

A Protocol to the LRTAP Convention dealing with POPs was adopted in June 1998, by members of the UNECE (Eastern and Western Europe, the U.S. and Canada) and is now open for signature and ratification. Canada has signed the Protocol and plans to ratify it shortly. This Protocol is designed to address the serious concerns that UNECE countries have about the effects of POPs resulting from their long-range atmospheric transport. Once in force, it will require parties to implement effective measures to control, reduce or eliminate discharges, emissions and losses of POPs. Canada is particularly concerned about the impact of POPs in the Arctic and has played an important role in the preparation and development of this Protocol.

As POPs circulate globally, no country acting alone, or even regional group of countries, can protect its citizens or environment from risks. Recognizing this, governments have agreed to negotiate a global treaty under the auspices of UNEP using the regional Protocol as a point of reference. The first negotiating session took place in Montreal in June 1998 and it is anticipated that negotiations will be completed by the end of 1999.