



UNEP Chemicals

June 2001

Stockholm Convention on POPs

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) works to protect human health and the environment worldwide, and UNEP Chemicals is the main catalytic force in the UN system for concerted global action on the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals.

Located in Geneva, Switzerland, UNEP

On 22 May 2001, 127 governments adopted the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). POPs are chemicals that are persistent, bioaccumulate in fatty tissues, biomagnify through the food chain and adversely affect health and the environment. The adoption of the Convention and its subsequent signing by 92 parties signaled the end of negotiations that started in June 1998. These negotiations were called for in 1997 by the Governing Council of UNEP in recognition of the need for urgent global action to protect human health and the environment from POPs.

The Convention seeks the elimination or restriction of production and use of all intentionally produced POPs (*i.e.*, industrial chemicals and pesticides). Initially, the chemicals slated for elimination are aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, hexachlorobenzene (HCB), mirex, toxaphene, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Continued use of DDT is allowed for vector control until safe, affordable and effective alternatives are in place. Countries must make determined efforts to identify, label and remove PCB-containing equipment from use by 2025, and manage those wastes in an environmentally sound manner no later than 2028. The Convention also seeks the continuing

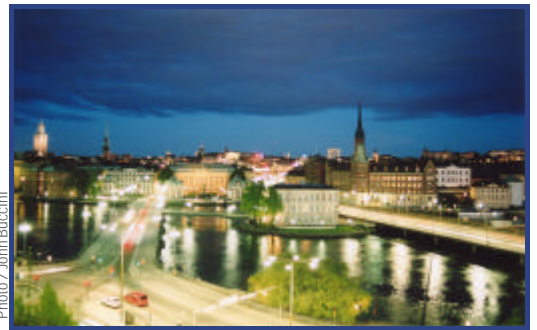


Photo / John Buccini

Stockholm

minimization and, where feasible, ultimate elimination of the releases unintentionally produced POPs such as dioxins and furans. Stockpiles and wastes containing POPs must be managed and disposed of in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner, taking into account international rules, standards and guidelines. Each Party is required to develop a plan for implementing its obligations under the Convention.

The Convention also imposes certain trade restrictions, and has a procedure for adding other POPs. Governments have set up an interim financial mechanism, with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the principal entity, to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their implementation of the treaty.



Photo / C. Lurdin



Photo / R. Ryan



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Building National Capacities for POPs Management

The conclusion of the negotiations of a POPs treaty brings a new stage in UNEP Chemicals' capacity building program. In 2001 and beyond, the priority is to assist countries to ratify and then implement the Stockholm Convention. The program will help countries to identify their capabilities and needs, and to develop their Implementation Plans. For many countries there will be an opportunity to move beyond the Implementation Plans and undertake specific implementation actions. Here, the program will build on the successful dioxin/furans, PCBs and POPs

pesticides workshops of the last few years. Donor support has been secured for a number of specific projects on POPs including alternatives to DDT use for disease vector control, PCB management, and undertaking inventories of the sources of dioxin and furans. A Memorandum of Understanding is in place with the World Bank to strengthen the program and broaden the funding base and in-country delivery mechanisms. The program also recognizes that there is a close relationship between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION – Protecting human health and the environment from POPs

How ?

BY GETTING RID OF EXISTING POPs

- Disposing of stocks of obsolete and unwanted POPs
- Identifying equipment containing PCBs and managing it properly
- Disposing of PCBs stocks in an environmentally sound manner
- Identifying and testing alternatives to POPs

BY AVOIDING FURTHER PRODUCTION AND USE OF POPs

- Finding and using alternatives
- Stopping or restricting further production and use
- Identifying chemicals with POPs characteristics and avoiding new POPs
- Limiting DDT use to disease vector control

BY MINIMISING EMISSIONS OF POPs THAT CAN'T BE ELIMINATED

- Identify sources and reduce releases of unintentionally produced POPs
- Promote measures, including best available techniques (BAT) and best environmental practices (BEP)
- Continuing minimization and, where feasible, ultimate elimination of the total releases of dioxins, furans and PCBs

How do you deal with it ?

Identify your national situation

- Make inventories of sources and estimate releases
- Assess needs and develop plans
- Assess regulatory and other mechanisms
- Assess capacity to manage or dispose of stockpiles or wastes



Determine your solutions

- Designate a National Focal Point
- Set national priorities
- Identify needs for enhancing regulatory and other mechanisms
- Develop strategies for dealing with POPs
- Promote information, awareness and education measures
- Encourage research and development



NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS (NIPs)

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO IT ?

- Technical and financial assistance to develop the NIP
- Technical and financial assistance to build capacity
- Technical and financial assistance to implement solutions

POPS Network

The UNEP Chemicals program is assisted by the global network of POPs focal points. These focal points are designated by governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations and serve as experts in the various aspects of POPs.

Check the list at:
www.chem.unep.ch/pops
 for your country's POPs focal point

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 UNEP Chemicals is a unit of UNEP's
 Technology, Industry and Economics
 Division

UNEP promotes the environmentally sound management of chemicals and so helps protect public health and the environment. It advances sustainable development by catalysing vital global actions and building national capacity for the sound management of chemicals through information exchange, training, and capacity building.

For a complete list of publications, databases, and websites, please contact UNEP Chemicals.

UNEP's Role in Implementing the Stockholm Convention

UNEP has extensive expertise in POPs issues. The Governing Council in 1997 set in train the negotiation of the legally binding treaty now known as the Stockholm Convention. UNEP managed the process that led to the adoption of the Stockholm Convention. We also undertook a \$5 million program of capacity building and awareness raising deliver-

ing country based projects and over 50 workshops on POPs: these provided countries with a sound basis for participation in the negotiations, and for subsequently undertaking the obligations arising from the Convention. The current GEF guidelines for enabling activities, including for Implementation Plans, draw heavily on UNEP's experience and contribution. UNEP is currently administering projects totaling nearly \$10 million to assist countries in developing their National

Implementation Plans for the Stockholm Convention. In addition, it is charged by governments to work with the GEF Secretariat in developing further a Capacity Assistance Network that will facilitate access to the diverse sources of funding and technical assistance for POPs.



Photo / John Buccini

UNEP's Memorandum of Understanding with the World Bank provides access to a broader funding base and coordination of their POPs programs. As se-

cretariat for the Stockholm Convention on POPs, the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent and the Basel Convention on hazardous wastes, UNEP integrates the programs of the three key global multilateral agreements addressing POPs.



Photo / Tom Bonnall