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## **International POPs Elimination Project**

*Fostering Active and Efficient Civil Society Participation in  
Preparation for Implementation of the Stockholm Convention*

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**Raising awareness project of public, local and state authorities and members of European Parliament about the POPs contamination in the world**

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September 2005**

## **About the International POPs Elimination Project**

On May 1, 2004, the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN <http://www.ipen.org>) began a global NGO project called the International POPs Elimination Project (IPEP) in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The Global Environment Facility (GEF) provided core funding for the project.

IPEP has three principal objectives:

- Encourage and enable NGOs in 40 developing and transitional countries to engage in activities that provide concrete and immediate contributions to country efforts in preparing for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention;
- Enhance the skills and knowledge of NGOs to help build their capacity as effective stakeholders in the Convention implementation process;
- Help establish regional and national NGO coordination and capacity in all regions of the world in support of longer term efforts to achieve chemical safety.

IPEP will support preparation of reports on country situation, hotspots, policy briefs, and regional activities. Three principal types of activities will be supported by IPEP: participation in the National Implementation Plan, training and awareness workshops, and public information and awareness campaigns.

For more information, please see <http://www.ipen.org>

IPEN gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Global Environment Facility, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Swiss Agency for the Environment Forests and Landscape, the Canada POPs Fund, the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), Mitchell Kapor Foundation, Sigrid Rausing Trust, New York Community Trust and others.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and not necessarily the views of the institutions providing management and/or financial support.

This report is available in the following languages: English

# **Raising awareness project of public, local and state authorities and members of European Parliament about the POPs contamination in the world**

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## I. Introduction

NGOs from the CEE region have prepared three different documents. Every participating NGO decided what kind of the report they will prepare - Country Situation Report, Hot-Spot Report or Policy Brief. It depended which report could be useful in the country or interesting material for the local / state authority, public or NGOs. The majority of documents were published in the English language. Some of these reports were also prepared / printed in a native language of the CEE NGO which was writing the report. The printed reports from CEE report are mentioned in the Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Printed reports from CEE region**

<b>Report</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Country / countries</b>	<b>Language</b>
<b>Policy brief</b>	National Hazardous Waste Treatment Centre	Bulgaria	English
<b>Country situation report</b>	Belarus Country Situation Report on POPs	Belarus	English
<b>Hot spot report</b>	Hot Spot Reports from Belarus, Czech Republic and Turkey	Belarus, Czech Republic and Turkey	English
<b>Hot Spot Report</b>	Derince Pestisit Stoğu, Kocaeli PETKIM Petrochemical co. (PVC Plant)	Turkey	Turkish

In 2005, International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) also published several documents focused on POPs and related issues - The Egg Report, After Incineration The Toxic Ash Problem and The New Generation of POPs: PBDEs and Lindane – and factsheets - Alternatives for the POPs Disposal, Inconsistent – The Problem with the Basel Guidelines on POPs, Standardized Toolkit for Identification and Quantification Dioxin and Furan Releases, Health and Environmental Hazards of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers and Other Brominated Flame retardants. All these materials represent useful publications for CEE NGOs because they can use them during their own projects to inform and educate public, NGOs, local and state authorities. These materials also contain some recommendation of NGOs regarding Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP), Dioxin Toolkit or the useful information about non-combustion technologies for POPs waste disposal. This is why these materials should be distributed to the NGOs from CEE countries.

The responsibility of Arnika Association as a regional hub was to arrange the graphic view, printing and distribution of the reports prepared by CEE NGOs.

## II. Raising awareness project of public, local and state authorities and members of European Parliament about the POPs contamination in the world

After the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention - May 2005, Uruguay - many of the NGOs still continue the work on POPs and Stockholm Convention as public awareness projects, negotiations with local and state authorities about different POPs issues related to e.g. the application of Best Available Techniques / Best Environmental Practices, participation in National Implementation Plan preparation including discussions about the POPs inventories and monitoring, preparation of IPEP reports from their countries, PR activities, international networking, etc.

