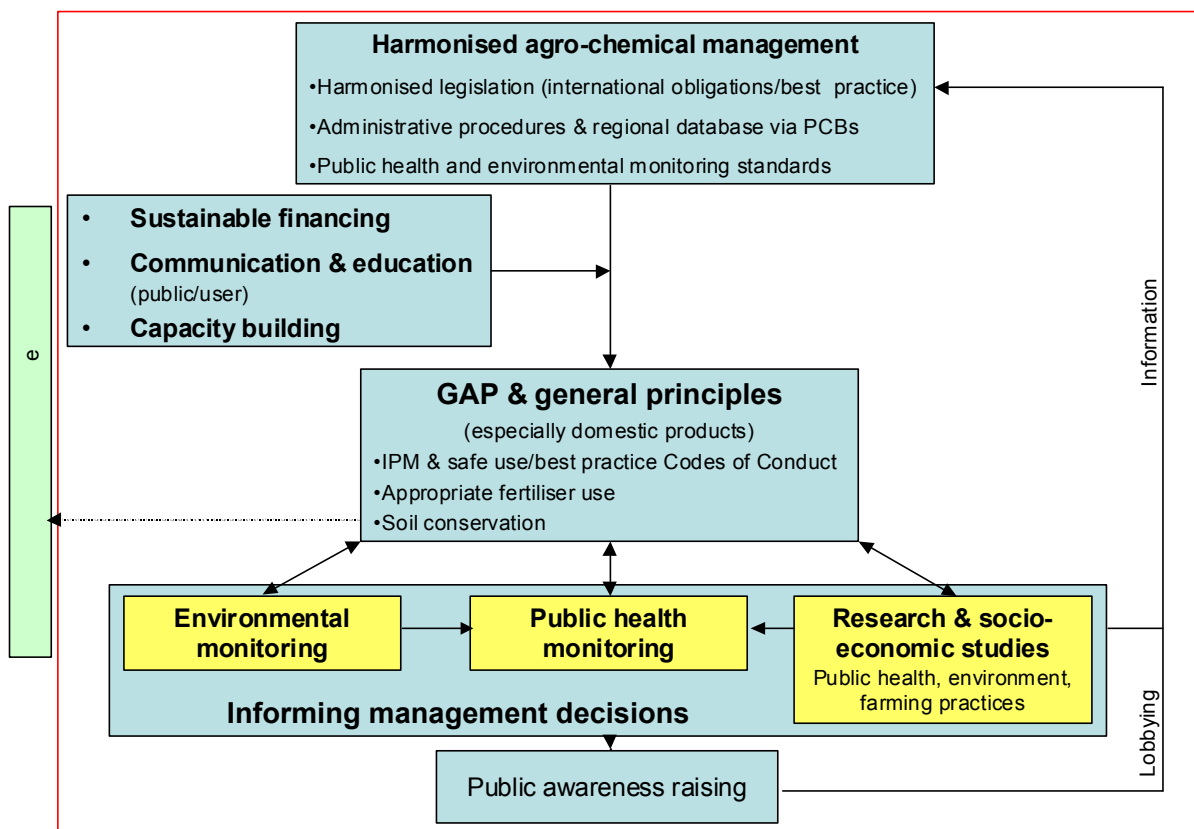


Policy Brief 1: Management of agro-chemicals for improved public and environmental health.

There is an urgent need for effective agro-chemical management in the Caribbean to increase potential for international trade in agricultural products and protect the global environment. Improper use of agro-chemicals has been shown to have harmful effects on human health and the environment. Correct management and use can bring social and economic benefits.

A strategy for the improved use and management of agrochemicals throughout the Wider Caribbean is illustrated below. The strategy may be implemented at different levels via both national and regional actions. There is a need for national governments to act promptly and, concurrently, to initiate regional actions co-ordinated through the CGPC to inform their national programmes. National Governments and the CGPC should develop prioritised plans of action to achieve implementation of their respective components of the strategy and to identify local and external sources of funding. Implementation of the strategy will require integrating and co-ordinating the actions of a number of implementing agencies. A participatory consultative process involving the users of agro-chemicals, those affected by pollution, and the implementing agencies will be important to achieve effective agro-chemical management, and thus pollution control.

