

FOREWORD

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The international Programme on Perception and Management of Pests and Pesticides (PMPP) was set up in 1978 at a meeting of the International Geographical Union Working Group on Environmental Perception at Ibadan, Nigeria.

The programme's aims are to encourage international and interdisciplinary collaboration in research related to the production, distribution and use of pesticides, with a view to maintaining and increasing the efficiency of agricultural production and the effectiveness of public health programmes. A parallel aim is to minimize the use of agrochemicals which could have damaging side effects on the environment, on those who come into contact with them or on consumers of treated produce. Particular emphasis is placed on integrated pest management systems. Social, political and economic aspects of the management of pests and pesticides were felt to be the most essential research priority for a programme of this nature because they are so important for the successful implementation of the work of biologists, and because they had received very little attention in the past. A co-ordinated effort was felt to be necessary because researchers working on these topics were scattered in a wide variety of academic disciplines and were often unaware of one another's work. This lack of co-ordination also had the effect of making it difficult to obtain research funding since the case for each project had to be argued in isolation.

The programme is organized from the Systems Group at the Open University in the U.K. with strong and continuing support from the Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Toronto, Canada, the Graduate School of Geography, Clark University, Massachusetts, U.S.A. and the Consortium for International Crop Protection of the United States Agency for International Development. The programme is also supported or endorsed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the International Organisation for Biological Control, the United Nations Environment Programme and UNESCO—Man and the Biosphere Programme.

Three international PMPP meetings have been held so far. The first took place at Cambridge University, England in July 1979 to draw up a research plan, and the second was held at Clark University, Massachusetts, U.S.A., in October 1980 to agree on guidelines for carrying out research projects (Tait, 1981). The third meeting was held at the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology, Nairobi, Kenya in June 1982 to report on research methods and to plan

further research. The papers presented at this meeting are reported here.

Research projects are being carried out under four main headings: (a) the perceptions and decision making strategies of farmers and other pest managers and public health workers; (b) national profiles of pesticide production and distribution and pest management practices, including controls on the production and use of pesticides; (c) the international trade in pesticides and its controls; (d) case studies of successful integrated pest management systems. The PMPP programme has over a hundred correspondents and approximately 20 active research projects in developed and developing countries. The level of co-operation being achieved across disciplinary and national boundaries is impressive. In addition, research projects have in many cases made officials in countries concerned more aware of the need to take local peoples' perceptions into account in making recommendations for improved pest management practices. They have also been able to indicate some potential and actual dangers which are avoidable in the distribution and use of pesticides.

These papers represent an important intermediate stage in the development of the PMPP research programme. Many of the projects reported are continuing ones and further research remains to be done. In some cases, research methods which have been widely used in developed countries are in the process of being modified for use in a range of different cultures. They all describe aspects of the world which have a very real bearing on the application of the work of biologists in pest management and it is important that their results should be disseminated as widely as possible.

Our thanks are due to all those, in Nairobi and elsewhere, who made this meeting possible and who contributed to the fruitful discussions which took place.

REFERENCE

- Tait E. J. (Ed.) (1981) *Perception and Management of Pests and Pesticides: Guidelines for Research*. Working Paper EPR-8, Institute of Environmental Studies, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada M5S 1A4.