## **Public Awareness projects in different Central and Eastern Countries**

### **1. Belarus - Foundation for Realization of Ideas (FRI)**

FRI participated at the strategic meeting on public participation in NIP preparation organised by the Global Environmental Facility / World Bank / Ministry of Environment (A project related to the Stockholm Convention. Date of the meeting - 16-17.03.2006). The representative of FRI gave a presentation on international experience of NGO working on POPs, including presentation on IPEN / IPEP activities. Another representative from FRI gave a presentation about public anti-toxic campaign in Belarus.

FRI made a proposal to the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Public Health to change the emission limits for dioxins, formed in the process of incineration of old medical equipment. The present limit is extremely high - 0.1 mg/m<sup>3</sup>/TEQ.

Other activities related to IPEN/IPEP issue, which have been organized by FRI (January 2005 - January 2006, listed in chronological order):

Events, organized by FRI:

- Round table “Implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Belarus: 1 year”, Minsk - 13.04.2005
- International round table with MoE (participants: FRI, GP Russia, Arnika, EUTOX, MAMA-86-Kharkov, and MoE) 12.07.2005
- International environmental Camp “Clean Dvina - Clean Baltic 2005”, Vitebsk region: 29.07-04.08.2005
- Round table on obsolete pesticides, Verchedvinsk: 02.08.2005

National events, related to IPEN/IPEP issues, where FRI staff members have participated:

- National Event on Launching of GEF/WB/MoE project on Preparation of NIP for Stockholm Convention in Belarus, Minsk: 24.05.2006
- Seminar on POPs inventory in Belarus (GEF/WB/MoE), Minsk: 31.08.2005

IPEN/IPEP materials were disseminated during all events listed above, as well as during a number of smaller events and during working meetings with officials, NGOs, scientists and mass media.

Among recipients of IPEN/IPEP materials we can mention the following organizations:

- Governmental and Scientific organizations:

Ministry of Environment (with its regional and local branches), Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Energy, Belarusian National Scientific Centre „Ecology”, Republican Hygiene and Epidemiology Centre, Republican Hygiene Centre, Institute of natural resources and ecology, scientific-practical enterprise „Lotios”, Minsk Environment Council, National Parliament of the Republic of Belarus (House of Representatives), Law Centre of Administration of the President of Belarus, Belarusian Academy of Sciences, Sacharov Environmental University, Belarusian State University, different regional and local executive committees, and others.

- Local offices of International organizations:

UN/UNDP, World Bank, TACIS

- NGOs:  
Ecoproject, Ecosphere, Krynica, Nerush, Endo, Rubon, BelAE, Ekaskop, Ekohome, BirdLife Belarus and others (approximately 100)

## **2. Bulgaria**

### **A) Za Zemiata**

The IPEN factsheets and reports, and IPEP reports were disseminated among participants at the 8th HCH and Pesticides Forum in Sofia (May 26-28, 2005) IPEN factsheets and leaflets were spread among participants.

The materials were also used during public actions - e.g. on April 13 Za Zemiata officially launched the results of the Hot Spot check of free range chickens in Kovachevo in a press conference. The Za Zemiata representative also attended in a broadcast in one of the small TVs talking about the report. They sent the copies of the Hot Spot report to Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment. (More information at: [http://www.oztoxics.org/ipepweb/egg/HotspotReports/Bulgaria\\_eggsreport.pdf](http://www.oztoxics.org/ipepweb/egg/HotspotReports/Bulgaria_eggsreport.pdf))

The next public action where the materials primarily the report about the sampling and analysis of the free-range chicken eggs, Kovachevo were distributed was the Egg Event in Sofia. On May 1 - Easter, Za Zemiata organized a symbolic giving of painted eggs to the Minister of Environment, Minister of Health, and the EIA expert team in front of the biggest cathedral in Sofia Alexander Nevski. It was well-covered by the media.

### **B) Ecoglasnost – these days National Movement Friends of the Earth**

National Movement Friends of the Earth conducted a national campaign against stockpiles for obsolete pesticides in Bulgaria in 2005 - awareness raising project in the small remote parts of Bulgaria. They disseminated the leaflets about dangerous stores and POPs and obsolete pesticides. The leaflets were focused on the health risk, contamination of the environment, etc.

They also organized the meetings with regional stakeholders - municipalities and journalists about the same problem – POPs and obsolete pesticides, inappropriate storage, environmental and health risk of these chemicals.

