

Introduction

An expert group meeting was arranged by the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, as part of its response to proposals on environment and health made by the 10th Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meeting (10CHMM) held in Cyprus, 1992. It was hosted by the Centre for Environmental Management and Planning (CEMP) of Aberdeen University.

The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate the achievement of the following ultimate objectives:

1. To develop core materials on Health Assessment¹ (HA) within Environmental Assessment (EA), from which teaching/training materials in appropriate forms can be prepared for a variety of users. The materials should be suitable for adaptation for:
 - (a) awareness-raising among politicians and decision-makers, including those in industry and the media;
 - (b) capacity building among health and other sector professionals, leading to an integration of HA in all EA for both planning and monitoring purposes;
 - (c) local communities, particularly women, enabling them to do basic HA as part of EA when development is proposed or carried out locally.
2. To develop outline project proposals for the development of core materials and their application and testing in selected countries around the world.

The full background to the meeting is provided in the Commonwealth Secretariat note (October 1994), reproduced as Annex 3 to this report. The list of participants at the meeting is attached as Annex 2.

¹ In this document, the term Environmental Assessment (EA) is used for a variety of formally recognised methods for the assessment and mitigation of environmental impacts of projects, plans and policies. As such, it replaces the term Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The term Health Assessment (HA) is used to describe the human health (and safety) component of EA. It replaces the terms Environmental Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) and Health Opportunity Assessment (HOA). Environmental health hazards assessment and management are recognised as methods for determining and controlling any environmental health hazard at any time, not necessarily in connection with formal EA procedures.