable gases, liquids, & solids; self-reactives; pyrophorics; 	<b>Exclamation Mark</b> Irritant, dermal sensitiser, acute toxicity (harmful) 
<b>Gas Cylinder</b> Compressed gases; liquefied gases; dissolved gases 	<b>Corrosion</b> Skin corrosion; serious eye damage 	<b>Exploding Bomb</b> Explosives, self-reactives, organic peroxides 
<b>Flame Over Circle</b> Oxidisers gases, liquids and solids 	<b>Environment</b> Aquatic toxicity 	<b>Skull &amp; Crossbones</b> Acute toxicity (severe) 

Because of the hazards above, chemicals have also been known to pose serious risks to humans depending on the exposure. Among them includes;

## Acute Effects

- headaches
- fatigue
- dizziness
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- Skin Sensitivity
- Hypersecretion
- Nausea
- Abdominal Pains
- Salivation
- Pulmonary Edema
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness
- Miosis
- Coma, etc.

## Chronic Effects

- carcinogenicity
- Reproductive Toxicity
- Neurotoxicity
- Mutagenicity
- Endocrine Disruption, etc.