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International POPs Elimination Project

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

National Training and Awareness Programme on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ)

**Sri Lanka
March 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>

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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: English

National Training and Awareness Programme on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

BACKGROUND

The awareness level with respect to Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and their adverse affects on human health and environment is extremely low in the community. This often results in the adoption of practices such as continued use of POPs pesticides in agriculture, open burning, incineration and others that add to the POPs level in the country.

The community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other civil society organizations can play a meaningful role in creating awareness on POPs in the community. However, to be able to play that role, they themselves need to be aware of the issues and challenges. They can, in addition, play a larger role as an effective stakeholder and contribute to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in the country. Unfortunately they are not aware of the role that the civil society can play in the whole process.

Likewise, all the stakeholders have a role to play in the process but due to lack of awareness about the issue they are not able to fulfil their roles. To deal with the issue of POPs it is necessary that all the stakeholders participate actively in the process and play the desired roles.

ACTIVITY PROPOSED

Against this background, Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ) in association with Green Movement Sri Lanka planned an extensive awareness and training program for the various stakeholders including NGOs, Government and the media. The broad objective of the workshop was to create awareness among the relevant stakeholders about POPs and its impacts on human health and environment, and working towards its elimination.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

The activity was expected to have a multiplier affect towards solving the issue of POPs. The participating NGOs would further raise awareness in their respective communities. The media representatives would help spread the message among a wider section of the population through informative and educative news reporting. This would also help localize the issue of POPs. The concerned government officials would give due recognition to the roles and efforts of other stakeholders and establish inter linkages to ensure smooth implementation of POPs control and management activities by the government. All this would contribute to the effective implementation of the Stockholm Convention in the country.

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

The Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ) organized a *National Training and Awareness Programme on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)* from January 20-21, 2006 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness and build their capacity and promote

active and effective civil society participation in the preparation for implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs. Over 70 participants representing various NGOs, CBOs, Environmental Organizations, Farmer organizations, research institutes, and the government officials participated in the workshop.

The workshop was designed in such a way that technical sessions were followed by interactions and discussion to provide clarity among the participants.

Mr Ravindranath Dabere, Chairman, Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ) welcomed the participants. The Chief Guest, Prof. Tissa Witharana, Honourable Minister for Science and Technology could not make it for some last minute engagement therefore his wife Kamini Witharana delivered the address on his behalf. Dr. Anura Senarathne, Deputy Director (Tec), ITI delivered the keynote address. Hemantha Withanage, Executive Director, CEJ reiterated the purpose of the workshop and stressed the need for action.

Some of the key experts include Mr. S.A.M. Azmy, National Project Coordinator, Ministry of Environment, Ms. Amara Beilin, Senior Manager (Environment), Biyagama BOI, Prof. Ravindra Fernando, Head, National Poison Information Centre, Dr. Mangala Wijesinghe, Attorney at Law, Mr. J.K.A.B. Wijegunasekara, Senior Research Officer ITI, Dr. G.K. Manuwera, Registrar of Pesticides, Office of the Pesticide Registrar, Ms. Chandani Panditharathne, Asst. Director (Environment), Ministry of Environment and Dr. Pathmalal Manage, Senior Lecturer, Zoology Department of University of Sri Jayewardenepura. IPEP Coordinator for South Asia, Upasana Choudhry also was present.

Besides an introductory session on POPs and their impacts on health and environment, the workshop covered topics including the current status, implementation status of the Stockholm Convention and the existing legal framework related to POPs in Sri Lanka. The issues of Pesticides, Dioxins and Furans and industrial chemicals especially the PCBs and their impacts were discussed in greater details. The status of candidates POPs in Sri Lanka was also shared along with the research findings related to the contamination of POPs and PFOS perfluorooctane sulfonate and related fluorochemicals in some aquatic biota of Sri Lanka. All the presentations and discussions were in Sinhalese.





Presentation on the POPs situation in India by Upasana Choudhry, Toxics Link, India provided further insight on the issue of POPs. India is looked upon in the region as a leader and there was curiosity among the participants as well as the government officials to understand how India is gearing to address the issue and the kind of technology used to manage POPs.



Participants later discussed some specific issues in small groups and came up with a set of recommendations to strengthen the country effort on POPs. There were also deliberations on the future plan of action.



Quite clearly, a loose network of civil society groups on the issue of POPs emerged by the end of the workshop. Since most of the groups were new to the issue it was widely felt that any attempt at formalising the network would be premature and not bring in desirable results. These NGOs and CBOs at this stage would be looking at receiving guidance and support from the more experienced groups such as CEJ, Green Movement Sri Lanka, SLEES, Toxics Link and others, and would not have much to contribute to the growth of the network. A formal network may shape up gradually over time.

