



KIMO RESOLUTION 3/96

ENDOCRINE DISRUPTERS

Recent studies have suggested that environmental chemicals possessing similar activities as the female hormone oestrogen, have contributed to reduced semen quality and increased frequencies of testicular cancer and abnormalities of male genitalia and that the underlying causes are still unknown.

Male reproductive health has declined progressively since the Second World War as a result of changes in environmental or lifestyle factors. While the reason for these apparent changes are not clear, both clinical and laboratory research suggests that all of the described changes in male reproductive health appear inter-related and may have a common origin in fetal life or childhood. This means that the increase of the disorders seen today originated 20-40 years ago and the prevalence of such defects in male babies born today will not become manifest for another 20 - 40 years or more. Other studies on the male reproductive health of wildlife also raise the possibility of environmental factors.

The growing number of reports demonstrating that common environmental contaminants and natural factors possessing oestrogenic activity suggests that the adverse trends in human male reproductive health may be associated with exposure to oestrogenic environmental chemicals during fetal and childhood development. Some environmental chemicals reported to be oestrogenic include pesticides such as PCBs and DDT, some products of detergents and surfactant manufacture such as the alkylphenols and some products released from plastics such as bisphenol A and some phthalates.

Current research suggests that these issues indicate the need for a vigorous research effort to understand the extent of the problem, its underlying aetiology, and the development of a strategy for prevention and intervention.

KIMO

Having regard that the possibility that environmental chemicals are entering the marine environment and that not sufficient information is known regarding the effects that these chemicals have on animal and human health;

1) call on all Northern Sea States and the European Commission to actively sponsor more scientific research into the causes and effects of oestrogenic substances on animal and human health.