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Landscape SAEFL

International POPs Elimination Project

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

Global Day of Action on POPs in Belarus

International Academy of Ecology

**Belarus
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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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Global Day of Action on POPs in Belarus

On the Earth Day (April 22, 2005), the International Academy of Ecology NGO (Belarus) held a roundtable discussion on POPs-associated issues in Belarus, with participation of NGOs, members of the academic community, representatives of mass media outlets and businesses. Background documents for the roundtable reflected official views on the problem of POPs and views of NGOs on the most pressing issues associated with environmental contamination by POPs. In particular, NGO members believe that the most urgent contemporary problem is associated with growing uncontrolled use of construction materials, that either generate POPs or may become their potential sources (e.g. PVC, styrene, etc. that are used for construction of housing and other buildings). Every consecutive year, the turnover and amounts of these materials in Belarus double and reach tens of thousands of tons (the amount of banned pesticides in Belarus reaches less than 30 tons and they are stored in special storage facilities, while PVC is widely used in children's and public health facilities). Waste dumps and landfills are substantial and uncontrolled sources of POPs, generated by oxidation of plastic waste (inc. PVC). It is worth to note that the share of plastic waste is gradually growing. Even now, dioxin levels in eggs, sampled nearby large landfills in vicinity of Minsk substantially exceed MACs and the situation is expected to get worse in the future. The roundtable participants discussed progress in implementation of the Stockholm Convention in Belarus and argued that the list of banned substances should be substantially extended, that it is necessary to apply additional legislative actions for regulation of application of potentially hazardous materials (particularly in construction sector), while the general public should be informed on POPs-related problems and health hazards. For additional information, please contact Eugeni Shirokov, International Academy of Ecology NGO, iaebd@tut.by