



International POPs Elimination Project

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

Country Situation report on POPs and awareness-raising on POPs in Mali



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Mali
June 2006

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: summary in English and full report in French

Mali country situation report and public awareness on POPs

This project is a contribution of the civil society of Mali to the implementation of the National Programme for the development and implementation of a National Management Plan of POPs in Mali. This project has been conducted in two phases:

- A first phase which consisted in documenting the situation of Mali with regards to POPs
- A second phase of dissemination of the outcomes achieved and other information on POPs and the Stockholm Convention through the organization of a workshop for the sensitization and information of some key actors.

I- Situation of Mali with regards to POPs

The Parliament adopted the law n° 03-003 authorizing the ratification of the Stockholm Convention on May 7, 2003. Thus, the Ministry of Environment and Sanitation of Mali has been commissioned to ensure the supervision and implementation of the Treaty. A focal point has been selected within the Direction Nationale de l'Assainissement et du Contrôle des Pollutions et Nuisances (DNACPN) [Department in Charge of Sanitation and the Control of Pollutions and Nuisances] to conduct reflections and collect proposals for the preparation of the National Implementation Plan (NIP).

1-1 The National Coordination Committee of POPs

A multi-sectoral National Coordination Committee (NCC) has been established. The working sessions of this committee have ended in the setting up of a national committee for the development of the NIP which has focused on the identification of priority topics meant to be the basis for the preparation of actions to be included in this Plan. The topics are as follows:

- Topic I Update of the National profile on the management of chemicals
- Topic II Inventory of POPs
- Topic III Identification of the effects related to POPs on health and environment
- Topic IV Development of a Communication Plan.

The reports produced on these topics have served as constituting items of the different phases of development of the NIP in Mali.

The National Coordination Committee on POPs is made up of the following 15 members:

- Direction Nationale de l'Assainissement et du Contrôle des Pollutions et des Nuisances (DNACPN) [National Department for Sanitation and the Control of Pollution and Nuisances]
- Ex Direction Générale de la Réglementation et du Contrôle du secteur du développement rural (DGRC/SDR) [Former General Division in charge of the Regulations and Control of the rural development sector]
- Ex Direction Nationale de l'Appui au Monde Rural (DNAMR) [Former National Division for the Support of the Rural World]
- Direction Nationale de la Santé (DNS) [National Health Division]
- Direction Générale de la Protection Civile (DGPC) [General Division of Civil Protection]

- Secrétariat Technique Permanent du Cadre Institutionnel de la Gestion des Questions Environnementales (STP/ CIGQE) [Permanent Technical Secretariat of the Institutional Framework in the Management of Environmental Issues]
- Laboratoire Central Vétérinaire (LCV) [Veterinary Central Laboratory]
- Office des Radio Diffusion Télévision du Mali (ORTM) [Mali Radio and TV Channel]
- University of Bamako
- des Associations et Organisations Féminines (CAFO) [Coordination of Women's Associations and Organizations]
- Comité de Coordination des Associations non Gouvernementales (CCA-ONG) [Coordination Committee of Non Governmental Associations]
- Secrétariat de Concertation des ONGS maliennes (SECO –ONG) [Consultation Secretariat of Malian NGOs]
- Association des Consommateurs de Mali (ASCOMA) [Mali Consumers Society] where derives ADESCOM-member of SECO-ONGS.

1-2 Update of the National Profile in the management of chemicals

The update of the National Profile in the management of chemicals has been carried out by a group of national experts. The outcomes of these working sessions are not yet available.

1-3 National Inventories of POPs.

Inventories on Pesticides with an emphasis on POP pesticides as well as inventories on POPs have covered the whole national territory. However, let us mention that out of eight regions only the regions of Mopti and Timbuktu have not been covered due to isolation and insufficiency of resources.

Inventories of opened and semi opened systems for PCBs have not yet been completed. In Sikasso in the 3rd region out of 11 sites which have been subject to the inventory of Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), 244 183 kg of suspicious material has been registered containing 65 285 kg of dielectric of PCBs or of an unknown nature.

The same applies to inventories of dioxins and furans which have started by the identification of potential sources of discharge. All this information is supplied subject to confirmation by the POP Focal Point in Mali.

As for POPs pesticides they exist through huge stocks of obsolete pesticides found in Mali. No aspect of the POPs issue is more urgent than the problem of obsolete and abandoned stocks, which, in many locations of Mali poses a hazard which is increasing day after day.

As an example, let us report that at the Base de Protection des Végétaux (PV) of Gao (Former OCLALAV Base) located downtown, not far from the Regional Hospital, of the kindergarten of INIPS and the maternity, in a storage warehouse which does not meet the standards of FAO (products laid on pallets), among the pesticides counted, dieldrin is on the top in terms of volume stored (nearly 45 88 litres) in different packages.

The presence of obsolete pesticides is then a major concern for the populations, in particular in the agricultural areas of the Compagnie Malienne de Développement des Textiles (CMDT).

