





GLOBAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT IN ACTION

Ever since it was discovered that harmful chemicals have the potential to pollute and accumulate in the deep seas, the Arctic and other remote areas – far from any human settlements and pollution sources - the international community has rallied together to prevent it from happening again.

The **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)** is the one of the key global instruments in limiting the spread of POPs.

POPs are defined as organic chemical substances, which:

-  **Persist and remain in the environment**
-  **Spread throughout the environment over long distances**
-  **Accumulate in living organisms**
-  **Have the potential to cause adverse effects to human health or the environment**

HISTORY

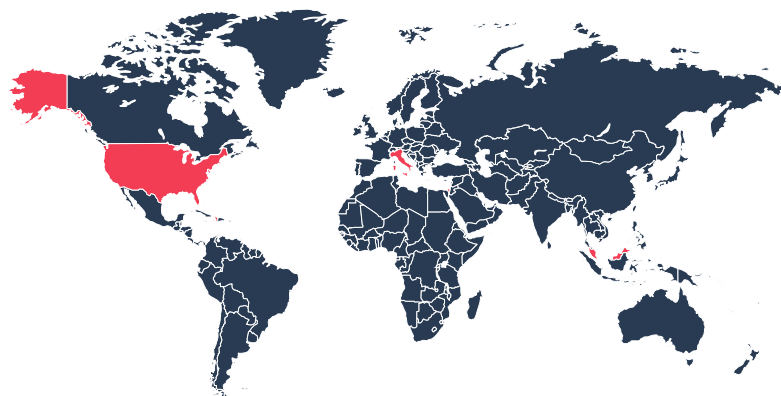
1995: the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) requested action on 12 identified POPs. A convention was prepared.

1998-2001: The convention was negotiated and finally adopted in May 2001.

2004: The convention entered into force.

WHO'S IN?

An impressive number of countries (182) are parties to the convention. Notable exceptions include the United States, Malaysia and Israel. The EU has signed up as one entity.



Interestingly, Italy (as the only EU Member State) did not ratify the convention. This does not have any significant practical implications, as Italy is a member of the EU.

WHAT SUBSTANCES ARE LISTED?

When the convention entered into force, it already included **12 substances**. Most of these are so-called “legacy substances” – i.e. substances that were used in the past but have now for the most part been substituted. The convention thus started with the “low hanging fruit”. Most of them were pesticides.

Since then, 16 substances have been added, bringing the total in 2018 to **28 listed substances**. A noticeable shift occurred in the proportion of pesticides and industrial chemicals – more than **60% of the newly listed chemicals have industrial uses**.

Some substances are intended for **elimination (Annex A)**. Others are **restricted (Annex B)** with certain uses allowed. Some are listed to avoid their **unintentional production (Annex C)**. Exemption listings can be quite specific, so it is important that chemical manufacturers are **aware and communicate with their stakeholders**.

The listed substances can be found [here](#).

Lindane, for example, is listed for elimination. No production is allowed, but it is allowed to be used to treat head lice and scabies if no other treatment is available.

SCCP, like Lindane, is listed for elimination, but has a much longer list of allowed uses: additives in transmission belts, rubber conveyor belts, leather, lubricant additives, tubes for outdoor decoration bulbs, paints, adhesives, metal processing, plasticizers.

WHO PROPOSED THE NEW POP SUBSTANCES?

Except for three substances proposed by Mexico, most substances have been proposed by countries in Europe.

EU or European Community 14+

Norway 4

Mexico 3

Sweden 1

PROCESS

Final decisions on listing of POP substances are taken by the Conference of the Parties (COP), which consists of all 182 parties (with a rotating bureau of 10 parties). Their meetings take place every 2 years.

The POP Review Committee (POPRC) reviews the substances and recommends listings. It consists of 31 rotating experts from 5 regional groups, ensuring that all areas are represented.

