

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2010

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: APVMA 01

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Endosulfan

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

1. Why has APVMA continued to defend its registration of the organochlorine pesticide endosulfan, despite the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review committee (POPRC) of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants recently agreeing that endosulfan satisfied all the criteria of a persistent organic pollutant (POP) and moved it to the next stage for global phase out?
2. Is it true that the APVMA is now at odds with the Australian government on endosulfan since the Australian government delegation at POPRC supported the international scientific consensus that endosulfan is a POP and must move to the next stage for global phase out?

Answer:

1. The current POPRC decision does not take into account any control measures and risk mitigation factors that governments may have in place.

Endosulfan is currently registered in Australia where its use is limited and tightly regulated following a formal review that concluded in 2005. Its availability in Australia relies on the APVMA being able to be satisfied that such use meets the criteria defined in the Agvet chemicals legislation. These criteria relate to occupational health and safety, human health, the environment and international trade.

The APVMA makes decisions based on scientific evidence. The APVMA has asked the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts to review a range of new scientific studies about endosulfan. Advice from DEWHA is being sought to determine if further regulatory action is warranted in Australia.

2. No.