National Movement Friends of the Earth organized a workshop a Conference on Pesticide Impacts in the Danube and Black Sea Region in October 2005. The NGOs from the Black sea region were invited to this workshop to discuss the issue of the pesticides pollution of the environment and humans including the POPs pesticides (use, disposal, storage of obsolete and POPs pesticides in Black Sea region). (More information at: <http://www.oztoxics.org/ipepweb/library/reports/Pesticides%20Danube%20Black%20Sea.pdf>)

The IPEN and IPEP materials were distributed during these actions.

### **3. Czech Republic – Arnika Association**

#### **a) International Level**

Arnika Association as a hub for the countries from Central and Eastern Europe was responsible for several activities as graphic design for the three different reports (Hot-Spot Report, Policy Brief and Country Situation Report) and also for printing of some prepared reports from the CEE region. The reports were printed not only in the English language but also in native languages of NGOs from CEE region (e.g. in Turkish language).

These printed materials were distributed to the NGOs from CEE region (e.g. to Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Turkey). The materials were also disseminated to the experts, scientist, doctors and to the governmental representatives during several important meetings on international level e.g. Conference of the Parties 1 to the Stockholm Convention, Open - Ended Working Group 4 (Basel Convention), Strategic Approach to International Chemical Management – PrepCom 3, Vienna and at the EU meeting in Brussels.

These materials were also distributed to NGOs from Western Europe (e.g. NGOs from France, United Kingdom, Belgium, etc.).

#### **Leaflets**

Arnika Association prepared a new leaflet called KEEP THE PROMISE, ELIMINATE POPs! (Annex 1) This leaflet was prepared after the IPEN global egg sampling. The leaflet summarizes the basic information about this global egg sampling, POPs and Stockholm Convention.

#### **Other activities**

E-mail list serve for the NGOs from CEE region – The NGOs can share there information, materials and experiences.

Arnika Association prepared a letter addressed to the European politicians, requiring a strengthening of the limits for POPs in waste. This letter was signed by 106 non-governmental organizations, experts and members of representative bodies from 50 countries on five continents and sent to the European politicians together with IPEN report (After Incineration the Toxic Ash Problem. (More information at: [http://english.arnika.org/keepthepromise/POPs\\_in\\_waste.shtml](http://english.arnika.org/keepthepromise/POPs_in_waste.shtml)).

#### **b) Czech Level**

The reports were used during different projects of Arnika Association focused on industry, chemicals and their management (e.g. during the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) process – chlor-alkali plant (resin production based on epichlorohydrin; etc.). These materials were also distributed to the Czech local and state authorities, scientists, other Czech NGOs, interested public, etc.

Public awareness in the Czech Republic: PR activities and articles in newspapers about the POPs and Stockholm Convention; Poster exhibition about the chemicals (also POPs) in different Czech cities. The poster exhibition is still goes on in different cities around the Czech Republic.



#### **4. Romania**

##### **A) TERRA Milleniul III**

The materials were distributed to people coming to TERRA Milleniul III office.

##### **B) Mare Nostrum**

The leaflets and other material (reports, fact sheets) were distributed to the high school teachers which tried to prepare some different class topics. The materials were also distributed to the students at the local University - specialization Ecology and Environment Protection.

#### **5. Slovakia - Friends of the Earth**

Friends of the Earth sent the IPEN document to the different local and state authorities e.g. Slovakian Ministry of the Environment, Regional Authority (Environmental Department), Slovakian Inspection of the Environment, Slovakian Hydrometeorological Institute, and National Centre for dioxins and related chemicals, etc.

They also arranged a discussion with the Slovakian Ministry of the Environment about the position of Slovakia regarding the new EU POPs legislation – POPs limits in waste, the round table with representatives of the polluters (e.g. with the representatives of the incinerator from Kosice – the discussed issue: the egg sampling and high concentration of the POPs; with the representatives of the villages from the polluted area and with the representatives of the grass root organizations).

Friends of the Earth prepared the two expert opinions about the building of the new POPs sources (hazardous waste incinerators).

Friends of the Earth did also a lot of PR activities as press releases, press conferences (e.g. interview in radios, articles in newspapers, programmes on TV stations, etc.). All these PR activities were focused on POPs and their elimination to raise public knowledge and public awareness about these dangerous chemicals and Stockholm Convention.