OUTCOMES

The workshop can be termed a success since it did meet all the objectives. The various accomplishments can be summarized briefly as under:

- The workshop was instrumental in creating a multiplier effect towards solving the problem of POPs. Many participants are keen on taking up awareness activities in their respective areas.
- The workshop inspired the participants to join hands and work collaboratively.
- The capacities of participating NGOs have been enhanced significantly. With enhanced capacity and understanding of POPs issue, they are committed to raise awareness in their respective areas and work towards its elimination.
- Media became sensitised on the issue of POPs and extensively covered it. This has helped in localizing the issue of POPs and taking the information right to the common masses.
- The concerned government recognised the roles and efforts of other stakeholders (especially the civil society) and established inter linkages to ensure smooth implementation of POPs control and management activities by the government

Annexure A: List of Participants

S.No.	Participant's Name	Organisation
1.	A.H.C.U Ganegoda	SDCI
2.	A.S Beleyn	Environment Department, Nawala
3.	Amara Beilin	BOI
4.	Aravinda Nanayakkara	SLEES
5.	B Wijewardana	ITI, No 263,Colombo 7
6.	B.M Ranasinghe	Monlar (SARD), 1151/58A, 4 Lane, Kotte Rd.
7.	C Aththanayake	BRIT Badulla.
8.	C Perera	NBRO, 99/1, Jawatte, Colombo 5.
9.	Chandana S. Jayakody	CEJ
10.	Chandra Hewa Gallage	Wikalpani Jathika Sandanaya,117,Talahena Rd, Malabe
11.	D.M Latha Kumari	Uva Gami Sanwardana Padanama, 18,Dutugemunu Rd, Monaragala.
12.	D.R Gunawathne	GMSL
13.	Dilani jayaweera	NSF, Maitland place
14.	Dilani Suriyaarachchi	POPs Project, Environment Ministry.
15.	Dilena Pathagoda	CEJ
16.	Dinusha de Zoysa	DILF
17.	Dr. Anura Senarathne	ITI
18.	Dr. Mangala Wijesinghe	
19.	Dr. Maunuweera	Pesticides Registrar
20.	Dr. Pathmalal	University of Jayawardenepura
21.	Dunston de Silva	POPs Project. NQ & NR
22.	E.M Chandrasekara	Vegetable and Fruit Producing Society, Kinigama
23.	Emil Dasanayaka	CES, 361/1/A, Warakawa, Nawalapitiya
24.	G.L.A Sarath Nandathileka	UFOF, 8 th Mile Post, Demodara
25.	H.G.S.S Senarathna	OECRP
26.	H.H.P Weerawardana	Kadukara Sanwardana Padanama
27.	H.M Siripala	Anagathe Ape Ate Sanwardana Padanama, Badula.
28.	H.M.H.E Herath	Ministry of Environment.
29.	H.M.P Darmasiri	Swa Sakthi Sanwardana Parsadaya Mahiyanganaya.
30.	H.U.R Bogoda	Balangoda Environmental
31.	Harsha Indraya	Laxpana Batteries Ltd, Panagoda,Homagama.
32.	Hemantha Withanage	CEJ
33.	J.H.S Malkanthi	Praja Sampath Sanwardana Kendraya, Dambulla.
34.	J.K.A.B. Wijegunasekara	ITI
35.	Janaka Vithanage	Green Movement
36.	K Dinusha de Zoysa	PILF
37.	K.K.A.C.M Kumarasinghe	MLENU
38.	K.K.U.J Premarathna	OECRP
39.	K.P.A Senavirathna	ITI
40.	K.Tharinda Nishantha Sagarika	Gemi Sarana Maha Sangamaya, C.W.E junction, Higurakgoda.

41.	Kamini Vitharana	CEJ
42.	M.K.K Kushani de Silva	Sewa Lanka Foundation, Boralesgamuwa.
43.	M.P Nirosha Nilanthi	University of Sri Jayawardanapura, Faculty of Pure Applied Science.
44.	M.R.K Abeysinghe	Heleys Agro Products Ltd
45.	Manel.C	SLAAS
46.	Ms. Chandanie Panditharatne	Ministry of Health
47.	Nihal	Kandukara Mithuro
48.	Nilmal Wikramasinghe	CEJ
49.	Nilmini Ranaweera	Ministry of Environment
50.	Nimal Kanaharaarachchi	Dumbara Mithuro
51.	P.Ragupathi	GRDH
52.	Prof. Ravindra Fernando	NPIC
53.	R.K.C.K Menike	Sasaka Foundation
54.	R.M.M.P Bandara	OECRP
55.	Ranjanee Karunanayeka	Green Movement
56.	Ravindranath Dabare	CEJ
57.	Rohana Kumara	CEJ
58.	S Amarathunga	
59.	S Siriwardana	AEDF
60.	S Vishwalingam	MOSDEF, 120/13, Rajagiriya.
61.	S.A.M.Azmy	Ministry of Environment
62.	S.B Udowita	NICBON
63.	S.M Chaminda	Swasakthi Sanwardana Parsadaya.
64.	S.M Pathiraja	Sarvodaya Shramadana Movment, 98, Rawathawatte Rd., Moratuwa.
65.	S.M.H.S Chandrasena	Faculty of Medicine Science University of Sri Jayawardanapura
66.	Saman Palitha	519/1, Madagoda Lake Rd, Athurigiriya.
67.	Sasika Wickrmasinhe	CEJ
68.	Shanthi Karunadasa	Praja Sampath Surakime Madyasthanaya, Monaragala.
69.	Sulochana Wijeweera	CEJ
70.	Suranjan Kodituwakku	GMSL
71.	V karunathilaka	SaSamasevaya Anuradapura Rd, Thalawa.
72.	Veenetha M Gamage	Lankadeepa
73.	W.A Assistiyan	CIC Ltd

**National Training and Awareness Programme on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
January 20-21, 2006; Taj Samudra Hotel – Colombo
Workshop Schedule**

Day 1 (20th January 2006)		
Time	Topic	Resource Person
9.00. a.m.	Registration	
9.30 a.m. - 9.45.am	Lighting Oil Lamp	
9.45 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.	Welcome Address	Mr. Ravindranath Dabare Chairman, CEJ
10.00 a.m. – 10.20 a.m.	Chief Guest Speech	Prof. Tissa Vitarana, Hon. Minister Ministry of Science and
	Technology	
10.20 a.m. – 10.40 a.m.	Keynote Address	Dr. Anura Senarathne Deputy Director (Tec) -ITI-
10.40 a.m.-- 11.00 a.m.	Introduction of the Workshop	Mr. Hemantha Withanage Executive Director, CEJ
11.00 a.m. – 11.20 a.m.	Tea Break	
11.20 a.m. – 12.00 noon.	Implementation Status of the Stockholm Convention in Sri Lanka	Mr. S.A.M. Azmy National Project Coordinator Ministry of Environment
12.00 noon – 12.20 p.m.	Discussion	
12.20 p.m. – 1.00 p.m.	The impacts of Dioxins and Furans	Ms. Amara Beilin Senior Manager (Environment), Biyagama BOI
1.00 p.m. - 1.15 p.m.	Discussion	
1.15 p.m. – 2.00 p.m.	Lunch Break	
2.00 p.m. – 2.35 p.m.	POPs situation in India	Upasana Choudhry Toxics Link, India
2.35 p.m.- 2.50 p.m.	Discussion	
2.50 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	Poison and Environment	Prof. Ravindra Fernando, Head, National Poison Information Centre,
3.30 p.m. – 3.50 p.m.	Discussion	
3.50 p.m. – 4. 10p.m.	Tea Break	

4.10 p.m. – 4.45 p.m.	Legal Situation on POPs in Sri Lanka	Dr Mangala Wijesinghe Attorney-at-Law
4.45p.m.- 5.00p.m.	Discussion	

Day 2 (21st January 2006)

9.00. a.m. - 9.15 a.m.	Registration	
9.15 a.m. -9.30.a.m.	Welcome and Recap	Mr. Dilena Pathragoda Director, Projects CEJ
9.30 a.m. – 10.20 a.m.	Industrial Chemicals under S/C and The status of candidates POPs In Sri Lanka	Mr. J.K.A.B.Wijegunasekara Senior Research Officer ITI
10.20 a.m. – 10.35 a.m.	Discussion	
10.35 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.	Tea Break	
11.00 a.m.-- 11.45 a.m.	The impact of pesticides in Sri Lanka	Dr. G.K. Manuwera, Registrar of Pesticides, Office of the Pesticide Registrar
11.45 a.m. – 12.00 noon.	Discussion	
12.00 noon. – 12.45 p.m.	PCB containing equipments and their management in Sri Lanka	Ms. Chandani Panditharathne, Asst. Director/Environment Ministry of Environment
12.45 a.m. – 1.00 a.m.	Discussion	
1.00 p.m. – 1.45 p.m.	Lunch Break	
1.45 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.	Contamination of POPs and PFOS perfluorooctane sulfonate and related fluorochemicals in some aquatic biota of Sri Lanka.	Dr. Pathmalal Manage Senior Lecture Zoology Dept USJ
2.30 p.m. – 2.45 p.m.	Discussion	
2.45 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.	Group Work - Session I	Mr. D.R. Gunarathne
4.00 p.m. – 4.15 p.m.	Tea Break	
4.15 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.	Group Work - Session II	Mr. D.R. Gunarathne
5.00p.m.	Vote of thanks and End of programme	Mr. Hemantha Withanage Executive Director, CEJ