THIRD MEETING OF THE PESTICIDES FORUM, 5 FEBRUARY 1997 AT THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, 2 MARSHAM STREET, LONDON

1. **Those present**

Those attending are listed at Annex A.

2. **Introductions**

2.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the third meeting of the Forum, particularly those attending a meeting for the first time - Dr Nick Sotherton (Game Conservancy Trust) Dr Robin Szmidt (SAC, deputising for Stuart Wale) and Caroline Drummond (LEAF deputising for David Richardson in the morning). In addition John Terry (FWAG) was deputising for Richard Knight and there were apologies from Anthony Pemberton (CLA). Gareth Jones was observing for the Department of Health and Liz Parker for PSD.

2.2 The Chairman thanked all who had responded to the request to send in in-house newsletters and definitions of ICM. Copies of the newsletters were available at the meeting, as were copies of Pesticide Survey Report 100 and the final report of the ADAS ICM survey.

3. **Minutes of the Second Meeting (PF/min/2) and Matters Arising**

3.1 It was pointed out that under paragraph 2.3 of PF/min/2 should read that "Scottish Natural Heritage under their TIBRE programme are producing a new Farm Management Manual that will be launched at the 1997 Royal Highland Show."

3.2 ADAS had given further consideration to the possibility of bias in their survey of ICM and this was covered in some detail in the final report. The report explained that the questionnaire had been introduced to respondents as a survey of pest control in general and not ICM, that expert specialists had not been surprised by the results, and that, from past ADAS surveys, it was known that the overall pattern of responses did not change significantly when additional responses were included or when non-respondents were re-surveyed. It was concluded therefore that the results of the study were representative of the whole of the target population.
3.3 Under Action 6, members felt that reduced volumes as well as reduced rates were an important consideration in this area.

3.4 Under Action 7, members asked that they be given good opportunity to comment on the review of labelling. In particular, members would be keen to see water hazard labelling incorporated. PSD confirmed that full consultation would take place.

**ACTION: PSD**

3.5 Under Action 11 concerning monitoring progress and developing indicators, Mr Tim Davis described PSD's recently let project with SAC to review indicators of pesticide risk to the environment. This would be reported to the October meeting of the Forum. An OECD workshop to be held in April to consider indicators was also mentioned.

3.6 The sentence "Under the conditions of the experiment no measurable environmental improvement was observed when pesticides were reduced by 50%" should be added to paragraph 7.2.

4. **Reports from Organisations / Forward Look: Members' activities February - June 1997**

4.1 There will be a Pesticide Optimisation session at this year's BCPC Brighton Conference covering 4 papers on policy, 4 papers on landscape management and posters on strategy.

4.2 A summary of BAA's activities January - June 1997 was tabled and is given at Annex C.

4.3 NFU is continuing work on broad-acre crops accreditation.

4.4 UKASTA is holding a conference in April on quality assurance schemes. There will also be 23 farmer meetings and there are proposals for two open days on TIBRE.

4.5 Game Conservancy Trust is to hold 15 seminars for distributors and there will be open days on the arable farmer conservation network.

4.6 The revised LEAF environmental audit is to be launched on 14 April.

4.7 The AEA will be holding in-field demonstrations at Sprays and Sprayers.
5. Final Draft of the proposed Action Plan and Timetable (PF/5/rev)

5.1 The revised draft action plan for the responsible use of pesticides was considered.

5.2 There was general support for the content of the Plan but concern that the document as drafted did not identify with sufficient clarity the need for the Action Plan nor what it was trying to achieve. The impacts of pesticides needed to be identified, prioritised and measured. It was felt that there was a risk of confirming current practice rather than changing it. Integrated Crop Management was overemphasised in the Action Plan as it was felt ICM was but one vehicle for achieving the Plan's objectives. Some members considered that the Plan needed to define "responsible use", explain how it would be achieved and identify how progress would be measured.

5.3 It was agreed that the Plan should include an introduction explaining the need for the Plan and discussing the concepts of "minimisation" and "optimisation". In addition, ICM should be placed in context and a general sharpening up was needed.

5.4 Each Action was considered briefly in turn with particular consideration of the timescale. "ICM" should be changed to "responsible pesticide use" at appropriate points throughout the document.

COLLABORATION:

It was felt that spray operators and contractors should be added to the list of collaborators.

In paragraph 3, some members preferred the term "optimise" to "minimise", others preferred "minimise the impacts".

Action 1 - Definition for ICM

Agreed (but see also paragraph 6.1).

Action 2 - Crop protocols

It was felt that the Forum needed to advise those drawing up protocols of any concerns regarding the principles enshrined in them, to influence their content and to monitor their use.

Action 3 - Accreditation schemes

Agreed
PROMOTION:

Action 4 - *Provide advisers with information*

Agreed

Action 5 - *Improve guidance to farmers*

Delete specific reference to demonstration farms.

Action 6 - *Improving better spray application practice*

Delete from "technology" onwards.

