



# NewsCasting

## Mexican Government Commits to Pilot Program

On 17th December a Memorandum of Agreement for the Lead Risk Reduction Program in Mexico was signed on behalf of the Government by Mr. Enrique Provencio, the President of the National Institute for the Environment (INE), Mr. Federico Kunz, the Chairman of the International Lead Management Center (ILMC) and the Executive Director, Dr. Craig Boreiko.

The Agreement was presented for signature and endorsed by Dr. Cristina Cortinas De Nava of the National Institute for the Environment (Instituto Nacional de Ecología, INE), who is an Advisor to the Government and co-ordinates risk reduction activities and projects in Mexico. The Agreement outlines the framework for cooperation between the Government, the Mexican Lead Industry, including mining, smelting, refining, oxide production, battery manufacturing and secondary lead recycling, and the International Lead Management Center.

The principles of the Agreement are consistent with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Declaration on Lead Risk Reduction and provides for all the parties involved to :

- cooperate in the investigation and assessment of occupational, environmental and transboundary lead exposure.
- design risk reduction regimes as integrated pollution prevention and control programs.
- adopt risk reduction strategies that recognize the specific needs and priorities of each participating organization and community.
- share their experiences in the sound management of lead exposure.
- provide adequate funding for the pilot program activities.

The Agreement will also ensure that, within the context of the voluntary framework for the Lead Risk Reduction Project, an Industry network of primary and secondary producers, and oxide and battery manufacturers will work towards lowering emission levels and reducing occupational exposure to world best practice for the available technology. Atmospheric emissions, including greenhouse gases and sulfur dioxide, will be reduced and procedures will be introduced to eliminate the production of ecotoxic waste residues and the discharge of lead contaminated liquid effluent to the environment. Measures will be introduced to improve the collection rates for used lead acid batteries and promote recycling.



*Federico Kunz (ILMC), Cristina Cortinas de Nava(INE) and Craig Boreiko (ILMC) sign the Agreement.*

Guidelines will be prepared for works medical officers and occupational health practitioners for the successful Management of Lead Risk Reduction in the workplace and include pamphlets containing information on the control of lead exposure for distribution in the local communities.

Environmental and health information about lead and lead based applications is now being compiled into a specially designed data base which will shortly be available on the Internet site for the Ministry for the Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries,

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# ILMC promote positive measures at UN

Efficient recycling is key to sustainable development.....

An expert meeting was convened by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva, Switzerland from 3rd to 5th November to consider "Positive Measures to Promote Sustainable Development", particularly in meeting the objectives of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA).

The meeting was attended by 150 delegates from participating United Nations member countries, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), non government organizations such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), World Wildlife Fund for Nature International (WWF), academia and environmental experts from the public and private sectors, including delegates from the legal and scientific professions.

The meeting format encouraged open debate and the delegates considered the merits of many "hands on" field projects demonstrating "positive" measures ranging from legislative instruments to joint participative exercises between the public and private sectors and local indigenous communities covering MEA's from the Montreal Protocol to the Basel Convention. The discussion placed particular emphasis on promising avenues of technology transfer, especially those integrated packages promoting skill, technology, managerial, and financial support.

The International Lead Management Center (ILMC) presented a paper on the Center's experience in accessing and disseminating environmentally sound technologies and capacity building. The ILMC presentation, outlining the multi-stakeholder lead risk reduction project in the Philippines, made two important points to the delegates.

First that, unlike most other MEA, the OECD Environmental Ministers recognized that the private sector could have an important role to play in lead risk reduction. They invited Industry to utilize their considerable experience in determining and reducing significant exposure sources in the Declaration on Risk Reduction for Lead, published in February 1996. The OECD endorsed the concept of a Lead Industry sponsored and funded International Lead Management Center charged with the responsibility to implement a voluntary lead risk reduction project to reduce environmental, occupational and population exposure.



*Bernaditas C Muller,  
Director for the Office of  
the U N and International  
Organizations Department  
of Foreign Affairs for the  
Philippines*

Second, the recycling of lead products is essential to sound environmental performance and the concept of sustainable development. In this respect the efficient collection of scrap lead waste, particularly lead acid batteries, and shipment to a recycler is critical to the success of the project. ILMC explained that, in most developed countries, between 95% and 98% of batteries are recycled because there is an established infra structure and sufficient economic incentives. In the Philippines the project team recognize the important role of the informal sector in collecting battery scrap and that consideration is being given to ways and means of improving incentives and infra structure to raise current collection rates to OECD levels.

During the debate on financial mechanisms and innovative approaches to generating resources for sustainable development, Ms. Bernarditas Muller, the Director of the Office of the United Nations and International Organizations Department of Foreign Affairs in the Philippines observed that all too often the provisions on transfer of technology are not fully implemented. Decisions taken to implement these provisiond take into account the role of the private sector, however, and Governments should fulfil commitments to facilitate and finance, where necessary, transfer of, and access to technology, both in the public and private domain. Whilst she recognized intellectual property rights, most of the G77 member countries felt that the price that private organizations often negotiated for effective transfer, either in the form of royalties, joint ventures or license fees was outside the cooperative spirit generated between government representatives during the preparation of an environmental agreement.

Brian Wilson confirmed that the ILMC was committed to the transfer of the necessary information required to reduce environmental and occupational exposure and in this context will assist the key lead recycler in the Philippines to improve the metallurgical processes and environmental procedures to attain world best practice for the available technology. ♦

# LIA Conference 97 focuses on HR

**T** Now in its 19th year, the LIA Annual Lead Occupational Health Conference continues to serve as the largest and most informative assembly of its kind. The three day summit focused on the key issues of interest to occupational health professions and facilitated a broad exchange of views on current health research, safety and health practices and toxicological studies.



