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Resolution 10-22 Banning Importation, Manufacture, or Use of PCBs

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

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Resolution 1975-10-22

BANNING IMPORTATION, MANUFACTURE OR USE OF PCBs

WHEREAS, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are closely allied to dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane (DDT), similarly are persistent in nature and there is substantial evidence that PCBs interfere with the production of viable eggs from at least northern pike and salmon in Lake Michigan and its tributary waters; many fish species including large salmon, lake trout and catfish are so contaminated that they exceed 5.0 ppm PCBs, the current Federal Food and Drug Administration level acceptable for consumer products; and

WHEREAS, despite assurances from the sole United States manufacturer that their sales are now limited to so-called closed systems involving large electrical transformers and capacitors, foreign imports of PCBs and PCB-contained products continue in widespread use in a wide variety of products and utilized in many industrial processes making environmental control through traditional effluent standards virtually impossible; and

WHEREAS, non-persistent substitutes are readily available for major PCB uses, prohibition of use would not cause any significant disruption in our nation's industries, and despite the fine cooperation of many major industrial users who have switched to alternative materials, PCB contamination of many waters remains at the same high level first recorded in 1969; and

WHEREAS, experience with persistent contaminants such as DDT and methyl mercury has shown that once new inputs are halted, contaminant levels in the environment decline; and

WHEREAS, previous independent action at the state level concerning the contaminant DDT and mercury did draw national attention to the environmental problems their use produced, resulting in eventual nationwide controls;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that for protection of fish and wildlife resources the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners does strongly support the action of the Lake Michigan Toxic Substances Committee and likewise recommends to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) institution of a nationwide ban on the importation, manufacture or use of PCBs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event the Environmental Protection Agency fails to act immediately to control the use of this pernicious chemical, the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners urges that its member states initiate action to ban the use of PCBs on an individual State basis through either an administrative or legislative process whichever brings the most rapid and effective cessation of use.