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Sweden regulates use of, PCB

By Our Own Correspondent

STOCKHOLM, April 5.

STRICT controls, and in certain cases the outright banning of the use of polychlorinated hydrocarbons (PCB) in industry are proposed by the Government following the significant increases of PCB poisoning of the environment, particularly in the Baltic.

It is believed that Sweden will be the first country to legislate against the use of PCB, although in the U.S. there is some voluntary control over the use of the chemical by a producers' agreement which limits the use of PCB in certain substances and products. Finland is also studying the problem and may follow Sweden's lead in the near future.

The main role of PCB is in the electrical engineering industry as it has good insulating properties and acts as a stabilizing agent. The outright ban will apply in most cases to the use in certain paints as well as in hydraulic fluids and in some sealing agents in the building industry. Current consumption of PCB in Sweden amounts to between 500 to 600 tons a year, compared with 80 tons a year of DDT up to the time it was banned 18 months ago.

The Nature Conservancy Board have asked the Government to take immediate action, and it is hoped that the new legislation will come into force as from January next year. Penalties for contravening the law are expected to be heavy fines or up to six months imprisonment.

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