Reviewer's report

Title: Environmental Policy and Children's Health in Mexico

Version: 1 Date: 2 February 2010

Reviewer: Howard Hu

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript describes a sociologic-qualitative research endeavor aimed at assessing awareness, activities, and policies specific to children's environmental health in Mexico.

Overall, the subject is an important one, and the paper is well-organized and lucidly written. Given the qualitative nature of the information gathered, it is difficult to assess the rigor with which the study was conducted. The sources of information appear mostly appropriate, and the responses have been grouped and interpreted in a logical way.

The one major deficiency is a relative lack of discussion of awareness or activity at the community grass-roots level. Is Mexico totally devoid of any non-governmental groups or community groups that are concerned about children's environmental health issues? How about the press---have these issues been totally ignored? How about US-Mexico coalitions that have tried to address environmental health in the border areas, such as the Maquiladora Health & Safety Support Network? In fact, a Google search uncovers an assortment of Mexican NGOs working on environmental health and ecological issues (see below, from the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)'s grants programs awarded through its North American Fund for Environmental Cooperation (NAFEC) that seem to demonstrate sensitivity to these types of issues.

- Documentation of Harm to Health, Toxic Substances and Human Rights along the Atoyac River (Mexico) Centro Fray Julián Garcés Derechos Humanos y Desarrollo Local A. C., Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, Mexico ($40,000)
- Young People's Environmental Tracking and Assessment for Health in the Yucatán Hydrological Basin (Mexico) Cuerpos de Conservación Mexicanos, A.C., Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico ($40,000)
- Reduction of Exposure to Lead Monoxide in the Purhepechas Pottery-producing Communities in Santa Fe de la Laguna and Tzintzuntzan, Michoacán, Mexico (Mexico) Grupo Interdisciplinario de Tecnología Rural Apropiada (GIRA), A.C., Patzcuaro, Michoacán, Mexico ($40,000)
- Environmental Health and Healing in Baja California's Indigenous Communities (Mexico) Instituto de Culturas Nativas de Baja California, A.C. (CUNA), Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico ($40,000)
- Environmental Monitoring for the Ecological Regulation of the Atoyac River
High Basin (Mexico) Instituto de la Naturaleza y la Sociedad de Oaxaca, S.C. (INSO), Oaxaca de Juarez, Oaxaca, Mexico ($36,200)

- Citizen Information and Training for the Sustainability of the Sonora River (Mexico) Red Fronteriza de Salud y Ambiente, A.C., Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico ($40,000)

I would vote for a major revision that tries to address this deficiency, particularly since it is the grass-roots level activity that would seem to carry the best promise (in this reviewer’s opinion) to bring about the political pressure to increase the profile and attention paid to children's environmental health issues.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.