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### EPA Bans 25 Dangerous Agro-Chemicals

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has banned the importation of 25 agro-chemicals because of their toxicological risks to people, animals, crops and the environment.

Mr John A. Pwamang, Director of EPA in charge of Pesticides, who disclosed this to the Daily Graphic, said the agency was in the process of reviewing the list of registered agro chemicals allowed into the country.

He said those given provisional certificates were being tested and if found not to be suitable for local conditions would be included in the ban.

He, however, explained that some chemicals had been placed under restricted use and were only applied on selected crops by competent pesticide experts and were being sold by dealers licensed to handle restricted pesticides.

Mr Pwamang said some of the banned chemicals that were being used in the agricultural and mining sectors included Toxaphene, Aldrin, Enderin, Chordane, Captafol and DDT.

He said even though DDT was a potent force in the control and eradication of mosquitoes and many countries were lifting the ban on the chemical, it was still a banned substance in the country.

He said, however, that 118 chemicals had been fully registered for importation into the country after undergoing testing for efficacy and safety under local conditions.

He said the category of the licensed chemical that could be imported included insecticides, fungicides and herbicides that had been used in the agricultural sector without any adverse effects.

The Director of Pesticides said the EPA was working closely with the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service and other stakeholders to prevent the country from being turned into a dumping ground for chemicals that were harmful to human beings, animals, crops and the environment.

He said the EPA was also encouraging scientists in the country to put more emphasis on biological control methods to reduce the over-reliance on chemicals, which sometimes contaminated water bodies.

Mr Pwamang said, however, that the EPA only allowed the importation of some unregistered chemical if the pesticides were imported for experimental and research purposes.

He said 24 agro-chemicals had been given provisional clearance because most of the information required had been provided and the chemical did not pose any risk to human beings and the environment.

He said the clearance was temporary for one year pending the testing and registration.

Mr Pwamang said during the review if those given provisional certificates were found not to be effective for the use for which they were intended, the EPA would have no option but to ban them.

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Monday, SEP 01, 2008

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- News

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- Events

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