

INTERNATIONAL POLLUTANTS ELIMINATION NETWORK (IPEN) ANNUAL REPORT 2024



A MESSAGE FROM IPEN'S CO-CHAIRS

Dear Friends and Colleagues of the IPEN Global Network:

As IPEN Co-chairs, we offer our best wishes and recognize your valuable work toward healthy, safe environments for all. We are thankful for your connection to IPEN.

Like all global organizations, IPEN is influenced by a wide range of global changes. Over the past year, numerous events have affected our work. As the global situation evolves, there are significant challenges for all organizations working for positive change. Threats to democracy, barriers to civil and human rights, and volatile global relationships are all on the rise. Yet through it all, IPEN persistently succeeds in paving pathways for positive change.



Among other successes, in 2024 IPEN's work resulted in:

- Several chemicals and chemical groups advanced for Stockholm Convention listings for global elimination, including the pesticide chlorpyrifos, the plastic chemical group medium-chain chlorinated paraffins, the PFAS “forever chemicals” group long-chain perfluorocarboxylic acids, and brominated dioxins, hazardous chemicals that come from burning plastics.
- Significant progress was made toward a meaningful Plastics Treaty, with many delegations now echoing IPEN's call for a Treaty that protects human health and includes obligations to eliminate harmful chemicals.
- Bringing attention to the crisis in the Arctic from plastics, chemicals, and climate change, our report in collaboration with Alaska Community Action on Toxics and Arctic Indigenous Peoples released at the Plastics Treaty negotiations called for a strong Treaty that protects Native lands, cultures, health and human rights, and Peoples.
- Raising greater attention to the everyday threats from exposures to harmful chemicals in plastics, our studies documented high levels of exposures to plastic waste workers and high-ranking UN officials, with coverage of our work in the New York Times and other media.
- Regulations banning lead paint were adopted or advanced in more than thirty countries;
- Following the 2023 adoption of a new Global Framework on Chemicals and the creation of the Global Alliance on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs), in 2024 IPEN contributed two key science reports to advance the goals of eliminating HHPs by 2035 and to address toxic plastics: a report on work by IPEN member groups in 43 countries to expose threats from HHPs and a comprehensive report on EDCs with the Endocrine Society, with sections on EDC exposures from pesticides and plastics.

A MESSAGE FROM IPEN'S CO-CHAIRS, CONTINUED

Additionally, much of our work focuses on nurturing our members' efforts for national and global change. In 2024, our members worked on highly hazardous pesticides, refuse derived fuel, toxic plastic recycling, and many other topics. IPEN also continued to build strategic partnerships, including with international organizations who focus on health, labor, women's rights, and agriculture, and through the initiation of a planning group to work toward strategies for transitioning away from the petrochemical industry's harmful operations.



Despite the regional and global challenges that erupted in 2024, IPEN remained focused on our mission: a toxics-free future for all. While there remain significant obstacles as we head into 2025, there are numerous signs of movement toward this goal on the global scale. The Plastics Treaty negotiations represent an opportunity for reducing threats from toxic plastics. The new Global Framework on Chemicals will provide many pathways to safer alternatives to harmful chemicals, including a global goal to end the use of the most hazardous pesticides. There is also renewed attention to threats from lead poisoning and a new human rights-based approach to ending health threats from mercury.

IPEN continues to see and provide positive results toward a healthier future. As we continue our work in 2025 and beyond, IPEN is poised to remain a key influential global network for positive change.

In unity, friendship, and solidarity for the work ahead,

Pamela K. Miller *Yuyun*

Pam and Yuyun
IPEN Co-Chairs

2024 HIGHLIGHTS: PLASTICS, PESTICIDES, AND LEAD PAINT - IPEN'S WORK OVER MORE THAN TWO DECADES

In 2024, IPEN moved the needle on several topics that we have worked on for more than twenty years. In three of these areas, our work over the decades is helping to create new opportunities for a safer, toxics-free future.



TAKING ON TOXIC PLASTICS

Since the inception of the Plastics Treaty, IPEN has been a leading civil society voice calling for controls on toxic chemicals, reducing overproduction, and an agreement focused on protecting human health. IPEN has worked on exposing the health threats posed by plastic for years, which we made evident with the launch of our interactive map, a global dataset showcasing over two decades of IPEN plastic and toxics research by our network in 85 countries.

