The Persistence of POPs

6 Non-Negligible Facts

Results of global monitoring of POPs in developing countries

1. Global Presence

POPs are pervasive worldwide, **detected in air, water, soil, sediment, and living organisms**. They were detected in all 900 samples collected in 2016-2019 from 42 developing countries, emphasizing their lingering presence.

Their widespread distribution highlights the need for continued monitoring and action.

2. Stubborn Persistence

POPs are incredibly resilient, resisting degradation over time. Some of these persistent chemicals can linger in the environment and our bodies for decades, posing long-term risks.

Long-banned pesticides like dieldrin and endosulfan were still detected at elevated levels in air across Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa, even in areas far from known sources of contamination.

3. Bioaccumulation Potential

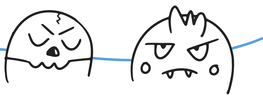
POPs have a dangerous trait of accumulating in the fatty tissues of living organisms. This process leads to higher concentrations as they move up the food chain, **affecting wildlife and humans**.

DDT, although its concentration has decreased by over 70% since 2004, still remains **the highest concentration among the POPs detected in human milk**.

4. Transboundary Pollution

POPs know no borders, **traveling vast distances through air and water currents**. This transboundary movement emphasizes the global nature of the issue and the necessity of international cooperation.

PFASs, known as "Forever Chemicals", were detected in water samples from 22 developing countries worldwide, with high levels found in water and human milk in remote islands in the Pacific.



5. Lingering Health Risks

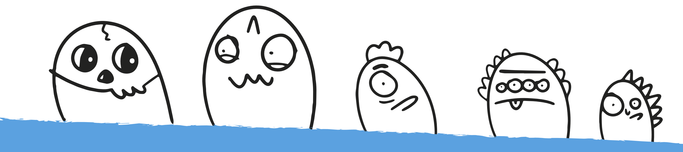
Despite restrictions and bans, **the health impacts of POPs continue to persist**. From developmental disorders to hormone disruption and cancer risks, these chemicals pose a significant threat to human health and the environment.

POPs detected in background monitoring indicate potential high exposure at the source of emission or release, emphasizing the need for immediate actions in effective and sound management.

6. Emerging Threat

The persistence and long-range transport of POPs pose an ongoing challenge, and **new POPs are continually being identified**. These emerging POPs, including novel chemicals and their byproducts, present additional risks to human health and the environment.

Chlorinated Paraffins— some of which were newly listed by the **Stockholm Convention in 2019**, with others under review— were detected as the second highest concentration of POPs in human milk on global average. Constant monitoring is crucial to detect and assess the presence of these new POPs and take proactive measures to minimize their impact.



collective action is essential to address this persistent issue and safeguard our well-being and the environment.

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