Strategy For Improved Agro-chemical Use And Management



The strategy was developed through the Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) based upon the findings of 3 years of research, and upon ten key prioritised management recommendations. It incorporates international obligations such as those defined in the Cartagena Convention and its Protocol on Land Based Sources of Pollution. Critical control points for management were examined and appropriate management actions and recommendations that are defined within a number of Technical Reports and Policy and Management Briefs are incorporated into the strategy. The CGPC has recommended that the strategy is promoted to National Governments for adoption and future implementation, and to the CARICOM for potential future support.

Mees, C., N. Esteban and S. Seddon-Brown, 2003. Management of agro-chemicals for improved public and environmental health - A strategy for improved agro-chemical use and management for the Wider Caribbean: DFID NRSP Project R7668. Policy and management strategy document, MRAG Ltd. website (<http://www.mragltd.com>) as downloadable Adobe Acrobat pdf file. Select the land water interface option in the left hand margin and then select the project R7668. The strategy and all other documentation referred to in this Brief (see overleaf) is available from this web-site.

Key recommendations in order of priority developed through the Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) for improved agro-chemical management in the Wider Caribbean

- HARMONISED AGROCHEMICAL MANAGEMENT (MITIGATION OF POLLUTION)**
- Harmonised procedures for agro-chemical management should be adopted throughout the Wider Caribbean:
 - Model legislation on Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals should be ratified and adopted. This will dictate the administration, use and monitoring of agro-chemicals.
 - Administrative procedures should reflect the requirements of the harmonised legislation and be promoted.
 - A locally owned and managed database should be developed for harmonised administration and information sharing.
 - Regionally acceptable (or local) standards for Maximum Residue Limits should be established, in the absence of which the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) / World Health Organisation (WHO) Codex Alimentarius standards should be applied where possible.
 - Regional environmental reference sites need to be established.
- SUPPORTING THE SYSTEM FOR AGROCHEMICAL MANAGEMENT**
- Sustainable financing and cost recovery mechanisms must be investigated, and where necessary novel and creative means found, to develop capacity, and to fulfil all the functions of the various institutions involved in all aspects of agrochemical management. External sources of funding must be explored and fully utilised.
 - Communications experts should be engaged for communication, education and training purposes; change-management concepts should be applied.
 - Undertake an institutional analysis and evaluation of the capacity and resource needs of Pesticide Control Boards (PCBs) and other relevant executing agencies (e.g. extension services, monitoring and research agencies, medical laboratories) throughout the Wider Caribbean. Duplication of effort should be rationalised.
 - PCBs must be adequately staffed and financed to administer and implement national legislation relating to agro-chemicals. There should be a dedicated full time staff. The composition of the Board of Directors should include representation from the private sector and persons with experience in ecological issues and the fate of agro-chemicals in the environment.
- GAP AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES (MITIGATION OF POLLUTION)**
- GAP and Best Practice Codes of Conduct for agro-chemical use need to be implemented, particularly for domestic products not already covered by existing arrangements.
- INFORMING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS (MONITORING AND RESEARCH)**
- Promote implementation and further research on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Management of Pests and Pesticides (IMPP) as a means of improved management of use of pesticides.
 - Socio-economic analyses, including cost-benefit analyses, should be conducted for different farming practices, including options for agro-chemical use (e.g. IPM).
 - Carefully designed public health monitoring plans must be developed. Ensure adequate analytical capacity to enable monitoring for compliance with standards for public health (i.e. medical and food residue monitoring laboratories).
 - Carefully designed long-term environmental monitoring plans must be developed (from the farm to the sea).

Strategy summary relative to the entry points for management, indicating the key recommendations of the CGPC (R1-R10), and Briefs and Reports containing more detail.