Action 7 - *Improving information on environmental impact*

Delete from "pesticides" onwards.

Action 8 - *Training*

This should emphasise the need to improve training in responsible pesticide use and to encourage the holding of an appropriate qualification.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER:

Action 9 - *Improving technology transfer*

It was agreed that two actions were needed here, one to consider technology itself and the other to consider the transfer of appropriate technology. The former would advise on appropriate technologies that farmers could adopt to assist the move towards responsible pesticide use and the latter would identify ways of improving the transfer of information to farmers.

MONITORING:

Action 10 - *Indicators of progress*

It was important that this action was dealt with in the near future and not by end 1998 as indicated in the draft Plan. A brief explanation of "sustainable development indicators" was needed. It was agreed that a sub-group should be set up to consider objectives and indicators of responsible use and that it should be chaired by Jim Orson with members to include: Keith Dawson, Peter Beaumont, Tony Pike, David Richardson, Paul Willgoss, SAC and NFU. It was important that the definition of ICM
in the revised Green Code (and supporting guidance) should line up with definitions to come out of the sub-group.

**ACTION: PSD**

The secretariat would liaise with Mr Orson in setting-up the group and would provide administrative support.

**ACTION: SECRETARIAT**

It was noted that the Agri-Environment Forum was also considering indicators. The secretariat were asked to keep the sub-group informed of their progress in this area.

**ACTION: SECRETARIAT**

**Action 11 - Report to ACP**

Agreed

5.5 The Action Plan would be redrafted by the secretariat to reflect the above discussion and circulated to members for comment and agreement with a view to publication in the Spring. An associated draft Press Release would also be cleared with members.

**ACTION: SECRETARIAT**

6. **Definition of ICM (PF/12)**

6.1 Given the earlier discussion about the need to concentrate on responsible pesticide use rather than ICM alone, it was agreed that paper PF/12 should be kept as an information paper at this stage.

7. **BASIS ICM certification and training agencies. Presentation on BASIS/LEAF ICM training course (PF/13)**

7.1 Barrie Orme presented a tabled paper on the proposed new BASIS / LEAF ICM training course. This had been drawn up with LEAF and would be a 2 day course resulting in a separate ICM certificate. The course would go into ICM in more depth than the existing BASIS qualification and would accrue Continuous Professional Development (CPD) points. A statement from the Forum and/or Ministers backing the proposed course would be welcomed as would information on possible sources of EU funding.
7.2 Although some members would have preferred it to form part of the current BASIS qualification rather than be a separate qualification, the Forum gave its broad support to the proposed course. The initiative was a welcome contribution to the responsible use of pesticides.

ACTION: BASIS/LEAF

8. A brief survey of the teaching of pesticide minimisation and integrated farming in agricultural universities and colleges (PF/14)

8.1 In Dr Andrée Carter's absence Tim Davis presented her paper PF/14.

8.2 The opportunities for improving the environmental content of curricula were discussed. It was felt that the best way this could be tackled would be to approach vice-chancellors and principals rather than to undertake further survey work. The Chairman mentioned that he was due to meet the Conference of Agricultural Professors and would consult them over a way forward.

ACTION: CHAIRMAN

9. Technology transfer

Presentation by Produce Studies - "Communicating with Farmers" (PF/15)

9.1 Mr Stephen Hearn presented his paper PF/15 on communicating with farmers. This showed that virtually all farmers sought advice irrespective of farm size. Farmers were best placed to make strategic decisions for environmental reasons whilst advisers provided pragmatic technical solutions and influenced changes in practice.

Presentation by the Association of Independent Crop Consultants - "Integrated Crop Management in Practice" (PF/16)

9.2 Mr Alan Bide presented paper PF/16. He outlined that the AICC represented roughly 30% of the UK market in technology transfer. The AICC drew its information from strong associations with a number of industry sources, Universities and Colleges. In addition, it had its own trials, in-house training and specialist days. In looking at information transfer, concern was expressed that independent advisers were not provided with the same information by the pesticide manufacturer as was received by the pesticide distributor. Crop assurance schemes, trace ability, LEAF audits etc. require growers to acknowledge the use of registered advisers and with the move towards recognition of ICM, concern was also expressed that there was sufficient integrity in the industry. It was difficult for organisations to do checks with no apparent directories for BASIS, BASIS Professional Registry and FACTS. Mr
Bide also noted that there was no list of HGCA Levy payers and that the HGCA had to promote its technology transfer through a third party.

9.3 The Forum was grateful for these presentations.

Discussion of the technology transfer presentations

9.4 It was pointed out that 16,000 BASIS certificates have been awarded and that a list of holders would pose considerable practical difficulties. Also, the BASIS professional Register had voted against publishing a list of its members. It was felt that improving information on those holding qualifications might be an area for consideration by the proposed Technology Transfer sub-group.

9.5 It was noted that not only was it important for the farmer to receive information but that they would also wish to see techniques formally demonstrated in practice or tried out by neighbours before they would seriously consider adopting them.