By the end of 2024, the Treaty text included options for articles that would provide controls on toxic chemicals and on addressing plastic. It is notable that earlier in the year, IPEN's key issue, regulating toxic plastic chemicals, was one of the few control measures that governments agreed should be discussed prior to the year-end negotiations.

At these final talks of 2024, our [two groundbreaking studies](#) on the exposures from harmful chemicals in plastics faced by plastic waste and recycling workers, the general public, and high-ranking UN officials were featured in a [New York Times story](#) and other media, as a reminder to delegates of the human health costs of toxic plastics. As further negotiations are planned for 2025, IPEN's work has served as a strong reminder of the need for a Treaty focused on health and the right to healthy environments by addressing the entirety of the plastics life cycle, including upstream controls on reducing plastic production and eliminating harmful plastic chemicals.





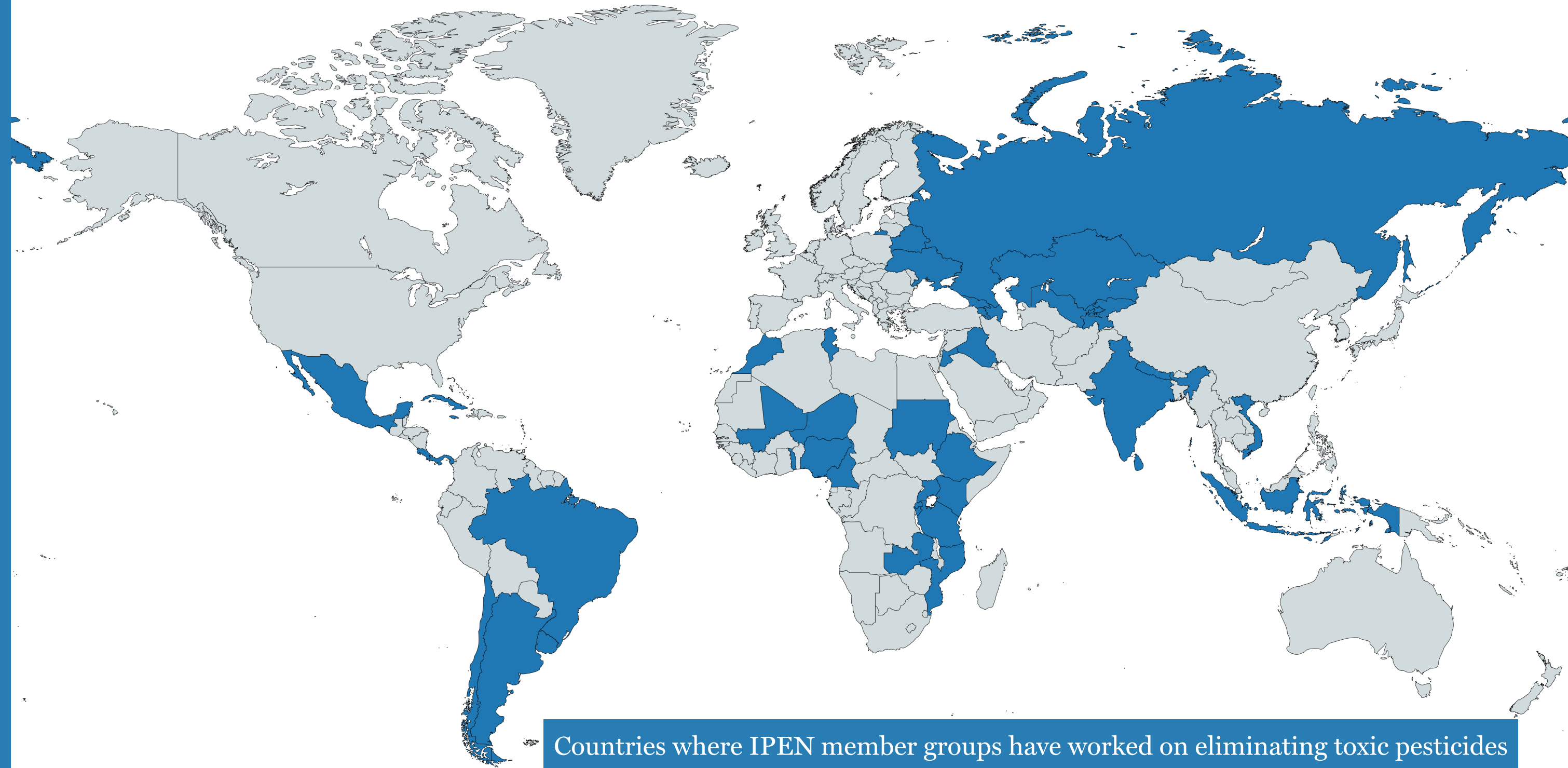
ELIMINATING HIGHLY HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES

In 2024, IPEN members' participation at UNEA-6 helped secure a resolution supporting the global elimination of highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) by 2035. This achievement followed our engagement in 2023 that contributed to the historic adoption of the Global Framework on Chemicals and the creation of the Global Alliance on Highly Hazardous Pesticides, calling for the same goal. At UNEA-6, our work included sharing [years of data](#) from IPEN members' work in dozens of countries to expose threats from HHPs.

We also continued to work on eliminating HHPs by successfully advocating for the pesticide chlorpyrifos to advance to the 2025 Stockholm Convention for a decision toward a global ban on this HHP. Throughout the year, we supported local awareness campaigns on threats from chlorpyrifos by IPEN members in 12 countries, including in Nepal where CEPHED's campaign resulted in a [national ban](#) on chlorpyrifos, phorate, and paraquat.

ENDING THREATS FROM HIGHLY HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES

- **Research:** since 2007, IPEN member groups have conducted 83 research projects in 43 countries on HHPs
- **Regulation:** new policies developed in Mexico, India, Nepal, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda with many more countries developing new rules
- **Ongoing work:** double-standards around HHPs remain: 100s of HHPs banned in the US and EU are still produced and sold to dozens of low- and middle-income countries

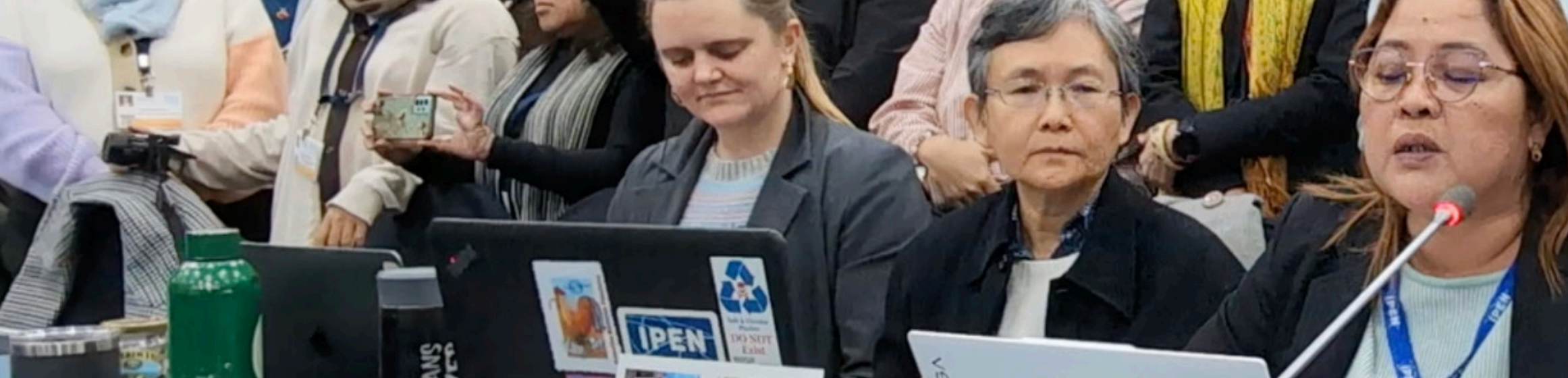


MOVING TO END LEAD PAINT

IPEN has advocated for a global end to production and sales of lead paint since 2007, and in 2024, our work prompted new lead paint regulations adopted or in development in more than thirty countries. Our work with the WHO and UNEP for the annual International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action saw participation by more than 60 IPEN member groups in 38 countries. During the week of action, we released a new report highlighting the double standards of [lead chromate exports](#) from countries that have banned lead paint but continue producing and exporting this key ingredient used to make lead paint.

In 2024, IPEN also joined the USAID – UNICEF Partnership for a Lead-Free Future as a founding member. Launched in September, the Partnership aims to mobilize funding to reduce lead exposure. We also continued to work with small and medium-size paint makers to eliminate lead paint, with four paint manufacturers in the Philippines obtaining Lead Safe Paint® certifications (an IPEN-developed program).