#### **5. Turkey – Bumerang**

Global Day of Action - Mass awareness campaign was applied to the citizens living nearby to Izaydas Incinerator. Information documents (primarily leaflets about the Stockholm Convention, POPs - brief chemical characterization and health effects, Keep the Promise Campaign leaflet (Annex 1) and contamination of this locality – results of the egg sampling) were released and distributed in surrounding area. In the end of this activity a meeting with the headmen of the villages, people and local NGOs was organised.

Bumerang together with the non-governmental organization Association of Physicians for the Environment of Turkey – APET (<http://www.cevrehekim.org/>), Regional Environmental Center, International POPs Elimination Network - IPEN (<http://www.ipen.org>) and Czech NGO Arnika Association (<http://english.arnika.org>) organized the POPs workshop in December, 2005 – “Persistent Organic Pollutants and Health Symposium”.

The important outcomes of this workshop are the common statement and press release.

The press release related to this workshop – “*Ratification of the Stockholm Convention by Turkey is near - IPEN supported the first conference on persistent organic pollutants in Turkey*” – you can read it here: <http://english.arnika.org/pressreleases.shtml?x=1232459>

These activities are briefly mentioned here because the IPEN and IPEP materials were distributed to the public, scientists, NGOs representatives and others during these actions (primarily at the workshop).

### **III. Conclusions**

Our main objectives of this project (*Raising awareness project of public, local and state authorities and members of European Parliament about the POPs contamination in the world*) were to support grassroots NGOs by printed materials and by the new information related to the Stockholm Convention (COP1, BAT/BEP Expert Group, POPs Review Committee, Dioxin Toolkit) and Basel Convention (low POPs content, technical drafts), SAICM (Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management), European Union activities focused on POPs.

The NGOs responsibilities were to disseminate these documents in their countries to the local and state authorities, scientists, other NGOs, public, etc. to raise a knowledge about these important issues.

The CEE NGOs see such awareness project as a very important and needed in their countries because the personal meetings and workshops have a big influence on local/state authorities and public. The NGOs can also introduce new information, translate it and disseminate it among public, scientists, local and state authorities, etc.

The activities of the CEE NGOs mentioned here represent only a brief overview of the most important activities from the CEE region. The CEE NGOs actively continue the work on POPs, Stockholm Convention, related issues and public awareness projects in their countries.

## IV. Annexes

### Annex 1: Leaflet for the Global Day of Action

#### KEEP THE PROMISE, ELIMINATE POPs!

Chicken eggs from 20 countries on five continents were tested in Czech laboratory to examine the level of contamination with hazardous toxic chemicals. The environmental association ARNIKA leads this unique International project as part of the worldwide campaign "Keep Promise, Eliminate POPs" initiated by International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) last year.

The aim of this project is to find out the extent of contamination with toxic substances in eggs collected throughout many countries of our planet Earth. The eggs were tested on the most hazardous toxic chemicals - persistent organic pollutants (POP<sub>s</sub> - dioxins, furans, DDT, toxaphene, mirex, heptachlor, endrin, aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, hexachlorobenzene, polychlorinated biphenyls)\*. The test results are known and are / will be published during March and April by many IPEN member organizations including all 20 countries participating in the project. Additionally, the project results will be sent to national delegates attending the Conference of the Stockholm Convention Parties planned for the beginning of May 2005 in Uruguay. Final report will be also passed on to top representatives of United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The eggs were chosen for this international testing project as they represent widely consumed food

product everywhere in the world as well as a symbol of new life. **We should therefore stop contaminating our unborn children and foetus.**

The **Stockholm Convention on POPs** is the first global, legally binding instrument whose aim is to protect human health and the environment by controlling production, use and disposal of toxic chemicals. The Convention identifies an initial list of twelve POPs, and it mandates Parties to take specific actions aimed at eliminating these pollutants from the global environment. The Convention further identifies criteria and a process for identifying additional chemicals for global action, based on their having properties similar to those of the initial twelve.

\* The eggs were tested for dioxins, furans, hexachlorobenzene, polychlorinated biphenyls, and DDT.



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