*Brian Wilson, ILMC and Dennis Kaumo of the Trojan Battery Company lead the exchange of information.*

This year's conference also provided special information group sessions concerned with the relevant aspects of Human Resource Management covering significant legal developments, medical practices in and outside the United States of America, industrial hygiene and occupational health.

ILMC was asked to moderate one of the many special information sessions designed to provide delegates with a broader view on "Reducing Blood Lead Levels in the Workplace".

Dennis Kaumo, the Occupational Nursing Officer for the Trojan Battery Company in Santa Fe Springs, California outlined to the delegates the lead risk reduction program followed at the Trojan battery plant. Dennis explained that the main reason that Trojan were so successful in reducing blood lead levels at the plant was that all the employees were committed to reduce the level of lead exposure. The employees took responsibility for their own levels of exposure and accepted that they also had an obligation to their fellow employees to work in a manner that minimized their risk of contamination.

The facility in California did not rely entirely on the engineering department to provide and maintain a first class extraction system, but the initiative involved employees in an ongoing education and surveillance program. The program was designed in such a manner that from the initial induction training through to "on the job" instruction the emphasis was to eliminate those behaviors that contributed to unnecessary risk of exposure.

Following Dennis's presentation, Brian Wilson of ILMC, moderated a lively debate and exchange of views from the many occupational health practitioners. Most of the delegates were interested in the level of compliance with any respiratory equipment that was made available and the degree of rotation in the plant between employees working in high risk areas and those not unduly exposed. Questions were also raised concerning housekeeping and the methods employed to maintain cleanliness, including a discussion on the merits of traditional versus vacuum cleaning regimes. ♦

## ILMC Convenes Policy Advisory Group

**T**he first meeting has been announced for the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) to the ILMC. This group comprises of six professionals with expertise in areas of public health, infrastructure development, risk reduction and voluntary non-regulatory initiatives will convene in Antwerp, Belgium on 12-13 January, 1998.

The PAG will, assess, review, comment and provide recommendations and guidelines on, the selection and implementation of ILMC lead risk reduction projects. The PAG members will function in a personal capacity and will provide advice in

accordance with their professional judgment in order to enhance the project capability of the voluntary Industry program. The PAG members participating in the meeting are:

Fritz Balkau - UNEP, Industry & Environment,

France Joseph Carra - US E P A, USA

Kaye Dal Bon - Independent Policy Analyst, Australia

Robert Goyer - Public Health Consultant, USA

Francis Labro - International Lead Zinc Study Gp.,UK.

Patrick McCutcheon - DG 11, EC, Belgium ♦

# Gasoline Initiative

## ILMC launches Pb free clearing house

**A**s a result of consultations convened by UNEP-IE and the OECD Secretariat in December of 1996 regarding the phase-out of lead in gasoline, ILMC has embarked upon a program of work to provide assistance to countries seeking to develop public health policy on lead in gasoline phase-out. ILMC is funding the preparation of consensus white papers detailing the impact of phase-out policy upon older vehicle fleets and an analysis of fast-track and slow-track policy options for removing lead from gasoline. OECD and UNEP-IE are presently assembling an organizing committee to oversee the preparation of the consensus white paper documents.

At the request of UNEP-IE and the OECD Secretariat, ILMC has also begun the collection of documents and databases relevant to the issue of lead in gasoline phase-out. This information is being assembled into a clearing house function designed to serve the information needs of the international public health community. Included in the clearinghouse will be International Policy documents, country case studies, international fuel stock analysis and engine technology data bases on compatibility with unleaded fuels. The informational contents of this clearing house will be made available through an internet web site, with information resources scheduled to be available in early 1998. ♦

## ILMC and ICF Plan Risk Reduction Information

**F**ollowing the participation of Dr. Craig Boreiko at the September, 1997 Ninth Technical Exchange Conference of the International Crystal Federation (ICF) in Estoril, Portugal, the ILMC and the ICF agreed to cooperate in efforts to manage the risk of lead exposure from lead crystal products.

The two organizations will work towards the preparation of general informational materials on lead release from crystal products as well as technical manuals to guide manufacturers of leaded crystal on techniques to limit lead leaching from crystal. ICF has offered to serve as a reference for manufacturers around the world on manufacturing and occupational exposure issues associated with the production of leaded crystal.

Similar technical materials are being prepared for ceramicware production with unleaded glazes. This exercise is currently being discussed with ceramicware producers. ♦

# Mexican Pilot Program

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SEMARNAP (Secretaria de Medio Ambiente Recursos Naturales y Pesca), at <http://www.semarnap.gob.mx/>. In order to facilitate the collection and collation of lead risk reduction information, environmental and occupational performance for the preparation of an information data base associated with Mexican Pilot Program activities, ILMC will purchase a network computer for use by the Mexican Institute for the Environment, INE.

Following the successful Monterrey Lead Risk Reduction Workshop in the spring, the Management of a lead oxide plant in Celaya agreed to the selection of their plant as a demonstration model for the lead risk reduction pilot program. The preliminary plant audit was undertaken during the second week of December and discussions with the local plant management resulted in an outline timetable for the introduction of a pilot program. Other lead related processes under consideration as demonstration models for the pilot program include a battery manufacturing plant, a secondary recycler and elements of the mining industry. Inspections of these facilities were also completed in December and are currently being evaluated. It is anticipated that specific proposals for each plant will be available for discussion during the first quarter of 1998.

Roberto Hernandez, Corporate Manager for the Environment for Servicios Industriales Penoles SA also represented ILMC at a seminar organized by SEMARNAP which considered the incorporation of a lead risk reduction action program into a new Mexican Government initiative legislating for the Environmental Management of Toxic Substances of Priority Attention. ♦

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