Russian asbestos policy: ongoing fight

More than 90% of global asbestos production and trade are associated with *chrysotile asbestos*. The EECCA region - about 50% of the global chrysotile production.

- Russia and Kazakhstan incorporate 60 mining and processing facilities, including 41 facilities in Russia.
- Russia – 30% of world’s production, exports 60% of the overall volume of extraction to 35 countries
- Annual export is 400 thousand tonnes

Asbestos products

- More than three thousand different products: corrugated asbestos, different fibres that are used for production of fabric, panels or heat and corrosion resistant coatings; electric insulators (e.g. for clutch and brakes parts), special protective gear, gas masks, etc.

Asbestos Exposure

- Workers of numerous industries have workplace exposure to asbestos, including the following types of exposure:
  - "primary" - mining, clarification and milling;
  - "production" - production of asbestos and asbestos-based products;
  - "construction" - construction and installations works, e.g. installation of boilers, construction of pipelines;
  - "environmental" - emissions of asbestos production facilities affecting nearby residents; demolition of constructions made with use of asbestos and asbestos-containing materials in violation of applicable regulations; uncontrolled disposal and releases of asbestos waste and dust;
  - "household" - household applications of asbestos and asbestos-containing materials, e.g. use of asbestos for ironing boards.

Asbestos in construction materials

- Housing for poor. In Ukraine 95% of all roofs are covered by corrugated asbestos-cement sheets

Asbestos use in everyday life

We discovered:

- Schools, hospitals, other public social buildings in the EECCA are built with asbestos
- Households use asbestos

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Asbestos use in everyday life

We discovered:

- Schools, hospitals, other public social buildings in the EECCA are built with asbestos
Asbestos containing waste
- Asbestos-containing construction waste – dump into waste collection ponds, or directly on roads
- Asbestos-containing construction waste is not considered as hazardous waste and disposed as solid waste

Asbestos related diseases
- **Asbestosis** - the asbestos-induced occupational disease.
- Asbestosis evolves into malignant tumours (lung cancer or mesothelioma).
- 40 countries have already banned asbestos
- In the UK 4,000 people die every year from asbestosis-related disease.
- Between 2010 and 2050, more than 100,000 people will die in the UK from asbestosis-related diseases

Asbestos related diseases
- IARC categorised asbestos as Group 1 Carcinogen - Carcinogenic to Humans
- Diagnosis of dust-induced lung diseases is difficult
- Occupational respiratory diseases are generally diagnosed at the stage when they are severe.
- The initial asbestos exposure and identification of the disease symptoms – 30 - 40 years

Asbestos related diseases - Cases and Costs

| Number of cases of asbestos related occupational diseases in Germany up to 2008: | 65,000 |
| in total (estimated): | 120,000 |

| Costs for asbestos related occupational diseases in Germany in 2008 all costs: | 357,000,000 US-
| costs for pensions: | 125,000,000 US-
| (85 % of all costs) |

| Costs for asbestos related occupational diseases in Germany 1987 - 2008 all costs: | 5,859,000,000 US-
| costs for pensions: | 4,800,000,000 US-
| (85 % of all costs) |

| Estimated total costs for asbestos related occup. diseases in Germany all costs: | 20,000,000,000 US-
| costs for pensions: | 17,000,000,000 US-

Asbestos related diseases - Costs per Case
- Recipients of a pension in 2008: 25,958
- Mean pension per recipient in 2008: 27,400 US-
- Estimated mean duration of pension payment per case: 13 years
- Estimated total pension per case - asbestosis: 130,000 US-
- lung cancer: 320,000 US-
- mesothelioma: 320,000 US-

Notes: April 2010: 1 Euro = 1.33 USD
- Estimated with a 25% annualized decrease of 10% per year for the estimated 30 years.