2024 POLICY HIGHLIGHTS: REDUCING AND ELIMINATING THE WORLD'S MOST HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS

In early 2025, nations will convene for the next meeting on the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (i.e., Conferences of Parties to the BRS Conventions, or BRS COP) to negotiate on new chemical regulations. In preparation, IPEN spent much of 2024 building momentum for governments to support a decision through the Stockholm Convention to eliminate the production and use of the highly hazardous pesticide chlorpyrifos and two toxic chemical groups: medium-chain chlorinated paraffins, which are frequently used in plastics, and long-chain PFCAs, which are types of PFAS “forever chemicals.”

Central to the process of moving these chemicals forward for consideration at the BRS COP is a recommendation from the POPs Review Committee (POPRC). IPEN has long provided scientific and technical information at this expert meeting and continued to participate at POPRC in 2024. Last year, we provided technical analyses and delivered several interventions in support of eliminating these toxic chemicals under consideration and rejecting blanket exemptions (in recognition that they are an industry ploy to shirk regulation).

We also looked further ahead to the 2027 BRS COP to build support and evidence for a ban on brominated dioxins and dibenzofurans, highly toxic chemicals that are known to be formed, for example, when plastics containing brominated flame retardants are burned or recycled. Brominated dioxins and dibenzofurans can harm brain development, fetal development, the immune system, and increase cancer risk. In 2024, the POPs Review Committee agreed that these chemicals meet all the screening criteria, and they are now on track for listing at the Conference of the Parties in 2027. Once listed, Parties to the Convention must take measures to minimize and ultimately eliminate releases of these chemicals. IPEN has produced original research on the threats to health and the environment from brominated dioxins and dibenzofurans for decades, and we will continue to advocate for their listing through the Stockholm Convention process.

LOCAL TO GLOBAL: MAKING THE CASE FOR CHLORPYRIFOS ELIMINATION

Key to IPEN's strategy to foster global political will for new toxic chemical bans at the Stockholm Convention is cultivating support for policy at the country-level. IPEN collaborated with its Participating Organizations (POs) in 12 countries¹ to raise awareness on their countries' use of chlorpyrifos despite it being known to harm children's brain development.



THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF EXPOSURE TO CHLORPYRIFOS

The 12 NGOs spread the message to media, government officials, farmers, and other audiences. Some activities and results included:

- RAPAL Costa Rica published an HHPs action plan, a report on alternatives to chlorpyrifos, and held an informational webinar. Consequently, the National Academy of Sciences of Costa Rica invited RAPAL to present at a high-level forum on HHPs where government officials proposed prohibitions on HHPs.
- Chemical Safety Agency in Ukraine issued letters of appeal to their relevant agencies, leading to meetings with government representatives on the status of chlorpyrifos use and its possible addition to the Stockholm Convention at the next BRS COP in 2025.
- Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED) in Nepal combined a media push with frequent visits to officials from agricultural and environmental agencies to share data and express concerns about chlorpyrifos. This prompted the government of Nepal to form a technical review committee which reviewed the science and banned chlorpyrifos and two additional HHPs, phorate and paraquat.

Our POs' activities provided evidence and demonstrated the widespread support for the need to advance chlorpyrifos through the Stockholm Convention toward a global ban on this dangerous pesticide. policy at the country-level. IPEN collaborated with its Participating Organizations (POs) in 12 countries¹ to raise awareness on their countries' use of chlorpyrifos despite it being known to harm children's brain development.

ELIMINATING LEAD PAINT

A KEY STEP TOWARD GLOBAL ELIMINATION OF LEAD PAINT

In 2023, IPEN launched its campaign to list lead chromates, the main lead ingredient in lead paint, under the Rotterdam Convention—providing guidelines for nations on how to prepare a Rotterdam Convention notification to nominate the compound. Our [2024 analysis](#) indicates that the EU and many countries which have banned lead chromates domestically are nevertheless exporting them to other countries; between 2020-2022, EU exports of lead chromates were sent to between 43-48 countries, including between 36-39 countries that have banned or restricted lead paint.

By listing lead chromate, the Convention would help end global exports of lead paint and strengthen countries' abilities to enforce their national lead paint laws by preventing exports of lead chromates and paints containing them to countries that have not consented to receive them. In 2024, this campaign bore fruit with Cameroon and Morocco submitting Notifications to the Rotterdam Convention—a vital step toward global regulatory action to finally eliminate lead paint to protect children's health.

