

## PRESS RELEASE

### Plant Science Industry Contributes to the Clean-Up of Obsolete Pesticide Stocks in Ethiopia

*Addis Ababa, 21st September 2005* - A group of manufacturers of crop protection products, represented in Ethiopia by CropLife Ethiopia, are contributing to the destruction of more than 800 tonnes of obsolete pesticides, mainly owned by the Government of Ethiopia. The contribution is being lodged by CropLife International, representing the global federation of the plant science industry, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome in a recently created FAO Trust Fund.

Over the last 40 years, stocks of pesticides have accumulated in Ethiopia. They were originally supplied by a number of sources including products sent to Ethiopia as development aid. Many of the stocks and their containers have deteriorated with age, are no longer useable and are presenting a potential threat to communities close to the storage sites.

The Ethiopian government had approached the FAO, donor governments and the private sector for assistance to collect, remove and dispose of the obsolete stocks. In a first Phase project, which commenced in 2000 under FAO coordination, some 1,500 tonnes of products were removed from Ethiopia and destroyed in an approved high temperature incinerator in Finland operated by Ekokem OY AB. Amongst the crop protection chemicals were some 800 tonnes of products originally supplied by companies participating in the CropLife Obsolete Stocks programme. A second phase of collection and disposal is now underway and will remove all remaining obsolete pesticide stocks in the country.

As part of Industry's continuing efforts to assist in preventing this problem in the future, training in responsible and safe handling, use and storage of pesticides is being carried out by CropLife in Africa. In Ethiopia, CropLife-sponsored training is complementary to initiatives by the Ethiopian Government, FAO and other organisations to avoid the accumulation of obsolete stocks in the future.

**For more information and interviews, please contact:**

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. There were more than 900 stores holding obsolete pesticides in Ethiopia, many in isolated locations. A proportion of the pesticides had been provided as aid by international agencies and stockpiled for use against desert locusts and other major pests. These strategic stocks were provided in readiness for emergency action as soon as signs of the unpredictable outbreaks were detected. However, the absence of a major outbreak over many years resulted in some stocks becoming obsolete and then requiring safe collection and disposal. Ethiopia has no suitable destruction facilities nor the necessary handling expertise nor the financial resources for organising destruction overseas. Old or poorly stored stocks of pesticides may leak from deteriorated containers, leading to environmental contamination and presenting a risk to nearby communities.

2. The CropLife Obsolete Stocks programme seeks to reduce the risk posed by stocks of obsolete pesticides globally by facilitating disposal projects and the safeguarding of hazardous pesticide stocks through financial, technical and organisational support to multi-stakeholder projects. The programme also seeks to prevent the accumulation of future stocks through training and capacity building in the management and regulation of the supply and use of crop protection products.

For further information on CropLife International's engagement with the issue of obsolete stocks see [www.croplife.org](http://www.croplife.org)

3. CropLife Ethiopia is the national association representing the plant science industry in Ethiopia. It coordinates the contribution of the plant science industry to sustainable agriculture and the responsible use of crop protection products in Ethiopia. CropLife Ethiopia has contributed to the obsolete stock disposal project through technical support and training in collaboration with the project management and other stakeholders. CropLife Ethiopia will continue to offer this support to future project activities.

4. CropLife International is the global federation representing the plant science industry. It supports a network of regional and national associations in 91 countries, and is led by companies such as BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, FMC, Monsanto, Sumitomo and Syngenta promotes the benefits of crop protection and biotechnology products, their importance to sustainable agriculture and food production, and their responsible use through stewardship activities.

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