

Stockholm Convention COP 8, Geneva, Switzerland, April 24 – May 5, 2017

Alaska Community Action on Toxics for Agenda Item 5

Presented by Carol Nagaruk of Elim Alaska, April 24th, 2017

Thank you Mr. President,

My name is Carol Nagaruk and I am a tribal member of the Native Village of Elim in the Arctic. I am making this intervention on behalf of Alaska Community Action on Toxics, International Indian Treaty Council, and the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus.

SCCPs should be listed in Annex A with no specific exemptions as recommended by the POPRC along with a requirement limiting SCCPs in other chlorinated paraffin mixtures.

SCCPs bioaccumulate in the aquatic food web, birds, and Arctic biota that serve as our traditional foods (such as fish, seabirds, seals, walrus, and whales) at levels comparable to known POPs. In my home in the arctic, our people depend on migrating wildlife that have sustained our people for generations. The time frame we have to gather and harvest these wildlife in the Arctic are short.

SCCPs are found in our women. At low concentrations, they disrupt endocrine function, birth defects, and are known to be cancer-causing. Alaska children have twice the rate of birth defects than the rest of the United States, and our Alaska native children have twice more than non-natives in the state. SCCPs also cause learning disabilities in our children. How will our children learn our languages, cultures, our creation stories, our songs and dances; and our way of life?

Indigenous Peoples bear a burden that we did not create. POPs reach us from global sources, we do not have the capacity to deal with this on our own. Due to special vulnerability of our Arctic communities, we emphasize that the total elimination of POPs and SCCPs. I respectfully urge you to take immediate action to protect our health and well-being, our lands and territories globally.

Taikku, (Thank you)