THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN SOUTH-SOUTH EAST ASIA- STATUS AND CONTROL STRATEGIES FOR DIFFUSE POLLUTION

A. J. Englelde, Jr.

School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 70112, USA

Abstract: This paper assesses the consequences of agricultural chemicals on the environment and public health in four rapidly advancing countries in South-Southeast Asia. These countries include China, India, the Philippines and Thailand. Particular emphasis is placed on Thailand and the effects of diffuse pollution caused by fertilizers and pesticides. The status of agricultural chemical use, consequent water and soil contamination and public health affects is presented. Diffuse pollution control strategies are discussed to overcome the externality and other social-economic problems associated with agricultural production in general and the excessive use of agricultural chemicals in particular. To address these issues, regulation, use of common sense, education, legal tools and best management practices where appropriate are required. The approach to remediation and success to insure food security will need a “New Green Revolution” with environmental sustainability as its focus.

Key words: Agrichemical, pollution, ASEAN