Source: German Social Accident Insurance – DGUV April 2010: 1 Euro = 1.33 USD
## Opportunities for Green Growth

- All types of asbestos cause cancer
- There is no safe use of asbestos
- There are no safe levels of asbestos exposure
- Development of cancer occurs in many years after the moment of initial asbestos entry to lungs
- True information on asbestos health risks is urgently needed

## Opportunities for Green Growth

- There are affordable and effective alternative to asbestos
- Total ban asbestos production and use is the only way to eliminate asbestos related diseases
- Just transition period is needed to accommodate workers
- Commitments of ministers to develop national programs on the elimination of asbestos related diseases by 2015

## Groundbreaking Project: Analyzing the Situation of Asbestos Use and its Health Impact in Russia

- three Russian asbestos hotspots - Volgograd, Novorossiisk, Dzerjinsk
- current asbestos consumption patterns;
- assess the impact on local populations;
- quantify the environmental repercussions of asbestos pollution;
- consider measures to eliminate the asbestos hazard.

## Steps forward

  - the introduction of a phased policy to end the use of asbestos throughout the EECCA region is required
  - Regulations to protect workers in asbestos, building and waste industry
  - Health research on asbestos related diseases is needed
  - prohibit asbestos use in schools, hospitals, kindergartens; free distribution of cover paint
  - Information campaign of asbestos danger to raise public awareness and support of asbestos free alternatives

## Analyzing the Situation of Asbestos Use and its Health Impact in Russia

- The lack of credible information on the incidence of asbestos-related diseases
- The lack of government transparency on asbestos issues
- A failure to protect construction and demolition workers from occupational asbestos exposures
- The disconnect between levels of asbestos awareness amongst medical and technical experts and the public
- The horrific situation regarding the collection and disposal of asbestos-containing waste
- The reuse of asbestos waste
- The failure of consumers to implement even minimal precautions when using asbestos products at home
- The failure to label asbestos products as containing asbestos or as having a health risk to consumers
- A complete lack of knowledge about and availability of safer alternatives

## Russian asbestos policy break through?

- A revolutionary law of September 7, 2011; a result of WHO and NGO pressure (hygienic requirements for asbestos production and use and asbestos containing products manufacture and use)
  - occupational hazard posed by chrysotile asbestos and chrysotile-containing materials
  - need for protective measures.
  - It is focused on:
    - asbestos containing waste;
    - the health and safety of workers;
    - occupational safety measures including those needed during the refurbishment and demolition;
    - the health of workers in the asbestos industry has to be monitored for life, including during retirement
Based on:
- Russian accession to ILO 162 Convention;
- WHO recommendations on elaboration of national programs on ARD elimination of 2007;
- Global Plan of Actions on occupational health adopted in 2007 at the World Health Assembly

Workshops in Volgograd, Dzerjinsk, Novorossiisk:
- Representatives of asbestos industry, scientific and research institutes; trade unions, local authorities, NGOs

Fight around:
- New law;
- Asbestos threat;
- Safety of asbestos free alternatives;
- Asbestos waste

Russian Ministry of Health:
- Does not consider the new law as a change in the Russian policy on asbestos

Russian Chrysotile Association:
- Opposing any initiatives to raise awareness on asbestos threat and promote safety measures among general public;
- Opposing any attempts to promote new law as a breakthrough in the Russian policy on asbestos;
- Opposing any initiatives to start awareness raising among workers based on the requirements of the new law;
- Opposing initiatives to start awareness among workers involved in demolishing

NGOs:
- The new Russian law on asbestos is a breakthrough in the Russian official approach on asbestos threat;
- Awareness raising among general public and asbestos workers is urgently needed;
- New Law should be used as the basic requirement to improve occupational health in asbestos industry

Planned for summer, 2012
Objectives:
- Sharing experience in asbestos outreach
- Meetings with national NGOs
- Round table discussion with stakeholders (place to be confirmed)

ABAN-Eco-Accord further plans
- Planning for a joint film on asbestos threat – objective, audience, scenario, interviews, visual picture
- Planning a special edition of Women and Environments International magazine on asbestos threat - an internationally recognized magazine focused on asbestos issues and women’s health ( submissions from ABAN and Eco-Accord, number of copies to be circulated in ABAN countries and Russia)
- WEI issue and film launch by ABAN and Eco-Accord
- Press-conferences on asbestos health risks to be highlighted in the film and WEI issue.