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NEWS RELEASE

It's B.C.'s turn to ban cosmetic pesticides

Report compares provincial policies and identifies best models for future laws

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VANCOUVER – It's time for B.C. to join Ontario and Nova Scotia as the best at protecting citizens from harmful cosmetic pesticides. A report released today by the David Suzuki Foundation and Equiterre identifies Ontario and Nova Scotia as having the most effective bans in the country. B.C. does not have a ban, so it doesn't appear in the ranking.

"It's encouraging that Premier Christy Clark has confirmed her support for a provincewide ban on lawn and garden pesticides," says David Suzuki Foundation CEO Peter Robinson. "There's no reason for further delay. The B.C. government should pass legislation by the end of this year, drawing on the experience of Ontario and Nova Scotia, which have already test-driven the strongest bans in the country."

The B.C. Ministry of Environment already consulted the public on "new statutory protections to further safeguard our environment from cosmetic chemical pesticides" in early 2010.

Today's progress report, *Pesticide Free? Oui!*, presents a comparative analysis of the policies in Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Alberta. Along with B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Newfoundland have yet to enact bans.

Ontario and Nova Scotia ranked highest because their bans focus on allowing access to a credible list of products that present a lower risk to human health. They also have a large number of pesticides which are prohibited, and the bans apply beyond lawns to other aspects of landscaping. However, there is room for improvement as both models offer exemptions that could be better controlled or even eliminated.

"Quebec was the first province to ban lawn pesticides, but it can no longer claim to be the gold standard," says Sideny Ribaux from Equiterre, a leading environmental organization in Quebec. "B.C. has the opportunity to raise the bar again by improving on the best models developed to date."

Quebec was the first province to ban lawn pesticides, in 2003, but it now appears third in the report's rankings. Among the provinces with comprehensive cosmetic pesticide bans, New Brunswick and P.E.I. have the most limited approach, given that only one active pesticide ingredient is banned, and only in lawn pesticides. Although included in the report, Alberta's approach is not really a cosmetic pesticide ban.

Instead, Alberta has a limited restriction on “weed and feed” herbicide-fertilizer mixtures, and is too weak to be considered a proper ban.

While provincial cosmetic pesticide bans generally share a common purpose – protecting health and/or the environment from needless exposure to pesticides – the approach varies considerably from province to province.

A complete copy of the report can be downloaded at www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/.

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