IPEN
for a toxics-free future

Не существует безопасных уровней воздействия свинца. Токсичный свинец снижает IQ детей и негативно влияет на их поведенческое развитие.

#Запретитесвинецвкраске

Закончите работу,
#Запретитесвинецвкраске, чтобы
защитить здоровье детей!
© IPEN for a Toxics-Free Future



IPEN
for a toxics-free future

There are no safe levels of lead exposure.

Toxic lead lowers children's IQ and adversely affects children's behavioral development.
#BanLeadPaint

Finish the Job. #BanLeadPaint
to Protect Children's Health!
© IPEN for a Toxics-Free Future



IPEN
for a toxics-free future

ليس هناك مستويات آمنة للتعرض إلى الرصاص حيث يخفض الرصاص السام من معدلات الذكاء لدى الأطفال ويؤثر سلباً على تطور سلوكهم.
#لنحذرطلاءالرصاص

انجز العمل، لنحذر طلاء الرصاص كي نحمي صحة أطفالنا!
© IPEN for a Toxics-Free Future



COUNTRIES ACT ON LEAD PAINT WITH MAJOR VICTORIES IN AFRICA

At the national level, we welcomed the adoption of new lead paint regulations in South Africa and Nigeria and the advancement of regulations in nearly 30 countries globally. There was particularly widespread change in West Africa following the adoption of a lead paint ban by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). IPEN Participating Organizations engaged with ECOWAS in developing their regulation, and IPEN's lead paint campaign staff worked with ECOWAS to ensure their standard conformed to global norms.

IPENERS WORK TO PROTECT THEIR COMMUNITIES FROM LEAD POISONING



ILPPWA 2024

**BRIGHT FUTURES BEGIN LEAD-FREE:
QC KIDS AND COMMUNITY TAKE
PART IN GLOBAL ACTION AGAINST
LEAD POISONING**

   @bantoxics

BANTOXICS

www.bantoxics.org

IPEN partnered with our POs Centre de Recherche et d'Education pour le Développement (CREPD) in Cameroon and AGENDA in Tanzania to release reports on the [lead content of paints sold in Cameroon](#) and [Tanzania](#). IPEN also worked with Nexus3 to release a study on the [blood lead levels of workers in paint factories in Indonesia](#) showing that workers in paint factories that continue to make lead paint are at much greater risk for cancer and other serious health conditions.

For International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, our network mobilized in force to urge governments to “Finish the Job: Ban Lead Paint to Protect Children’s Health.” 62 Participating Organizations across 38 countries engaged in this global campaign.

Some NGOs, such as the People to People Volunteers in Sri Lanka, Caribbean Poison Information Network (CARPIN) in Jamaica, and Groupe d'Action pour la Promotion et la Protection de la Flore et la Faune (ONG-GAPROFFA) in Benin, held consumer education workshops in local communities and schools. The Ruzgar Ecological Society in Azerbaijan and the Young Volunteers for the Environment in The Gambia among others chose to engage officials from relevant national authorities like the Ministries of Environment, Health, and Trade to discuss lead paint legislation. Other IPENers engaged with the paint industry: the Land and Human Advocate Progress in Jordan reached out to the paint industry to discuss lead-safe alternatives, and in the Philippines, IPEN and EcoWaste Coalition worked with the Philippine Paint and Coatings Association on a public notice to retailers and consumers identifying 150 foreign-sourced products that violate the Philippines national lead paint regulations. Still more NGOs, such as Asociación Colnodo in Colombia and Association d'Education Environnementale pour les Futures Générations (AEEFG) in Tunisia, ran social media campaigns to drum up awareness within their networks to build public support for urgent action on children’s health.

REDUCING AND ELIMINATING MERCURY POLLUTION

FROM CITIZEN SCIENCE TO REGULATORY ACTION

After testing locally purchased cosmetics for mercury, IPEN Participating Organizations [EARTH - Thailand and EcoWaste Coalition in the Philippines](#) won successful product bans by coordinating appeals to the Thai FDA to take regulatory action against 12 mercury-containing skincare cosmetics produced in Thailand and exported to the Philippines. A [2022 review](#) found that cosmetics containing mercury (often skin whitening creams) put consumers at risk for high mercury exposures and the WHO [has warned](#) that mercury in cosmetics is ultimately released into the environment where it can cause widespread contamination.

