

# THE GREAT LAKES BINATIONAL TOXICS STRATEGY



## WORKGROUP ACTIVITY UPDATE

FALL  
2003

## INTRODUCTION

Signed in 1997, the Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy (GLBTS) is an agreement between Canada and the United States to virtually eliminate persistent toxic substances from the Great Lakes environment. Environment Canada (EC), the United States

Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and stakeholders from industry, academia, state/provincial and local governments, Tribes, First Nations, and environmental and community groups have worked together toward the achievement of the Strategy's challenge goals. Substance-specific workgroups have worked to eliminate the Level 1 substances from the Great Lakes Basin, and an Integration Workgroup has addressed issues that fall outside the scope of the substance-specific workgroups. Highlights of recent workgroup activities are described below.

*The Level 1 substances include mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), dioxins and furans, hexachlorobenzene (HCB) and benzo(a)pyrene (B(a)P), octachlorostyrene (OCS), alkyl-lead, and five cancelled pesticides: chlordane, aldrin/dieldrin, DDT, mirex, and toxaphene.*

## WORKGROUP ACTIVITIES

**Mercury Workgroup:** The workgroup drafted and is finalizing a report on options for reducing dental mercury for state/provincial and local governments. The workgroup has monitored mercury use and provided input for efforts to regulate mercury in scrap. In May 2003, the workgroup analyzed mercury trends in the environment.

**PCB Workgroup:** The workgroup continued with its "Recognition and Award" incentives, continues to seek voluntary reduction commitments from industry sectors, reviewed PCB source emission studies, and maintains a website to facilitate the identification and removal of PCB equipment.

**Dioxin/Furan Workgroup:** The workgroup has gathered information on sources (e.g., on stack test results, ash management), monitored existing initiatives (e.g., MACT implementation, Canada wide Standards), supported national initiatives, and drafted a new two-year workplan. The Burn Barrel Subgroup of the Dioxin Workgroup has gathered education/outreach materials,

conducted education/outreach activities, and completed surveys to learn more about open burning behavior and regulations against it. The subgroup maintains a website of background information, emissions studies, outreach materials, and more at [www.openburning.org](http://www.openburning.org).

**HCB/B(a)P Workgroup:** The workgroup continues to hold discussions with the scrap tire sector on tire fire reduction practices, and has supported the "Burn it Smart!" wood stove campaign in Canada, gathered information from pesticide manufacturers and the Pest Management Review Agency regarding HCB concentrations in pesticides, assessed new emissions reports and monitoring data, and developed a draft inventory on vehicle emissions.

**Integration Workgroup:** The workgroup meets quarterly at alternating locations in Canada and the U.S. The workgroup has supported a municipal toxics management pilot project in Severn Sound, prepared a draft communications plan, shared information about other toxics reduction strategies, and developed a draft evaluation process to assess the status of current Level 1 substances and a draft adoption process for other substances for the GLBTS to consider.

**Long-Range Transport:** A long-range transport workshop will be held September 16-17, 2003 in Ann Arbor, MI, to address regional, continental, and global source contributions of Level 1 substances to the Great Lakes basin.

**Emerging Pollutants Workshop:** An Emerging Pollutants Workshop, sponsored by USEPA Region 5 and the USEPA Office of Research and Development, was held in Chicago on August 11-14, 2003. The workshop had a scientific focus, with the following objectives: 1) To clarify the state of the science for a number of chemicals of emerging concern, and 2) To develop a list of next steps where indicated, such as research needs and pollution prevention strategies.

### GET INVOLVED

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## UPCOMING GLBTS MEETINGS

December 16, 2003 - Stakeholder Forum, Chicago

December 17, 2003 - Integration Group meeting, Chicago

February 24, 2004 - Integration Group meeting, Windsor

May 19, 2004 - Stakeholder Forum, Toronto

May 20, 2004 - Integration Group meeting, Toronto



## PROGRESS TOWARD THE CHALLENGE GOALS

The following table shows Canadian and U.S. progress toward the challenge goals agreed upon in the GLBTS. It represents overall progress that has occurred in the two countries, in some cases in addition to the GLBTS efforts.

