

Madsen, Søren R. N.

Fra: Schou, Lone
Sendt: 10. december 2008 14:18
Til: Madsen, Søren R. N.; Jakobsen, Dorte Skjøtt
Emne: VS: Australia to Export Hazardous Waste

Prioritet: Høj

til sagen

-----Oprindelig meddelelse-----

Fra: Allan Andersen [mailto:aa@dn.dk]
Sendt: 10. december 2008 14:13
Til: Schou, Lone
Emne: VS: Australia to Export Hazardous Waste
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Kære Lone

Dette til din orientering.

Mvh
Allan

Allan Andersen
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-----Oprindelig meddelelse-----

Fra: Mariann Lloyd-Smith [mailto:biomap@oztoxics.org]
Sendt: 4. december 2008 05:33
Til: Allan Andersen
Emne: Re: Australia to Export Hazardous Waste
Prioritet: Høj

Dear Allan,

Thankyou for your response ..I had meant to email you again before we distributed our call for support. Its just we have so little time to organise our responses.

You raise some important concerns.

In summary, yes it is is a realistic option, technically and politically to establish an appropriate technology to treat the HCB in Australia.

- Australia is well experienced in treating POPs waste with non incineration technology.

- Under Basel Convention obligations, Article 4 requires Australia to "take the appropriate measures to (b) Ensure the availability of adequate disposal facilities, for the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes and other wastes."

- There are significant risks in the transport at sea of such highly hazardous persistent wastes.

These shipments of 6000 tonnes will be followed by more the stockpile is 22,000 tonnes.

- The incineration of HCB wastes will result in the formation of a range of extremely toxic byproducts. Some may escape through air emissions while others will be consolidated in the flyash, which will require permanent secure storage in hazwaste facilities.

That's it is summary.... but I would like to take the opportunity to give you some background to this shipment.

This is part of a long NGO campaign to address hazardous waste in Australia particularly our POPs waste like PCBs and HCB starting in 1990 when NGOs helped close the facility that made the waste at Orica's industrial premises.

In 1996 the Australian National Advisory Body (NAB) on Scheduled Waste (of which I was a member) released the national Management Plan for Hexachlorobenzene (HCB) to oversee the destruction of this HCB waste stockpile. All governments adopted it.

The plan recommended that the waste should be destroyed as "close to the source as possible" in the light of the significant risk in transporting such a large stockpile of persistent organic pollutant (POPs) waste and Australia's proven ability to destroy hazardous waste in an environmentally sound manner.

At the time the ECOLOGIC Gas Phase Chemical Reduction (GPCR) facility was running in Western Australia but it was always envisaged that a plant would be built in NSW closer to the HCB waste.

Orica surprisingly did not choose GPCR, which was well tried and had community support. Instead it chose a incineration / vitrification process called GeoMelt.

It was untried in Australia and had had a rocky history with a large explosion in field trials. Orica had difficulty securing a site for this technology.

However, at the same time in Western Australia, there was a public siting process for a non incineration hazwaste complex which resulted in 3 regional communities asking for the facility to be built in their area. The difference in these responses was both in the public process that was undertaken to choose a site and the fact that Orica was attempting to site an incineration technology which had already had bad history and media.

So to answer your question, yes it is certainly possible to establish in Australia a non incineration facility with the technical capacity to destroy the HCB stockpile.

More importantly, it is essential that Australia re-establish the capacity to deal with its own hazardous waste. We have obligations to our own people as well as our Pacific Island neighbours whose waste is treated in Australia. We are currently having bilateral discussion with Papua New Guinea to bring back their hazardous waste including the stockpiles of DDT but we are already in difficulty with our own industrial wastes, and there is the growing problem of products with new POPs, such as brominated and fluorinated compounds.

Orica (formally ICI Australia) has been a difficult company to deal with from the beginning...the first time I saw the HCB stockpile it was stored in bad conditions, and even last week Orica was caught incinerating the very toxic diethyl aluminium chloride outside their agreement with residents.

We believe Orica has thrown away opportunity after opportunity to address this issue, and now that it is reported they want to sell the site, the waste needs to be dealt with in the quickest and cheapest way possible.

I hope this has helped give you some context to this issue and that you consider supporting our objection to the export of this waste.

Regards Mariann

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On 03/12/2008, at 8:12 PM, Allan Andersen wrote:

> Dear Mariann
>
> We need from you updated information on whether treating/handling/
> destruction of the HCB waste "on location" in Australia is a
> realistic option for the time being.
>
> If the equipment used earlier (late 90's) is closed down and out of
> function at the moment and if it technically is out of question to
> re-install the equipment it might be a only solution to export the
> waste.
>
> We have noted the date Dec 15, but before going on we need to be
> sure and to be updated on, whether destruction of the HCB-waste "on
> location" in Australia is a realistic option, technically and
> political: What are the main arguments against "on location
> destruction" and what are the main arguments for "on location
> destruction"?
>
> Best wishes
> Allan
>
>
> Allan Andersen
> Miljømedarbejder (Environmental Consultant)
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