To gather evidence on the health harms of mercury use in small-scale gold mining, the largest source of mercury pollution, in time for the 2025 meeting of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, IPEN partnered with Indigenous-led organizations in Latin America to measure mercury body burden in the hair of women in Indigenous communities near gold mining operations. We expect to release the report in spring 2025, ahead of the Minamata meetings later next year.



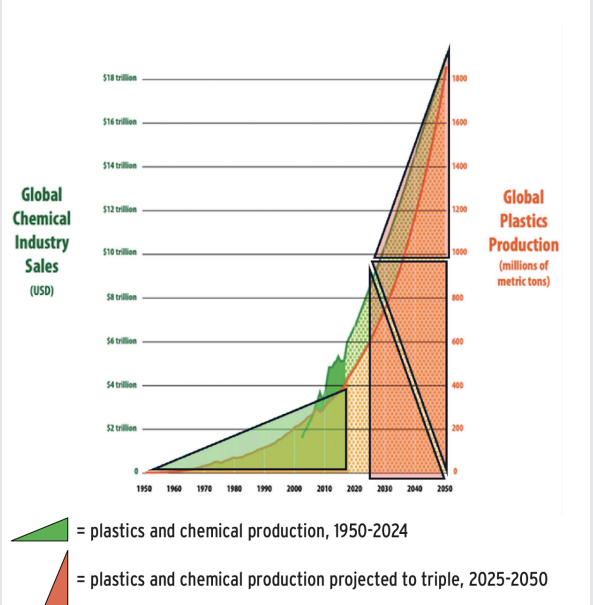


IPEN members in Busan, South Korea attending the Plastics Treaty INC5 meeting.

ADVANCING STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

THE PLASTICS TREATY IS A GLOBAL HEALTH AGREEMENT

By the end of 2024, it was clear that IPEN’s drive to shift the framing of the Plastics Treaty to that of a global health agreement addressing toxic plastic chemicals had succeeded. Even as negotiations extend into 2025 and remain contentious, the majority of countries have now set the terms of debate within IPEN’s framework of protecting human health and tackling plastics as materials made of fossil fuels and chemicals. This is a culmination of IPEN’s multi-year strategic campaign to mainstream understanding of toxic plastic chemicals and how the full life cycle of plastics must be addressed if the Treaty is to meaningfully protect health and the environment.



THE PLASTICS TREATY IS A GLOBAL HEALTH AGREEMENT, CONTINUED

Before the Treaty's formal inception at the 2022 UN Environment Assembly meeting (UNEA), IPEN was already carving a path for this work, drawing on our decades of experience navigating multilateral environmental agreements to begin habituating delegates to the link between chemical policy and plastics. Well before the broader climate change discourse turned its attention to the problem of plastics, IPEN has dedicated over 25 years of work to helping policymakers understand the connections between the invisible hazards of toxic chemicals and visible plastic waste and how petrochemicals (from which plastics are made) intersect with climate change, public health, and the environment. By the close of the 2022 UNEA meeting, with help from IPEN's advocacy and key policy points, the Assembly adopted a mandate for a Plastics Treaty founded on protecting human health and the environment.

But our work did not stop there. At the start of the Treaty talks in late 2022, very few countries included health or chemicals in their submissions. But following 18 months of IPEN's advocacy, by 2024, a large majority of countries were calling for chemical controls and asserting the need to protect health and the environment—a substantial shift from the original narrow view held by many governments of merely cleaning up plastic waste floating in the oceans.

With much of the year's global attention focused on the progress of the Plastics Treaty at the fourth and fifth round of Treaty negotiations (i.e., INC-4 and INC-5), IPEN has continued to take leadership in pushing the conversation on plastics upstream from waste management to a holistic framework tackling the plastic life cycle and raising public understanding of plastics as materials composed of fossil fuels and chemicals. IPEN and its network engage with policymakers at the national, regional, and global levels, and we have frequently hosted informational webinars with a number of governments as featured speakers, including the EU and China. By the time negotiations wrapped for the year, a substantial number of delegations echoed IPEN's goal for the Plastics Treaty at INC-5 when Mexico spoke on behalf of 95 countries, demanding a Treaty that protects human health and includes legally binding obligations to eliminate harmful chemicals.

At INC-4, we released our [FAQs on Plastics](#) to educate delegates on the topics they were most often raising and supported the attendance of 43 POs from 34 countries to contribute to the negotiations and network with delegates. We also released a [report](#), [video](#), and [podcast](#) on the threat to the Arctic from plastics, which linked climate change, plastic chemicals, and fossil fuels. This report featured Arctic Indigenous leaders' perspectives, and we co-hosted a [press briefing](#) at INC-4 that brought together Indigenous leaders from Canada, Alaska, and the contiguous United States to discuss their experiences.



