

Tangier Model United Nations Environmental Chair Packet



The impact of chemical use on water

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Introduction:

Dear delegates,

We, Hiba El Kerdoudi and Ghofrane El Mokaddame are extremely delighted and honored to welcome you as the chairs of the environmental committee to the ninth's Tangier MUN. In this upcoming conference, we will be acknowledging and discussing The Impact of Chemical use on Water.

The Environmental committee:

The Environmental Committee works on and discusses county and regional programs, policies, and efforts that may impact the county and region's physical environment and sustainability. The Committee addresses a variety of service areas, as they relate to environmental sustainability, including land use, transportation, water, waste management, parks and ecological resources, climate and energy and environmental stewardship.

Through its work on these issues, the first objective of this Committee strives to uphold and advance the principles of the Environmental Vision, moreover, protecting the environment and the high quality of life for current and future generations.

Topic overview:

Undoubtedly, over the last one hundred years, humans have introduced a significant number of chemicals into the environment such as cosmetics, furniture, cleaning products, plastics, and toys. There is little in our modern world produced without chemicals, and without doubt they have brought enormous benefits to people and society.

The numbers are staggering. There are approximately 150,000 different chemical substances in commercial use today and their number and applications continue to grow.

Despite their benefits, chemicals can also pollute and contaminate. They are everywhere: in the air, water, and soils. They have been found in the Arctic and at the bottom of our oceans.

The presence of chemicals does not always mean they represent a risk but chemicals in the water environment at or above levels of concern may harm aquatic life and other wildlife that these environments support.

Exposure over time to even low levels of some chemicals may affect the health of animals and fish, such as interfering with the endocrine system, which affects reproduction. Other chemicals have a more immediate impact on aquatic life because of their short-term toxicity if certain thresholds are exceeded. Pesticides are used in farming to control weeds, insects and fungi. Run-offs of

these pesticides can cause water pollution and poison aquatic life. Subsequently, birds, humans and other animals may be poisoned if they eat infected fish.

Some chemicals can be persistent as they don't break down easily in the environment and accumulate in our bodies as well as those of animals and fish. Some of the higher risk substances may contribute to increased risk of cancer, reproductive problems, and damage DNA.

Chemicals are produced by industry and generally enter the environment from diffuse sources such as sewers and run-off from roads and farmland. They are also widespread in the environment from past use. For example, historical mining activity has led to significant emissions of metals from below the ground into surface waters, and these have continued even after mining has stopped.

Chemicals used in homes, businesses and industry can be released directly into the water environment, and some of those chemicals are harmful if people are exposed to them in sufficient quantities. To reduce the risk from harmful chemicals in drinking water, expensive treatment is needed to remove them.

The number, size and sources of significant pollution incidents have been reduced. Wildlife is returning to previously contaminated waters. Our challenge now, however, is to understand whether low levels of chemicals in the environment are causing more subtle effects, limiting the potential that could be achieved for future generations.

Moreover, in the future, population growth and climate change will increase the pressure on the water environment from chemicals. The market for chemicals is predicted to double worldwide by 2030 compared to 20174. Population growth is likely to increase the use of chemicals increasing their release into the environment. This will be further exacerbated by the impact of climate change. Higher intensity rainfall events will wash more chemicals into water bodies from sewers or land. Periods of drought will be more common, resulting in less dilution in rivers.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does chemicals affect water in both negative and positive ways?
2. How can the chemical investigation programmes (CIRs) help water pollution?
3. What is the impact of this water crisis on the life of human beings?
4. How to maintain marine life from chemical water pollution?
5. How can underdeveloped countries deal with water pollution?
6. What are Water Quality Standards (WQS)?
7. How can the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) help water pollution from toxic chemicals?
8. What are the economic effects of chemical use on water?

Key Words:

Chemical substances: a form of matter having constant chemical composition and characteristic properties.

The water environment: is water managed to improve or maintain the health of rivers and wetlands including the plants and animals that depend on them.

Wildlife: refers to undomesticated animal species, but has come to include all organisms that grow or live wild in an area without being introduced by humans.

Endocrine system: includes not only the pancreas but also the pituitary, thyroid, and other glands.

Aquatic life: means fish, mollusks, crustaceans, algae and other aquatic plants and invertebrates.

Sewers: an underground conduit for carrying off drainage water and waste matter.

Climate change: refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, such as through variations in the solar cycle.

Period of drought: is a period of time when an area or region experiences below-normal precipitation. The lack of adequate precipitation, either rain or snow, can cause reduced soil moisture or groundwater, diminished stream flow, crop damage, and a general water shortage.

Requirements:

- a. Position Paper.
- b. A resolution paper in relation to the topic.
- c. knowing all the points and motions.
- d. Potential solutions to solving the problem.
- e. Substantial research done on the committee's topic.
- f. A considerable amount of knowledge about your country.
- g. A smile on the face :)

Helpful Websites:

1. <http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/Documents/meetings/OEWG3/inf/OEWG3-INF-19-GCOII-Summary.pdf>
2. <http://nora.nerc.ac.uk/id/eprint/524322/>
3. <https://www.norman-network.net/>
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>
5. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/nationalpopulationprojections/2016basedstatisticalbulletin#main-points>
6. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-dangersub/pdf/strategic_approach_pharmaceuticals_env.PDF
7. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution>
8. <https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/120299/chemistry-of-water-pollution.pdf>
9. <https://www.southernenvironment.org/topic/industrial-chemical-pollution-in-our-water/>

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P.S: we will be more than happy to help.