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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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# **Celebration of the 2005 IPEN Global Day of Action in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania**

## **Action pour une Gestion Rationnelle de L'Environnement En Mauritanie (AGREEM)**

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## **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>

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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

# **Celebration of the 2005 IPEN Global Day of Action in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania**

An awareness- raising and dissemination meeting on the Stockholm Convention meant for Non- Governmental Organisations involved in the environmental issues was held in Nouakchott on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2005. This meeting was organised by the NGO AGREEM in collaboration with the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan in Mauritania and was financed by IPEN.

In his opening speech, the chairman of AGREEM welcomed all participants. He emphasized the importance of the meeting that aimed to raise awareness of the Stockholm Convention among the Civil Society Organisation and provide them with information and knowledge that will enable them to change behaviour and conserve the environment which is critical to maintain life on this planet.

He added that this meeting was organised with the financial support of IPEN and thanks to the availability of the Ministry of the Rural Development and of the Environment represented by the Coordinator of the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan in Mauritania.

He afterwards informed participants about the agenda. The meeting was articulated around three themes.

- A presentation that will be made by the Coordinator of the Stockholm Convention NIP in Mauritania
- Debates
- Distribution of hard copies of the IPEN Statement to participants

This meeting has been presided over by Mr. Hamoud Ould Sid' Ahmed, coordinator of the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan in Mauritania. In his speech, he emphasized the problem relating to the economic development and chemical use in sectors such as health and rural development. He also emphasized the weakness of scientific capacities in Mauritania in facing the POPs proliferation and hazards.

He added that his department has implemented praiseworthy efforts for the protection of the environment in general and for a rational and environmentally-friendly management of chemicals in particular. Nevertheless, it is necessary and urgent to combine our efforts with those of the International Community to achieve this goal.

Mauritania has developed a Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan that falls within the framework of the chemical management. This plan provides for important awareness- raising actions and includes a series of administrative, legal and technical measures to be implemented.

Afterwards, the coordinator of the NIP program in Mauritania made a presentation on:

- The Convention development process (negotiating sessions on the Convention).
- Measures taken by the Convention as well the list of POPs targeted

- A general insight of the Stockholm Convention while focusing on the general obligations of parties involved in articles 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 15.
- Assessing possibilities of synergy between the Stockholm Convention and the other environmental Conventions ratified by Mauritania, notably CCNUCC, CDD, CDB, the Montreal Protocol, the Basel Convention.
- The specificity of the Stockholm Convention on POPs compared with other environmental Conventions

The presentation was followed with two interesting and fruitful debates articulated around 2 themes:

- POPs in Mauritania
- Role of the different partners in particular NGOs and their relations with the POPs project in Mauritania

Participants took the floor by turns to praise the quality of the presentation and the importance of the meeting.

All the interventions were rewarding and were articulated around the need to work toward a public awareness- raising of problems linked to chemicals and on NGO training and information in order to build capacity on chemical management and on the Stockholm Convention.

As far as the first point is concerned, the debate aimed to locate POPs, including their storage and transport places in order to identify them as well their holders and people involved.

It emerged from these debates that POPs are not largely used and that their chain remains unknown.

As far as the second point is concerned, the debate was articulated around the role of health control and plant control structures and the place of the Civil Society in the alert and follow- up mechanism.

A certain number of important issues such as the supervision, the definition of the role of each partner and above all the collaboration mechanism between the different partners and the project have been raised by participants.

At the end of a rewarding and fruitful debate in which participants exchanged experiences and showed their satisfaction with the organisation of this meeting, a special award was given to the chairman of the NGO AGREEM for the initiative taken by his organisations.

In the aftermath, a reading was made on the IPEN Statement and hard copies were distributed to participants.

At the end of the meeting, participants made the following recommendations:

- To the coordination of the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan in Mauritania:
  1. The putting in place of structures specialized in diagnosing POPs
  2. The strengthening of analytic capacities for the follow- up and the control of POPs.

To the NGO AGREEM:

- Increase this kind of initiatives and send to participants whenever possible information it has on chemicals.