THE PLASTICS TREATY IS A GLOBAL HEALTH AGREEMENT, CONTINUED

In the run-up to INC-5, IPEN co-convened a government event on health and chemicals in the Treaty with the governments of Switzerland and the Philippines along with WHO representatives where speakers called for greater participation of health officials in the negotiations. This event was exceptionally successful, as it elevated the importance of health and WHO as a critical voice in the Plastics Treaty pre- INC-5. In addition, the event resulted in an informal group of countries and stakeholders focused on public health who contributed to a [key WHO submission to the INC-5 Plastics Treaty](#), advancing IPEN's campaign defining the Plastics Treaty as a global health agreement.

Over 70 IPENers from 40 countries attended INC-5 to join in advocating for a meaningful Treaty and to connect with their delegates to disseminate our research and analyses. During the week, we released [two groundbreaking studies](#): one in partnership with EARTH, an IPEN PO from Thailand, and another featuring high-ranking UN officials, including Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Together, the studies showed that workers in all settings face exposures to harmful chemicals from plastics, with plastic waste and recycling workers facing greater exposures. It also exposed the widespread exposure of the general public to phthalates, a hazardous group of plastic chemicals. Our press briefing at INC-5 highlighted the studies and hosted speakers from the UN High Commissioner's office, WHO, and Fiji. The studies were featured in a [New York Times story](#) and other media, as a reminder to delegates of the human health costs of toxic plastics.



At INC-5, IPEN also stepped-up calls to avoid flawed, industry-driven measures with a series of reports, analyses, and media coverage: pointing out flaws in “[compromise solutions](#),” [debunking chemical recycling statistics perpetuated by industry](#) (our initial critique of chemical recycling also continues to draw [media coverage](#)), and emphasizing the [necessity of tackling production and the full life cycle of plastics](#) to adequately address toxic chemicals and protect health.

As concerns grew that the INC-5 negotiations could lead to a weakened agreement without protections from toxic plastic chemicals or production controls, IPEN held a well-attended [press event](#) during the talks calling on delegates to hold the line on centering protection of human health. Speakers included IPEN Co-Chairs Yuyun Ismawati and Pamela Miller and IPEN leaders from Ethiopia and the Philippines. IPEN's work served as a strong reminder of the need for a Treaty focused on health and the right to healthy environments, and we ultimately saw more than 100 countries come together toward the end of the negotiations to define their red lines for a meaningful Treaty, including key upstream controls on reducing plastic production and eliminating harmful plastic chemicals.

As the INC concluded, some media reports described the INC as a failure, but even prior to the meetings IPEN noted that the likely outcome would be a call for further deliberations. IPEN is uniquely situated in recognizing and preparing for the long road ahead for continued negotiations and the work needed after the Plastics Treaty is adopted. We are already anticipating the need to move national regulations on plastics via controls on POPs and EDCs in plastics, as our previous experience with other global chemical treaties shows the need to maintain pressure for lasting global policy change.



Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop
an international legally binding instrument on plastic
pollution, including in the marine environment



Our Health is in Your Hands
Ban Toxic Chemicals in Plastics





NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS ON PLASTIC WASTE

A cornerstone of IPEN's work is supporting our POs to generate data and educate their communities about toxic chemicals. In addition to pesticide awareness campaigns, capitalizing on heightened attention during the Plastic Treaty negotiations, IPENers ran an additional 21 campaigns on toxic plastic waste and current waste management issues—singling out the problems with recycling plastic and using it as fuel, which really means burning hazardous waste.

- 11 campaigns exposing toxic chemicals in [recycled plastic pellets](#), coinciding with INC-4, emphasized our message that plastic recycling will not solve the plastic crisis. Some activities and results included:
 - Social media campaigns and a press conference by Toxics Link in India that led to [several news articles](#).
 - Centre for Earth Works in Nigeria convened a press briefing with the National Union of Journalists, which [resulted in several articles](#) and a request from government to learn more about their findings.
 - Consumers' Association Penang (CAP) in [Malaysia](#) held three meetings with their national delegation to the Plastics Treaty and issued [press statements](#) on their findings, generating 13 news articles in many outlets, such as the [New Straits Times](#), [Malay Mail](#), and others.
- 10 POs researched and published situation reports on refuse derived fuel (RDF) in their countries³ that were shared during INC-5. Overall, [the reports](#) demonstrated how RDF hides the plastic waste trade and demonstrated that burning hazardous plastic waste is just another way to burn fossil fuels, given that plastics are made from oil and petrochemicals.

