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BUREAU RÉGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL

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REGIONAL ACTIVITIES IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL

Report by the Regional Director

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the second progress report on regional activities in environmental pollution control, prepared as requested by the Regional Committee at its twenty-second session (resolution WPR/RC22.R15).

2. CONSULTANT TEAM IN 1971

The team, consisting of an environmental engineer, an air pollution control specialist and a water pollution control specialist, visited Australia, China (Taiwan), Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Singapore, from 14 June to 10 September 1971. During these visits, the team established contact with officers of public health agencies, clean air organizations, port authorities, bodies dealing with agriculture, fisheries, transportation and planning, teaching institutions, municipal governments, etc. Discussions were held also with representatives of international assistance programmes. The team's report in English was distributed to governments in February 1972; the French version was distributed in April 1972.

The team reached the general conclusion that in the Region there was an apparent need for additional financial support to environmental pollution control programmes together with additional resources in personnel. It would be desirable to relate preventive measures to comprehensive planning, to establish legislation which could be enforced, to collect and evaluate data with a view to the adoption of standards and to strengthen the co-ordination of the pollution control programmes supported by national and international agencies.

The provision of safe water supplies accompanied by satisfactory disposal of waste water was still a major issue in many of the countries

/visited ...

visited. The team stressed the necessity for adequate technical training as well as for immediate corrective action with respect to emissions of a definite toxic character or having long-term public health implications.

With regard to the long-term programme started by the Regional Office in 1970, the team endorsed the proposed arrangement and spacing of group educational activities but suggested that, if feasible, the timing be accelerated. The team recommended that more support be given to the programme by providing long-term advisers or consultants in the fields of air pollution and water pollution control.

3. PREPARATIONS FOR REGIONAL SEMINAR IN 1973

The primary objectives of the seminar on environmental pollution control were drafted as follows:

1. To bring together officers of clean air, urban planning, transport and industrial organizations concerned with problems of control, measurement and effects of air pollution, thus making possible an exchange of knowledge of mutual benefit to the countries in the Region.
2. To draw up proposals or guidelines for a plan of action on air pollution control at both regional and national levels.

A consultant was recruited in March 1972 for one month and a half to assist with preparations for the seminar. He was asked to review the objectives, to propose the format and leadership, to establish the detailed programme, to advise on documentation and equipment, to assist in preparing the various communications required and to provide a working paper on air pollution control.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT WITH WHO ASSISTANCE

4.1 Technical discussions

Preparations were completed for the conduct of the technical discussions on "Environmental pollution problems and approach to their control in the Western Pacific Region", to be held during the twenty-third session of the Regional Committee as decided in resolution WPR/RC22.R25. Mr R.R. Harcourt, Assistant Director of Health

/(Environmental ...

(Environmental Health), Department of Health, New Zealand, was selected as Chairman of the Technical Discussions.

4.2 Technical assistance to countries

4.2.1 Inter-country mission on environmental sanitation

During three months in 1971 a WHO consultant visited China (Taiwan), Fiji, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Viet-Nam and Singapore to carry out a baseline survey of the environmental sanitation conditions and make suggestions on possible solutions for common problems. Investigations were made in fields, such as excreta disposal, food hygiene and solid waste management, that have a bearing on environmental pollution. This consultant's report was distributed to governments in January 1972.

4.2.2 China (Taiwan)

A consultant on air pollution control was provided for three months to advise the Government of China (Taiwan) on problems of combustion technology. Another consultant was provided for two months to advise on methods and design of night-soil treatment by the chlorella process.

4.2.3 Malaysia

The WHO sanitary engineer assigned to a long-term environmental health advisory services project assisted the Government of Malaysia in planning water quality control activities, improving water pollution control legislation and preparing guidelines for achieving uniform water quality. Assistance was also provided to the Government in formulating a request to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for a project to study sewerage scheme for the whole of metropolitan Kuala Lumpur.

4.2.4 Philippines

A consultant assisted the Department of Health of the Philippines for four months in environmental health programming and legislation. His mission touched on many subjects and activities connected with environmental pollution control.

Assistance was furnished to the National Water and Air Pollution Control Commission (NWAPCC) in formulating a project for a nation-wide water and air pollution control programme. The resulting proposals are scheduled for submission to the annual review of the Philippine UNDP country programme at the beginning of 1973.

4.2.5 The Republic of Korea

Preparations were completed for the recruitment of a consultant to advise the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs of the Republic of Korea on various aspects of air pollution control.

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Preparations for the recruitment of an air pollution control consultant for two months were completed. He will advise the Government on the establishment of a national programme in this field.

4.2.7 Singapore

A WHO consultant reviewed a comprehensive plan for the construction of facilities for the handling and disposal of solid wastes in Singapore. The plan provides for the construction of a large incineration plant and a high-compression baling facility. The economics and technical merit of the proposals were reviewed and advice was given on methods for reducing air pollution. Another WHO consultant was assigned for three months in early 1972 to advise the Government on various aspects of trade wastes pollution control.

Preparations were completed for the recruitment of two consultants to advise on coastal water quality standards and waste treatment systems as part of a two-year project to assist the Singapore public works department to plan for the provision of sewerage services.

5. TRAINING ACTIVITIES

5.1 Group activities

5.1.1 Inter-regional training course on coastal water pollution - Central Denmark

Two participants, one from Singapore and one from Australia, attended the second training course on coastal water pollution held in Denmark in August 1971. Hong Kong, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea were invited to nominate one participant each for the third training course in August 1972.

5.2 Fellowships

The following fellowships were awarded or started during the period 1 July 1971 to 30 June 1972.

/Field ...

Field	Number of fellows	Number of months	Awarded ⁽¹⁾	Started ⁽¹⁾
Sewerage and water pollution	7	27	3/4-1/2	4/22-1/2
Air pollution control	2	7-1/2	1/6	1/1-1/2
Solid waste disposal	1	12	-	1/12
Environmental health ⁽²⁾	11	110-1/2	1/12	10/98-1/2
Food hygiene ⁽²⁾	3	35	2/23	1/12
Total	24	192		

(1) In these columns, the number to the left indicates fellows, the number to the right indicates months. Thus 3/4-1/2 means three fellows for a total of 4-1/2 months.

(2) The fields of environmental health (general grouping ranging from environmental sanitation to sanitary engineering) and food hygiene include elements of environmental pollution control.