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE POPRC

5 May 2016–4 May 2020
(POPRC-12–POPRC-15)

5 May 2018–4 May 2022
(POPRC-14–POPRC-17)

WESTERN EUROPEAN AND OTHERS GROUP

Luxembourg
Switzerland
Netherlands
Denmark
Austria
New Zealand
Canada

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN GROUP

Poland
Ukraine
Belarus

ASIAN AND PACIFIC GROUP

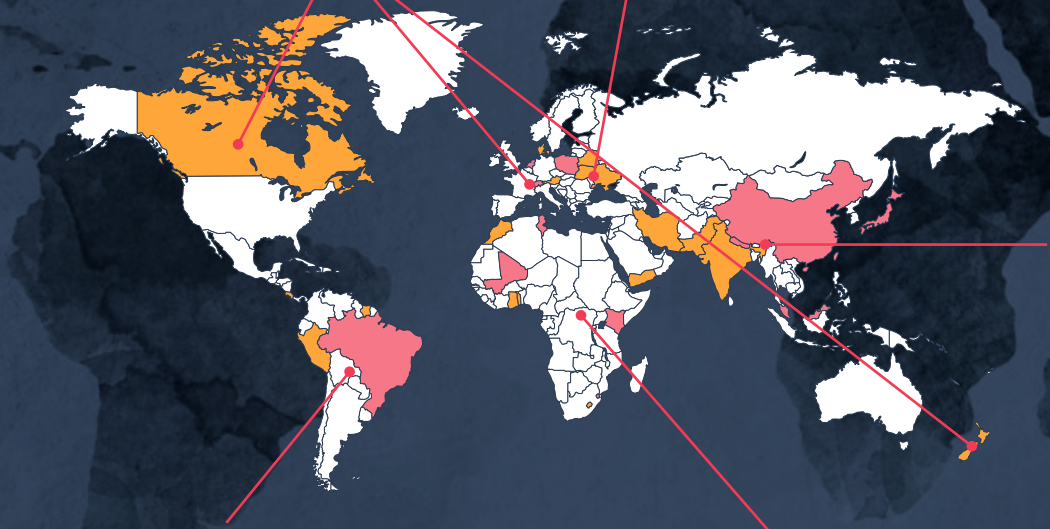
China
Indonesia
Japan
Nepal
India
Pakistan
Iran

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP

Brazil
Jamaica
Peru
Costa Rica
Suriname

AFRICAN GROUP

Kenya
Mali
Swaziland
Tunisia
Lesotho
Yemen
Ghana
Morocco
Togo



POPRC PROCESS

Overview of a typical POPRC process



IN THE EU

In the EU, the Stockholm Convention is implemented by the POP regulation. This regulation was adopted in 2004 and recast in 2019, among other things to include a bigger role for the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) in the EU POP procedures.

ANNEX

PESTICIDES AND INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS IN ANNEXES A AND B

PESTICIDES

Aldrin	Annex A
Chlordane	Annex A
Chlordecone	Annex A
Dieldrin	Annex A
Endrin	Annex A
Heptachlor	Annex A
Hexachlorobenzene (HCB) *	Annex A
Alpha hexachlorocyclohexane	Annex A
Beta hexachlorocyclohexane	Annex A
Lindane	Annex A
Mirex	Annex A
Pentachlorobenzene *	Annex A
Pentachlorophenol and its salts and esters	Annex A
Technical endosulfan and its related isomers	Annex A
Toxaphene	Annex A
DDT	Annex B
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride *	Annex B

INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS

Decabromodiphenyl ether (commercial mixture, c-decaBDE)	Annex A
Hexabromobiphenyl	Annex A
Hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD)	Annex A
Hexabromodiphenyl ether and heptabromodiphenyl ether	Annex A
Hexachlorobutadiene	Annex A
Annex A	Annex A
Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB)	Annex A
Polychlorinated naphthalenes	Annex A
Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs)	Annex A
Tetrabromodiphenyl ether and pentabromodiphenyl ether	Annex A
Pentachlorobenzene *	Annex A
Hexachlorobenzene (HCB) *	Annex A
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride *	Annex B

More information here:

<http://chm.pops.int/TheConvention/ThePOPs/AllPOPs/tabid/2509/Default.aspx>

* Both a pesticide and an industrial chemical