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Challenge Goals</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>Mercury</b>	Canadian Release: By 2000, reduce releases by 90% in the Great Lakes Basin.	Approximately 83% reduction by 2001.
	U.S. Release: By 2006, reduce releases (to air nationally and to Great Lakes waters) by 50%.	Reductions estimated to be over 40% between 1990 and 2001 (for air emissions).
	U.S. Use: By 2006, reduce by 50%.	Estimated reduction of more than 50% since 1995 (2001 projection).
<b>PCBs</b>	Canada: By 2000, reduce by 90% high-level PCBs (>1% PCBs) that were once, or are currently, in service. Accelerate destruction of stored high-level PCB wastes.	As of March 2003, 86% of high-level PCBs (Askarel > 1%, 10,000 ppm) in storage had been destroyed in Ontario, compared to 1993; approximately 3854 tonnes of high-level PCBs are still in storage and 3596 tonnes in service in Ontario.
	U.S.: By 2006, reduce by 90% nationally high-level PCBs (>500 ppm PCBs) used in electrical equipment.	According to annual reports from PCB disposers, approximately 36% (71,000) of PCB transformers and 10% (141,000) of PCB capacitors have been disposed of between 1994 and 2000. Since the annual reports do not readily account for all PCB transformers and capacitors disposed, the amount of PCB equipment disposed since 1994 is likely higher.
<b>Dioxins and Furans</b>	Canadian Releases: By 2000, reduce releases in the Great Lakes Basin by 90%.	83% (213 grams) reduction in total releases within the Great Lakes Basin.
	U.S. Releases: By 2006, reduce releases (to air nationwide and to waters of the Great Lakes) by 75%.	77% (10,743 grams) reduction in total releases within U.S.
<b>HCB</b>	Canadian Releases in the Great Lakes Basin: Reduce by 90% by 2000.	Approximately 65% reduction in Ontario since 1988.
	U.S. Releases: By 2006, reduce releases to the Great Lakes Basin.	Approximately 90% reduction nationally from chlorinated solvents and pesticide manufacturing.
<b>B(a)P</b>	Canadian Releases in the Great Lakes Basin: Reduce by 90% by 2000.	Approximately a 45% reduction in Ontario since 1988.
	U.S. Releases: By 2006, reduce releases to the Great Lakes Basin.	In the Great Lakes: approximately 65% reduction from coke ovens and over 90% reduction from primary aluminum reduction plants and petroleum refineries.
<b>Alkyl-lead</b>	Canada: By 2000, reduce by 90% the use, generation, or release of alkyl-lead.	Over 98% reduction in sources, uses, and releases from 1988 to 1997 in Ontario.
	U.S.: Confirm by 1998, that there is no longer use of alkyl-lead in automotive gasoline.	In 2000, EPA confirmed no-use of alkyl-lead in automotive gasoline.
<b>Level I Pesticides</b>	Canada: Report by 1997 that there is no longer use, generation or release of the five Level I pesticides.	EPA and EC confirmed that all uses of the Level I pesticides have been canceled, and production facilities have been closed.
	U.S.: Confirm by 1998 that there is no longer use or release of the five Level I pesticides in the Great Lakes Basin.	
<b>OCS</b>	Canada: Report by 1997 that there is no longer use, generation or release of OCS.	In 2000, EC concluded that there were no documented releases in Ontario in 2000, but identified potential sources where testing was required to confirm that releases do not exist.
	U.S.: Confirm by 1998 that there is no longer use or release of OCS in the Great Lakes Basin.	EPA has concluded that the challenge goal has been met.

Sources: (For mercury) USEPA, 2001. *Progress Update: Mercury Release and Use Reduction Challenge*. October 18, 2001, Access: <http://www.epa.gov/region5/air/mercury/progress.html>; (For OCS) USEPA, 2000. Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy Octachlorostyrene (OCS) Report Stage 3; (Alkyl-lead and Level 1 Pesticides) USEPA, 2002. *Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy, 2001 Progress Report*, Access: [www.binational.net](http://www.binational.net); (All other substances) Stakeholder Forum presentation. Windsor, Ontario, May 14, 2003, Access: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/bns/reports/stakemay2003/index.html>