



CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DU DROIT DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

July 9, 2010

The Honourable Jim Prentice
Minister
Environment Canada
Minister's Office (TLC)
10 Wellington Street
Gatineau QC K1A 0H3 CANADA

Transmission by email: Jim.Prentice@ec.gc.ca

Dear Minister Prentice:

RE: CELA responds to the Government's initiation of ratification for the global elimination of 9 new POPs by June 2010

The Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) (www.cela.ca) acknowledges the Government's public announcement of June 16, 2010 to initiate the ratification process that signals Canada's commitment to ratify the amendments made to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) at the Fourth Conference of the Party in Geneva, Switzerland in May 2009. The amendments tabled by you in the House of Commons demonstrate the Government of Canada's commitment to the global elimination of the following nine POPs: Pentabromodiphenyl ether (Penta BDE); Octabromodiphenyl ether (OctaBDE); Hexabromobiphenyl (HBB); Lindane; Alpha hexachlorocyclohexane (Alpha HCH); Beta hexachlorocyclohexane (Beta HCH); Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS); Chlordecone; and Pentachlorobenzene (PeCB)).

In our letter of May 27, 2010 we urged the Government of Canada to take the necessary steps during the recent Parliamentary session to ratify the amendments to the Stockholm Convention to confirm Canada's continued commitment towards global POPs elimination. While ratification was not completed during the recent Parliamentary session, the public announcement of June 16, 2010 is, nevertheless, a necessary first step towards successful ratification. There is general agreement that Canada is well positioned to meet the obligations outlined in the amended Stockholm Convention on POPs, but there are critical steps necessary in achieving ratification. These steps include "observ[ing] a waiting period of at least 21 sitting days" and the successful introduction of the necessary ratification package to the House of Commons.

CELA sees this time period as an opportunity for the government to scope out the necessary steps to avoid seeking exemptions under Annex 1 of the Stockholm Convention for specific POPs. The government should do everything under its authority to avoid seeking exemptions for POPs such as lindane in pharmaceutical uses and PFOS in specific applications permitted under the *Perfluorooctane Sulfonate and its Salts and Certain Other Compounds Regulations*. This may require engagement with stakeholders in the coming weeks to discuss options for avoiding exemptions. The inclusion of exemptions in a ratification package (even if exemptions are time limited) will continue to result in the constant threat of POP's deposition and impact to Canadians' health and environment, particularly in the north. Canada's leadership and

commitment on a global elimination of POPs would be greatly enhanced if efforts were directed to find options for Canada to eliminate potential exemptions for lindane and PFOS.

CELA encourages the Government to take every step needed to ensure that the ratification process is a priority matter for the Parliament and to ensure successful ratification by early Fall 2010, when the House is expected to resume.

CELA will continue to monitor the government's ratification efforts in the coming months and we hope that your government will take time to engage the public in this ratification process to promote transparency and accountability.

If you have any questions on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us (see below for information).

Sincerely yours,

THE CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ASSOCIATION



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c.c. Canadian Environmental Network Toxics Caucus

c.c. The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs

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