

## **WECF Intervention on EDCs and vulnerable groups**

**Speech held by Alexandra Caterbow, WECF, at ICCM3, Nairobi**

Thank you Madam President,

I am speaking on behalf of Women in Europe for a Common Future and participating member of IPEN. WECF represents over 100 women`s and environmental organizations in more than 40 countries.

One of the most tragic aspects of EDCs is the vulnerability of young children, particularly unborn and newborn infants, to exposure during highly sensitive windows of development.<sup>[1]</sup> Exposure during such critical windows of development can have potent and irreversible effects that only become evident later in life or even in the next generations, including the deterioration of male reproductive health, hormone related cancers, cardiovascular disease, obesity and diabetes. For instance studies show that in European countries the concentration of spermatozoa dropped from 180 million per ml to 60 in the last 40 years.

According to WHO, to be fertile the minimum concentration should be at least 20 million per ml. Multiple EDCs are commonly found in humans, including pregnant women, thereby exposing men and women alike. Exposure to several different EDCs at low dose levels, which are not predicted to cause adverse effects by themselves may still result in adverse effects. Studies also show the potential of lower doses of EDCs to exert stronger effect than higher doses of EDCs, and to be magnified by the “cocktail effect” of chemical mixtures.<sup>[2]</sup> EDCs can be found in our food and a variety of products, ranging from toys, cosmetics to baby bottles, with can be easily produced without them. It is important to raise public awareness and decent political will on this issue, so that vulnerable groups can be protected from EDCs, according to the precautionary principle and their right to know. We therefore urge delegates to support EDCs as an emerging issue and do not hesitate to dedicate resources to this issue now, instead of spending it later for health care to treat various related diseases - for the sake of all our children.