



## COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

### *Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) (Protocol to the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP))*

**SUBJECT CATEGORY:**

Chemicals & Wastes

**TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:**

Multilateral

**FORM:**

Legally-binding treaty

**STATUS:**

- Signed by Canada June 24, 1998
- Ratified by Canada December 18, 1998
- Entered into force internationally October 23, 2003
- Entered into force in Canada October 23, 2003

**LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:**

**Lead:** Environment and Climate Change Canada

**Partners:** Health Canada–Pest Management Regulatory Agency; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada; Global Affairs Canada

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

**Web Links:**

- [Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants](#)
- [Stockholm Convention](#)
- [National Pollutant Release Inventory](#)

**Contacts:**

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

**COMPENDIUM EDITION:**

October 2018

#### PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Canada is a party to the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's (UNECE) Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP), the first international treaty to eliminate or reduce POPs. POPs are particularly harmful chemicals that pose a serious threat to the environment and human health around the world. The Protocol on POPs was a pioneer in the international fight against POPs and served as a model and stepping stone to global action which now exists under the Stockholm Convention on POPs. Canada's North is particularly impacted by POPs as they can travel long distances and tend to settle in colder climates, where they threaten sensitive ecosystems and indigenous peoples. International agreements like the Protocol on POPs and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants help reduce POPs from all countries, which can ultimately end up in Canada.

#### OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Protocol on POPs is to control, reduce, or eliminate discharges, emissions, and losses of POPs to the environment.

#### KEY ELEMENTS

The Protocol is a regional agreement requiring Parties to eliminate the production and use of intentionally produced POPs, restrict production and use of other listed POPs, and reduce emissions of unintentionally produced POPs using best available techniques. The Protocol also includes obligations for environmentally sound disposal of wastes containing POPs, as well as specific limit values for the incineration of waste.

Amendments to the Protocol in 2009 added seven new POPs and introduced more stringent requirements for several previously listed POPs. Flexibilities to encourage ratification from countries with economies in transition, notably countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South Eastern Europe (SEE), were also included.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

Implementation of the Protocol is expected to result in decreasing levels of POPs entering the environment over time.

## CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

The Protocol on POPs was the first international agreement targeting POPs, with Canada playing an instrumental role in identifying the POPs issue and garnering support for action. The POPs Protocol also served as the impetus for the global agreement on POPs, the Stockholm Convention, which entered into force in 2004.

Canada is particularly impacted by POPs as they can travel long distances and tend to settle in colder environments like Canada's Arctic. The majority of POPs of concern to Canada now come from foreign sources. International agreements, like the (regional) Protocol on POPs under the UNECE CLRTAP) and the (global) Stockholm Convention, help reduce emissions from all countries that can ultimately end up in Canada.

Canada efforts to eliminate and restrict the production, use and release of POPs are implemented using authorities under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* and the *Pest Control Products Act* and associated regulations such as the *Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, PCB Regulations*, and the *Export of Substances on the Export Control List Regulations*.

## RESULTS / PROGRESS

### Activities

Activities under the Protocol on POPs have phased down in recognition of global efforts under the Stockholm Convention. In December 2013, the CLRTAP Executive Body adopted a principled approach to future listings whereby proposals for new listings would first be referred to the Stockholm Convention for consideration and additional action under the Protocol on POPs considered only if stricter measures in the UNECE region are warranted or if the substance is not ultimately listed under the Stockholm Convention.

### Reports

Canada meets its annual reporting requirement under the Protocol on POPs through the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI). Canada's most recent report (2017) can be found on the [NPRI](#) website under the heading: *Air Pollutant Emission Inventory*.

### Results

Canada has put in place regulatory measures for POPs under the Protocol on POPs.