POPs HELPDESK LUXEMBOURG

managed by REACH &CLP HELPDESK LUXEMBOURG

Persistant Organic Pollutants (POPs)

What are POPs?

POPs, also known as "forever chemicals" are substances with the following properties:

- **persistent:** difficult to degrade and persist in the environment for long periods;
- **bioaccumulative:** able of accumulating in living organisms;
- **toxic:** cause harmful effects on ecosystems and human health (e.g. cancers, birth defects, disruption of the immune and reproductive system in humans);
- **mobile** over long distances.

POPs origin

Chemical substances that have been identified as POPs include:

- **pesticides** (such as DDT);
- **industrial chemicals** (such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), which were widely used in electrical equipment); or
- **unintentional by-products** formed during industrial processes, degradation or combustion (such as dioxins and furans).

Source: Stockholm Convention

Regulatory framework

- International level:
  - Stockholm Convention (or **"POPs Convention"**);
  - Aarhus Protocol (or **"POPs Protocol"**);
  - These two international agreements have the same objectives: the reduction, control and elimination of emissions of POPs into the environment.
- EU Level: Regulation (EU) 2019/1021 (or **"POPs Regulation"**);
- **Remark:** The international and EU regulations are legally binding in Luxembourg.

Related obligations

- Prohibition & restriction of the manufacture, placing on the market and the use of certain POPs;
- Management of stockpiles consisting of or containing POPs;
- Reduction and/or elimination of POPs release;
- Management of waste containing POP's.

Further information available on our POP Helpdesk website.

