

Minutes of the 13th Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting of the Project on Environment Sound Management and Disposal of PCBs Waste and PCB Contaminated Equipment in Sri Lanka

Date: 20th February 2019

Time: 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

Venue: Conference Hall, Ground floor, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment “Sobadam Piyasa”, 416/C/1, Robert Gunewardana Mawatha, Battaramulla.

Present:

- Mr. W.T.B. Dissanayake, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment
- Ms. Dammika Wijayasinghe, Director (EPC & CM), MMDE
- Mr. S.M. Werahera, Deputy Director (EPC & CM), MMDE
- Ms. Sujeewa Fernando, Assistant Director (EPC & CM), MMDE
- Dr. Parackrama Karunaratne, Senior Lecturer, U/Peradeniya
- Mr. K.A Anuradha Prabath, Vice President, People to People Volunteers
- Mr. Samantha Kumarasena, CEO, NCPC
- Mr. Indika Rajapaksha, Environment Officer, Center for Environmental Justice
- Ms. Deepthi Tissera, Director Legal, Consumer Affairs Authority
- Mr. K.K.B Perera, DGM(AM&C), Ceylon Electricity Board
- Mr. W.K.B.T.W.Fernando, Chief Engineer, Ceylon Electricity Board
- Mr. T.D.A Gamage, Assistant Director, Central Environment Authority
- Mrs. D M H S Dissanayake, Senior Research Engineer, ITI
- Ms. Nirosi Pieris, Project Secretary, UNIDO
- Mr. K D G Sumanadasa, Superintendent of Custom, Department of Customs
- Mr. W.N.U. Wijesinghe, Test Engineer, LECO
- Mr. H K G M Wijendrasiri, Electrical Engineer, LECO
- Ms. Arosha Hemali, Business Development Manager, INSEE Ecocycle
- Mr. Asitha K Sanavirathne, Advisor, Ministry of Industry & Commerce
- Mrs. Navoma Karunaratne, Research Assistant, M/MD & Environment
- Ms. M.A.I.U Jayasumana, Technical Officer, PCB Management Project
- Ms. Jeewanthi Ransinghe, Assistant Director, M/MD & Environment
- Mr. Chandima Gunasena, Admin Assistant, UNIDO

Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Mr. W.T.B. Dissanayake, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment, welcomed all the members of Project Steering Committee (PSC) and explained the objective of the meeting.
- Minutes of the 12th PSC meeting was presented and consequently confirmed by members of the PSC.

Progress of the Project

- Ms Dhammika Wijayasinghe, Acting Director (EPC & CM) explained the progress of the project to date. According to her now CEB has started the sample collecting process without the software application and completed around 15 percent of the work. First version of the software application was also developed and presented to the subcommittee and final version will be available for use within the month of March.
- Printing of inventory and training manuals in all three languages will be completed by April.
- Welding transformer inventory has been completed and payments can be made upon revised request.

Presentation of Study Report of the Sub Committee

- Mrs Sujeewa Fernando, Assistant Director (EPC & CM) presented the study report as the convener of the subcommittee.
- As per the report the committee agreed, that the testing all transformers in the welding inventory using test kits and disposing the contaminated transformer oil is more economical than disposing oil in all transformers in the inventory.
- In addition as per the report the contaminated PCB oil can be treated at Eco-Cycle (Holcim), where the People to People Volunteers can transport the contaminated oil in Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBC) placed in a hazardous waste transportation vehicle complying to the standards of the Central Environmental Authority. This oil can be transported either to Putlam or to Colombo.
Peoples to People volunteers will be provided with the uncontaminated transformer oil when they are collecting the contaminated oil. Eco cycle will check the PCB level in the ICB before treatment and the cost varies with the PCB concentration.

Disposal of PCB:

The committee agreed that disposal of contaminated PCB oil in welding transformers is very important as it caused more damages to the environment and human, than utility transformers as it can be safely stored until disposal.

Funds for Disposal.

It was agreed to request UNIDO to fund disposal of contaminated PCB oil in welding transformers. Further it was stated that the bidders for disposal will be selected through International Competitive Bidding. (ICB). Additional Secretary further requested from UNIDO to make a presentation highlighting the use and availability of funds in the project.

CEB progress

- CEB requested to extend the project period as there are many practical difficulties in sample collection process. PSC agreed to extend the project till October 2019

NEXT Exhibition

It was proposed to have a stall in the coming NEXT exhibition (2019) to build up awareness among the general public. In addition to that committee decided to have a separate section for chemical management as suggested by Ms. Dhammika Wijayasinghe to disseminate knowledge about the chemical management among the community and their responsibility.

Curriculum development

- Dr Parakkrama Karunaratne, Senior Lecturer, University of Peradeniya presented a study report related to PCB contained in Breast Milk. He stated that POPs are contained in breast milk and it will be very harmful for the future generation and should be measured specially women in welding sector families. He requested funding facilities to test POPs in breast milk by this project. PSC agreed it subjected to the approval of Dr. Carmela Santeno, UNIDO Project Manager. Dr. Karunaratne further mentioned that unavailability of facilities to analyze hazardous chemicals other than PCBs in Sri Lanka, project has proposed to send samples to China for further analysis. He also stressed that data collected form the analysis will be handed over to the Ministry and any publication regarding the analysis will be done with the collaboration of the Ministry.
- ITI representative Mrs. Hasanthi Disanayake mentioned that presently they could analyze only PCB and within another three months period laboratory will be upgraded to analyze other hazardous chemicals. Therefore, there will be a possibility of analyzing Breast milk in Sri Lanka.
- Dr. Paracrama Karunaratne requested permission to print 200 copies of a book written on POPs including PCBs and National Secretary granted the permission and asked to follow the Ministry guidelines to print it. Dr. Karunaratne mentioned that the book will be treated as a property of the Ministry. Additional Secretary requested a distribution plan of the book from the Dr. Karunaratne. Mrs Sujeewa Fernando mentioned about planed training workshops to be conducted desiring the month of March.

People to people volunteers

Referring to the request made by the previous PSC meeting Mr. Anuradha proposed to increase the sample size by another 800 samples and PSC approved the budget for the work. Additional Secretary requested to submit a report highlighting the fund requirement for increasing the number of samples up to 1000.

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Ms. Dhammika Wijayasinghe

Director (Environmental Pollution Control and Chemical Management Division

Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment