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SDC



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Forests and  
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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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# **Global Day of Action Against Persistent Organic Pollutants in Pakistan**

**Sustainable Development and Policy Institute (SDPI)**

**Pakistan  
April 2005**



**SDPI**

Sustainable Development Policy Institute

## 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.

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# Global Day of Action Against Persistent Organic Pollutants in Pakistan

Environmental experts and academia have urged elected local government representatives to raise awareness among the communities against Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and make necessary laws at local levels. Experts have also revealed that these kinds of chemical substances persist in the environment and in the human body up to forty years. This was expressed at a workshop for local government elected representatives organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on April 21, 2005, at the eve of “Earth Day” and global day of action against POPs, declared by international POPs elimination network (IPEN), a network of over 400 civil society organizations (including SDPI) in 70 countries..

Experts showed their concerns on the smuggling of banned chemicals in the country, which are the major cause of encouraging POPs use in the country. Workshop recommended ban on open dump burning, use of DDT and household pesticides, control on leakage of electricity transformers, consideration of alternative technology along with incineration for waste disposal and ratification of Stockholm convention 2001 on POPs by government at the earliest.



Elected representatives from various union councils of Rawalpindi participated in the workshop and posed important questions that how a local government can play its role to eliminate POPs. Councilors were also asked to take initiatives to raise POPs awareness among communities.

Welcoming the participants, Dr. Abid Suleri of SDPI said that local governments are custodians of the environment at community level. “They have the basic responsibility to take up pollution issues at their respective unions, tehsil and district councils through legislation.”

Dr. Mahmood A. Khwaja, Research Fellow environment at SDPI, told the participants that POPs are rapidly spreading around Gujranwala and Gujrat areas and cotton picker women have serious threats to their health, as breast cancer has been reported among these women in Pakistan, due to inhaling of agriculture pesticides used on the crops. He said POPs have direct link with humans and wildlife due to breathing contaminated air, eating contaminated food and drinking and washing in contaminated water.

“POPs chemicals accumulate in human bodies through fetus and unborn babies still in womb (through parent’s fats), food web and animal products like meat, fish, and milk. Even extremely small amounts of POPs can injure health and health of other organisms.” he informed.

Dr. Khwaja said that government should fulfill its promises and ratify the Stockholm convention 2001. “There is a need to identify & quantify POPs in the country, review national laws & policies, development of an effective plan against elimination of POPs and providing opportunities for public participation at all levels for giving inputs on the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in the country,” he said.

Dr. Nauman F. Qadir informed about the policy issues regarding POPs. He said that review of the national legislation concerning all aspects of POPs management in Pakistan including enforcement and recommendations is required. “Planning and implementation of awareness raising campaigns on POPs and other chemical safety and management issues should also be incorporated in the policy,” he said

He said that POPs elimination should be the top environmental priority as once POPs enter into the human body; these may remain in the body up to 40 years. “Research analysis has proved that the volume of POPs in the waste forms is an alarming situation in Pakistan,” he informed.

Tahir Husnain of WTO watch group informed the participants in details about the possible impacts of POPs in agriculture. He said that due to heavy use of agriculture pesticides our lands are rapidly heading towards infertility and POPs use is among one of the major reasons. “District governments can play a vital role to stop use of banned pesticides by devising local level policies,” he suggested.

Concluding the workshop, the chief guest, Dr. Ishtiaq Qazi of National University of Science and Technology (NUST) appreciated the efforts of SDPI for choosing local government representatives for raising the very important issue of POPs. “Local government representatives must come forward to implement POPs-free environment plans and legislation should be developed on priority basis, if so required.”

Mohsin Babbar of SDPI thanked the participants and said that local governments should take lead in eliminating POPs, and civil society would continue to support them by providing information and technical assistance.

## **PARTICIPANTS (Local Government Members)**

No.	Name & Designation
1.	Raja Tariq Kiyani Nazim District Rawalpindi
2.	Raja Javeed Ikhlas Naib-Nazim District Rawalpindi
3.	Ms Sumaira Gul Tehsil Presiding Officer/Programme Manager AHKMT
4.	Ms. Shamim Hayat Lady Councilor
5.	Ms. Zahida Ashraf Lady Councilor
6.	Nusrat BiBi Lady Councilor
7.	Ms. Aneela Rafique Lady Councilor
8.	Ms. Kausar Prean Lady Councilor
9.	Ansar BiBi Lady Councilor
10.	Robina Tehsin Tehsil Member (Rwp)
11.	Ms. Sara Batool DAAMKMT
12.	Ms. Moona Gul NGO Worker
13.	Dr. Shazad Baloch Lady Councilor
14.	Ms. Suriya Khatoon Tehsil Member
15.	Mr. Rana Shoukat Labour Councilor (UC-7)
16.	Chaudhry Abdul Hameed General Councilor (UC-7)
17.	Ms. Zahida Ashraf Vice President
18.	Ms. Robina Tehseen General Secretary
19.	Ms. Nasreen Rasheed Lady Councilor/Joint Secretary

20.	Ms. Aneela Rafique Lady Councilor
21	Ms. Safia Sultana Lady Councilor
22.	Ms. Mumtaz Qayyum Secretary Information/Lady Councilor
23.	Ms. Lozina Shoaib Lady Councilor
24.	Mr. Safdar Hussain Sai Nazim
25.	Tariq Mahmood Nazim
26.	Malik Ghulam Rasool Nazim
27.	Badshah Mir Khan Afridi Nazim
28.	Babu Muhammad Riaz Nazim
29.	Mr. Aamir Azeem Naib Nazim
30.	Sheikh Muhammad Ijaz Nazim
31.	Mr. Manzoor Akbar Turk Nazim
32.	Mr. Khalid Mahmood Nazim
33.	Raja Zaheer Mumtaz Nazim
34.	Dilpazeer Awan Nazim
35.	Malik Qasim Deer Safi Nazim
36.	Raja Shahid Latif Nazim
37.	Mr. Ziaullah Shah Nazim
38.	Malik Nisar General Councilor (UC-8)
39.	Mr. Abdul Hameed(Councilor)
40.	Mr. Sajid Abbassi Councilor
41	Ms. Nousheen Malik Lady Councilor

## Press Coverage

# POPs cause for cancer among cotton pickers

*The Frontier Post, Peshawar, April 22, 2005*

ISLAMABAD (inp): Environmental experts and academia have urged elected local government representatives to raise awareness among the communities against Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and make legislation at local levels, if required.

Experts have also revealed that these kinds of chemical substances persist in the environment and in the human body up to forty years.

This was expressed at half-day workshop for local government elected representatives organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Thursday.

The workshop was organized at the eve of global day of action against POPs, declared by international POPs elimination Network (IPEN), a network of over 350 civil society organizations in 65 countries world over.

Experts showed their concerns on the smuggling of banned chemicals in the country, which are the major cause of encouraging POPs. Workshop recommended ban on open dump burning, use of DDT and household pesticides, control on leakage of electricity transformers, consideration of alternative technology along with incineration for waste disposal.

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## Plea for steps to curb organic pollutants' spread

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*Peer Mohammad*

*Business Recorder Islamabad, April 25, 2005*

ISLAMABAD: Environmental experts at a workshop here have urged elected local government representatives to raise awareness regarding Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) to curb their spread.

The workshop was organised by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) for local government elected representatives on Thursday, in connection with "Global Day of Action against POPs," declared by international POPs Elimination Network (IPEN), having over 350 civil society organisations in 65 countries worldwide.

The experts also showed their concerns on the smuggling of banned chemicals, which encourage spreading of POPs.

The workshop recommended ban on open waste burning, use of DDT and household pesticides and control on leakage of electricity transformers and stressed incineration for waste disposal.

The elected representatives from Rawalpindi participated in the workshop and raised questions as to how a local government can play its role to eliminate the POPs.

Dr. Mahmood A. Khwaja, Research Fellow environment at SDPI, told the participants that POPs are rapidly spreading in various areas and informed the gathering that cotton picker women have high incidence of breast cancer due to inhaling agriculture pesticides.

He said the POPs have direct link with humans and wildlife in connection with breathing of contaminated air, eating contaminated food and using impure water for drinking and other purposes.

Dr. Nauman F. Qadir highlighted the policy issues regarding POPs. He said that review of the legislation concerning all aspects of POPs is necessary and other chemical safety and management issues should also be incorporated in the policy.

He said that POPs elimination should be the priority agenda of environmental policy. Once POPs enter into the human body they remain in the body up to 40 years.

Dr. Abid Suleri of SDPI said that local governments are custodians of the environment at community level. "They have the basic responsibility to take up pollution issues at their respective union council, tehsil and district levels through effective legislation."

Tahir Husnain of WTO watch group informed the participants about the possible impacts of POPs on agriculture. He said that due to heavy use of pesticides our lands are rapidly heading towards infertility.

"Districts governments can play a vital role to stop use of banned pesticides by devising local level policies." Tahir added.

Concluding the workshop, chief guest Dr. Ishtiaq Qazi of National University of Science and Technology (Nust) appreciated the efforts of SDPI for choosing local government representatives to raise the very important issue of POPs.

"Local government representatives must come forward to implement POP-free environment plans and legislation can be made on priority basis," he maintained.