Source: Regulation (EU) 2019/1021

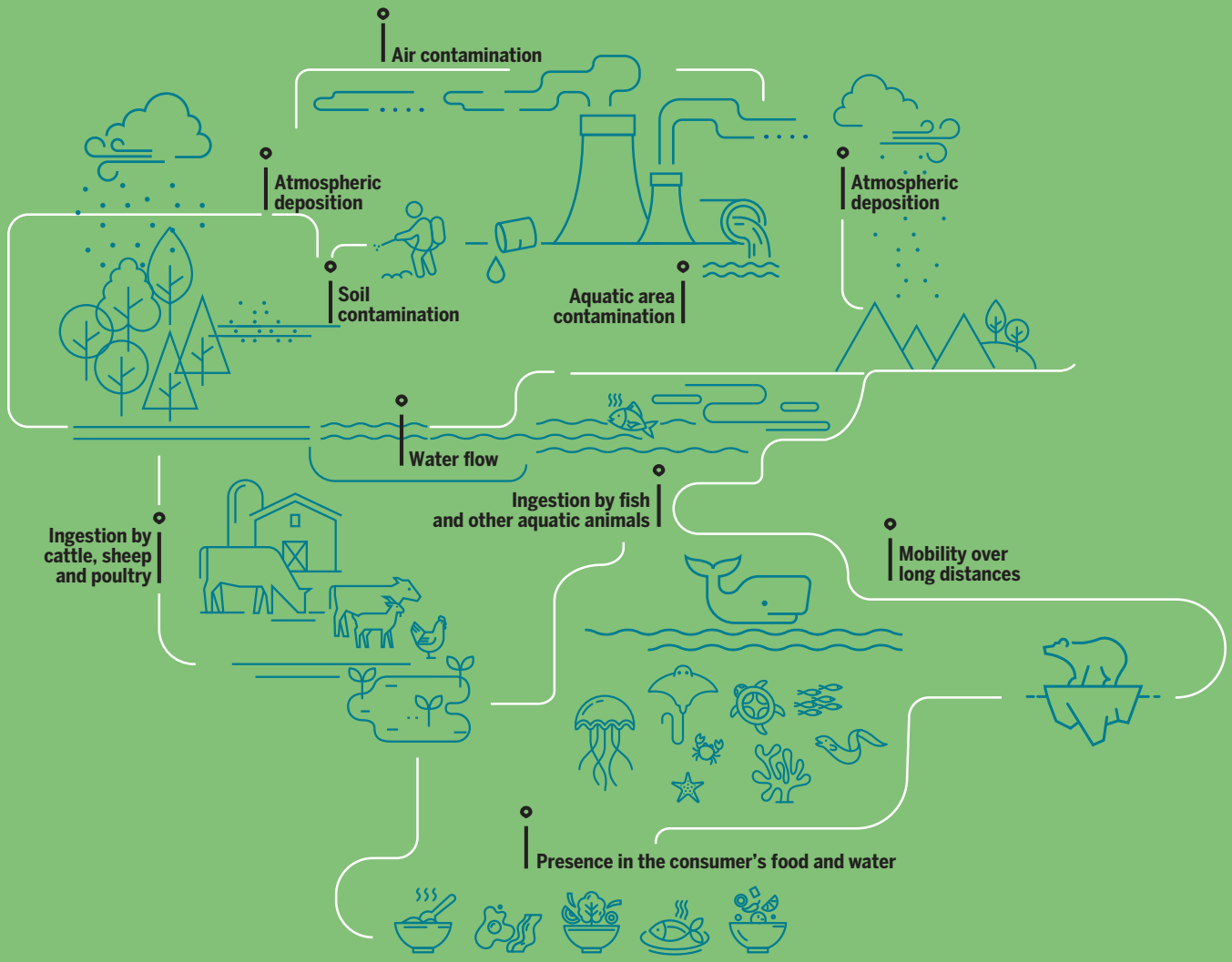

Figure: POPs dispersion in the environment

How POPs are regulated in Luxembourg

- Luxembourg has signed the Stockholm Convention in 2001: Loi du 8 janvier 2003 portant approbation de la Convention de Stockholm sur les polluants organiques persistants, faite à Stockholm, le 22 mai 2001
- A law transposes certain implementing rules and sanctions of the POP Regulation: Loi du 11 mars 2020 portant certaines modalités d'application et les sanctions du règlement (UE) 2019/1021 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 juin 2019 concernant les polluants organiques persistants
- Regular measurement programmes to verify both the releases of POPs into the environment and to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures and actions taken over time. Examples:
  - Monitoring of existing stocks and common sources of POPs and the evolution of these stocks;
  - Biosurveillance program which covers PCDDs, PCDFs and PCBs.
- Information on measures and action planned and their results can be found in the National implementation Plan (PNMO).
- The PNMO is an obligation for the convention's signatories to provide an overview on their POPs situation and measures to reduces POP releases in line with the convention's obligations.

Source: Plan national de mise en œuvre (PNMO) de la Convention de Stockholm sur les polluants organiques persistants

POPs in Luxembourg

Among others:

- **PFOS/PFOA:** substances were widely used in coatings on water resistant outdoor clothing and in fire extinguishing foams. Although that their usage is restricted nowadays, old stockpiles may still contain these substances.
- **PCB:** Never produced in Luxembourg, but were widely used as flame retardants, coolant liquids, plasticizers, etc. Thus, may still be found in old electric equipment or in window caulk, etc.
- **SCCPs** were recently added to the Convention and may still be found in electric equipment.
- **HCB:** Problems related to HCB are due to unintentional emissions.
- **DDT:** Its detention, placing on the market and use are forbidden in Luxembourg since 1981. Never produced in Luxembourg but is part of the monitoring of boundary waters.

Substances	Measures/Actions
PentaBDE, OctaBDE, HBB, PCB, PCDD/F	The substance should be monitored regularly. For example: PCBs and PCDD/PCDF are monitored in Sewage Sludge.
HBCDD, PFOS	The substance should be monitored regularly. Additional measures/actions to reduce releases to the environment should be foreseen. Example for PFOS: inventory of fire-fighting foams and proper disposal of non-compliant products .
Aldrin, Chlordane, Dieldrin, Endrin, Heptachlor, HCB, Mirex, Toxaphene, Chlordecone, endosulfan, lindane, Alpha- & beta-HCH, DDT	The presence of the substance could not be determined. The substance may however be part of a screening project.

Source: Plan national de mise en œuvre (PNMO) de la Convention de Stockholm sur les polluants organiques persistants

What do we offer

- We are the national enquiry point;
- Answering your questions related to POPs;
- Support in English, French and German;
- Our webpage: https://www.pop-chemicals.lu/

Useful links

- Stockholm Convention: http://chm.pops.int/
- National Portail de l'environment (Emwelt.lu): https://environnement.public.lu/fr/chemesch-substanzen/Substances_chimiques/POPs.html
- ECHA: https://echa.europa.eu/understanding-pops
- European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/international_conventions/index_en.htm

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