Dick: S&A should handle for EPA Reg. Team with N.Y. D.E.C.

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
National Water Quality Laboratory, 6201 Congdon Boulevard
Duluth, Minnesota 55804

SUBJECT: PCB Contamination in the Hudson River

DATE: July 9, 1975

Use Regn Flye on our Team See bald is Contact in DEC. Je

FROM: Donald I. Mount, Ph.D., Director
NWQL

TO: Mr. G. M. Hansler, Regional Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency Region II
New York, NY

Attached you will find a memorandum from Dr. Veith of my staff to me regarding the seriousness of PCB discharges into the Hudson River. Also attached is a rough draft copy of the PCB report stemming from the Lake Michigan Toxic Substances Committee. The purpose of my memo is to convey to you my feeling that there is a very serious PCB problem on the Hudson River because of the relatively large amount of PCBs being discharged into the river. Certainly the measurements to date indicate that the concentrations of PCBs in the river biota are much higher than they are in Lake Michigan. Furthermore, recent work done at the University of Wisconsin at the Medical School indicates that concentrations as low as 2.5 ppm continuously fed in the diet of monkeys resulted in striking skin lesions, baldness and reproductive impairment. This has led the Food & Drug Administration to begin actively enforcing the 5 ppm action level that they have established for fish products and they have also indicated the probability that after review they might even lower the permissible concentration.

We believe that the situation in the Hudson River could develop into one where there is a true health concern for people eating the fish and as Dr. Veith has pointed out in his memorandum, the reason there has not been FDA involvement to date may well be simply because there is not a commercial fishery there or because the fish are not being shipped interstate. That in no way relieves the public health concern for the sports fisherman who might be catching fish from this area of the river and eating them. I personally believe that the PCB problem is going to become much more severe and will result in a great deal of publicity and I think that EPA can "win one" by taking appropriate action in places where there are problems such as on the Hudson River, in advance of the public outcry.

If we can be of assistance to you with this problem, please let us know.

MONS 030596

Attachments

cc:
Dr. Gilman Veith, NWQL
Dr. John Buckley, EPA Headquarters

EPA Form 1320-6 (Rev. 6-72)