Knowledge about POPs in our country remains insufficient, notably their real effects on human and animal health as well as the environment. The information related to diseases which might be caused by POPs (cancers, tumours and congenital malformation) is not so far fully investigated or substantiated by relevant epidemiologic surveys. The recurring problem of storage will only worsen as long as stocks and warehouses are not identified, gathered and securitized.

1-4 Identification of issues related to POPs.

These tasks have been performed by a group of national experts. The identification of effects and incidences related to POPs on health and the environment are registered in a draft waiting for validation by the National Committee.

1-5 Development of a National Strategy of information sharing, communication, education and sensitization

This working group has launched the Strategy of information sharing by the mobilization of women's organizations and associations (CAFO) which have toured the national territory for that purpose.

During the Environment Fortnight (7th Edition) ADESCOM participated in strengthening this dynamics already launched by the organization of an information and sensitization workshop on POPs and the Stockholm Convention.

II – Sensitization and information workshop on POPs and the Stockholm Convention

As part of its contribution to the implementation of the strategy of Mali of information sharing, communication,, education and sensitization on POPs, the NGO ADESCOM has organized a workshop relating to the topic « *the Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants in Mali* » on June 05 at Centre Djoliba.

During the workshop three presentations were delivered relating to:

- 1- The Stockholm Convention on POPs, perception of its implementation in Mali of a national NGO - Mory Kaba DIAKITE
- 2- The pilot project for the development of a National Plan for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Mali - Lamine THERA, Mali POPs Focal Point
- 3- Management of POPs in Mali - Demba SIDIBE DNACPN

Topic 1 : The Stockholm Convention on POPs, perception of its implementation in Mali by a national NGO– by Mr Mory Kaba Diakit , Chairman of ADESCOM

The speaker, after a brief introduction of the Stockholm Convention and its implementation, has focused on the inventory of Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Then, he has set out the key stages in the development of the NIP, mentioned the precautionary principle so dear to consumers and denounced the obsolete stocks which are everywhere on the national territory and which pose a permanent threat to people's health and the preservation of the environment.

Topic 2: The pilot project for the development of the National Plan for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Mali by Mister Lamine Théra, Mali POPs Focal Point

After having defined the Stockholm Convention and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Mister Théra indicated and commented on the obligations deriving from the ratification of this Convention. Then, he has focused on the pilot project for the development of an Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention and has indicated the activities of the four working groups of the National Steering Committee and the outcomes they have achieved.

The answers to the questions asked for clarification have been given and allowed participants to know where they stand with regard to their specific roles and to the contribution expected from each and every one (Technical Services – Private Sector, Consumers, the Press, Development Partners) for an appropriate implementation of the Convention on POPs.

Topic 3: Management of POPs in Mali by Mister Demba SIDIBE

The topic has been developed in Bambara the national language and after a condensed commentary in French as an introduction. In a correct language and by drawing on the current concerns of consumers in terms of satisfaction of their needs, he has condemned dangerous behaviours and proposed at each occasion cautious, responsible and efficient attitudes.

Thus, women have been sensitized about the dangers of depigmentation, tattooing, and the abusive use of incense based on toxic chemicals. The representatives of farmers and distributors of pesticides have received their share of advice. The tasks of information and sensitization vested in priority on journalists have been defined. Community radio-stations hosts (Radio Kledu- Réseau Echos –Benkan etc) have been so convinced that they have committed themselves to ensure a good dissemination of the information received. Fruitful discussions have taken into account the concerns of participants, including among others the evaluation of the Action Plan, the conditions of participations; the polluter pays principle, the profitability of projects for the protection of the environment, the prospects of a coordinated management of POPs etc.

At the end of the workshop, the participants issued a statement calling the authorities to implement the Convention and reasserting their commitment to contribute to the implementation of the Convention.

Statement of the workshop

As indicated by their name, persistent organic pollutants (POPs) are persistent chemical substances which pile up in adipose tissues, spread in the food chain and are, as a consequence, extremely noxious to health and the environment.

The Stockholm Convention, adopted on May 22, 2001, has been signed and ratified by Mali. It became effective on May 17, 2004. It enables Parties to identify the sources of discharge of POPs, minimize them, put in place a management policy of chemicals and hazardous pesticides and promote the use of substitution products. A dozen of these pollutants will then be prohibited from production and exploitation.

The fact is that more and more growing stocks of pesticides and toxic chemicals are piled up in our countries in an extremely dangerous way for our populations and the whole planet.

We have therefore, even before the legitimate ecological concern, a fundamental humanitarian aspect with regard to the populations of poor countries which must necessarily be addressed.

A number of NGOs of the Coalition SECO-ONG including ADESCOM (Association pour la Défense de l'Environnement et la Santé des Consommateurs) and all the stakeholders have welcomed the ratification of the Stockholm Convention by Mali and invite the government to make its sanitation, environmental, agricultural and industrial policies more relevant to this major breakthrough of preventive substitution and precaution principles which lies behind the appropriate implementation of the convention.

This conference debates, organized as part of the 7th edition of the Environment Fortnight provides us with this good opportunity.

Bamako, on June 05, 2006