

Toxics Link welcomes the Union Cabinet decision of ratification of seven POPs chemicals

Toxics Link welcomes the Union Cabinet's approval on ratification of seven chemicals listed under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) considering the protection of human health and the environment. These POPs are (1) Chlordecone; (2) Hexabromobiphenyl; (3) Hexabromodiphenyl ether and Heptabromodiphenylether; (4) Tetrabromodiphenyl ether and Pentabromodiphenyl ether, (5) Pentachlorobenzene; (6) Hexabromocyclododecane; (7) Hexachlorobutadiene. These chemicals are designated POPs in the Stockholm convention way back in 2009 and ratification reiterated India's commitment towards the global convention to protect the human health and environment. Further ratification will pave the way for the inventorisation of these chemicals as well as India can update the National Implementation Plan which is overdue for a long.

Incidentally in March 2018, The Government of India promulgated regulation of Persistent Organic Pollutants Rules, 2018 and prohibited the manufacture of these chemicals. However, after the ratification by the Union Cabinet, these chemicals will be phased out completely which are critical for the environment and human health. Most notably many of these chemicals have been phased by the major producer countries and these countries submitted the National Implementation Plan in the Stockholm Secretariat.

The Stockholm Convention on POPs is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from POPs, which are identified as chemical substances that persist in the environment, bio-accumulate in living organisms, adversely affect human health/environment and have the property of long-range environmental transport (LRET). Exposure to POPs can lead to cancer, damage to central and peripheral nervous systems, diseases of the immune system, reproductive disorders and child development. POPs are listed in various Annexes to the Stockholm Convention after thorough scientific research, deliberations and negotiations among member countries.