Setting up a Forum sub-group on technology transfer (PF/17)

9.6 Mr Tim Davis presented paper PF/17. There was broad agreement to the proposal and the secretariat were asked to set up the sub-group. It was thought that better promotion was also needed of existing information and that an innovative communicator should be included in the group.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

10. Any other business

10.1 The letter from Rowena Tye of OFWAT (PF/18) was discussed. There were concerns that the calculations in the letter were inaccurate. The secretariat undertook to reply to Dr Tye outlining these concerns.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

10.2 Both Tony Pike and Jim Orson had replied to Dr Tye and they were asked to provide the secretariat with copies of their letters (Mr Pike did so immediately after the meeting).

ACTION: MR ORSON

10.3 Concern was expressed about proposed changes to the status of herbicides on set-aside land. The secretariat agreed to pass on these concerns to Cereals and Set-Aside Division of MAFF.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT
11. Date of next meeting - 18 June 1997

11.1 The likely agenda for the next meeting was outlined. The main item would be crop protocols and the NFU/retailer group and Scottish Quality Cereals would be invited to make presentations. They would also be a report back from the objectives and indicators sub-group. A presentation of TIBRE by Scottish Natural Heritage was also suggested as was one by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency/Environment Agency on their interests in pesticides. In the latter case, members felt that a paper should be submitted to the Objectives and Indictors sub-group in the first instance.
THOSE PRESENT AT THE THIRD MEETING OF THE PESTICIDES FORUM

Chairman

Dr David Shannon  
*Chief Scientist, MAFF*

Members

Professor Sir Colin Berry  
*Advisory Committee on Pesticides*

Mr Tony Pike  
*British Agrochemicals Association*

Dr Keith Dawson  
*United Kingdom Agricultural Supply Trade Association*

Mr Ron Saunders  
*Agricultural Engineers Association*

Dr David Brightman  
*National Farmers' Union*

Mr Charles Russell  
*Scottish Farmers' Union*

Mrs Helen Bower  
*Women's Farming Union*

Mr Peter Beaumont  
*The Pesticides Trust*

Dr Nick Sotherton  
*The Game Conservancy Trust*

Ms Caroline Drummond  
*Linking Environment and Farming*

Mr John Terry  
*Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group*

Mr Paul Willgoss  
*Fresh Produce Consortium/British Retail Consortium*

Mr Jim Orson  
*ADAS*

Dr Robin Szmidt  
*Scottish Agricultural College*

Mr Barrie Orme  
*BASIS Registration Ltd*

Mr David Richardson  
*Linking Environment and Farming (pm only)*

Presenters

Mr Stephen Hearn  
*Produce Studies Limited*
Mr Alan Bide  
*Association of Independent Crop Consultants*

Mr Tim Davis  
*Pesticides Safety Directorate*

**Observers**

Mr Geoff Bruce  
*Pesticides Safety Directorate*

Dr Peter Corcoran  
*Department of the Environment*

Mr Ian Lawrence  
*Department of Trade and Industry*

Mr Gareth Jones  
*Department of Health*

Mr John Bouckley  
*Health and Safety Executive*

Mr Roy McLachlan  
*Scottish Office*

Ms Lynn Griffiths  
*Welsh Office*

Mr Brian Murphy  
*Department of Agriculture, Northern Ireland*

Ms Liz Parker  
*Pesticides Safety Directorate*

**Secretariat**

Dr Andy Croxford  
*Department of the Environment*

Mr Matthew Wells  
*Pesticides Safety Directorate*
ANNEX B

ACTION LIST

SECRETARIAT

1. PSD to allow Forum members a timely opportunity to comment on the review of labelling.

2. Assist Mr Orson in setting-up the Objectives and Indicators sub-group and provide administrative support.

3. PSD to ensure that Green Code definition of ICM lines up with that to come out of the Objectives and Indicators sub-group.

4. Liaise with Agri-Environment Forum over their work on indicators and keep Objectives and Indicators sub-group aware of developments.

5. Action Plan to be redrafted along the lines discussed at the third Forum meeting. Redraft to be circulated to Forum members for comment and agreement by end February.

6. A Press Release for the Action Plan to be drafted by the secretariat and circulated to members for comment and agreement by end February.

7. Dr Shannon to consult the Conference of Agricultural Professors over the best way of Influencing the ICM content of Agricultural courses.

8. Set up the Technology Transfer sub-group and identify a suitable innovative communicator for membership.


10. Pass on Forum's concerns regarding the proposed change in status of herbicides on set-aside land to MAFF's Cereals and Set-aside Division.
MEMBERS

1. Mr Orson to provide the secretariat with a copy of his reply to Rowena Tye.

2. To comment on the to-be-circulated redrafted Action Plan and the accompanying draft Press Release by mid-March.

3. BASIS to take forward their joint initiative with LEAF on ICM qualifications.