Additionally, prompted by IPEN's previous [collective investigation](#) and media efforts [exposing Australia's exports of toxic plastic waste fuel](#), the Australian government reversed its position on RDF by now classifying RDF as hazardous waste.

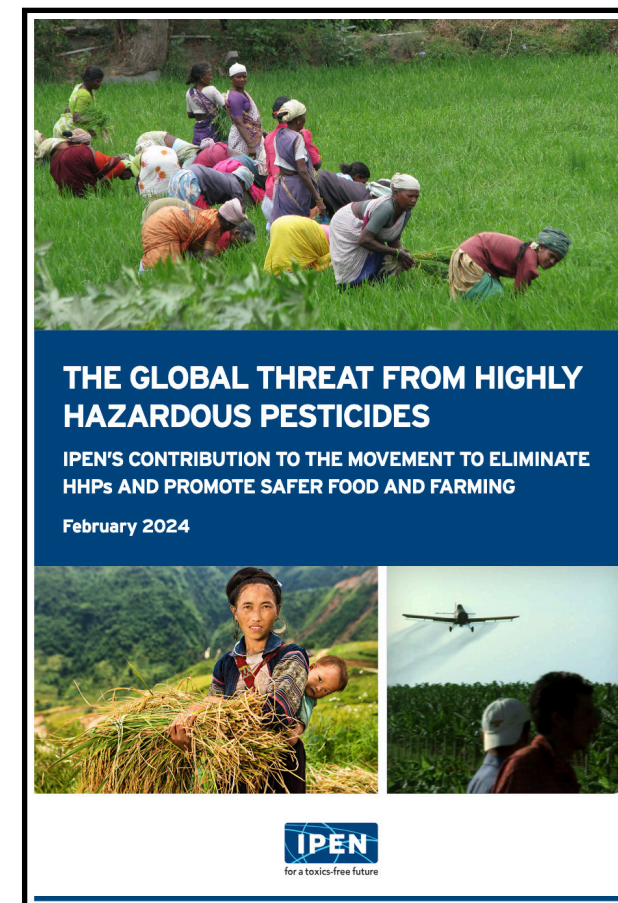
GLOBAL FRAMEWORK ON CHEMICALS CREATES NEW MOMENTUM ON PESTICIDE ACTION



In 2023, seven years of IPEN campaigning came to fruition with the adoption of a new UN Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC). As the GFC began taking shape in 2024, IPEN has been deeply engaged in driving its implementation; IPEN's Science Advisor serves as a Public Interest Groups representative on the GFC Bureau helping to shape its global agenda, and IPEN has begun mobilizing its network and launching multi-sectoral alliances with key partners for local campaigns.

One of the key initial actions of the GFC was the creation of a Global Alliance on HHPs (a policy body that IPEN and PAN [called for in 2015](#)) to eliminate HHPs by 2035. The UN Environment Assembly further signaled that tackling HHPs would be an international priority when it passed a [formal commitment](#) to phase out HHPs during its 2024 meeting. IPEN helped to secure this commitment with our major [report](#) detailing 83 HHP projects by IPEN NGOs in 43 countries, showing how in some countries, almost 70% of pesticides allowed for use are HHPs and that there is a general lack of awareness of the harms of HHPs or availability of safe alternatives in many low- and middle-income countries.

With new international willingness to address HHPs, IPEN and its POs are poised to leverage the GFC and UNEA deadline to strengthen our advocacy to ban HHPs in the coming years.



IPEN Science Advisors and experts from our Participating Organizations produce original research, often providing the only data of its kind on toxic threats to health and the environment. In many cases, the work is published in scientific and academic journals, adding to the scientific knowledge base on environmental contamination and chemical exposures. Over the past few years, the following list includes just some of the studies published by IPEN staff and members.

[CHEMICAL SIMPLIFICATION AND TRACKING IN PLASTICS](#)

Published in *Science*

This commentary in the prestigious journal argues that recycling cannot help resolve the plastics crisis until we limit the use of toxic chemicals in plastics.

[A DATASET OF ORGANIC POLLUTANTS IDENTIFIED AND QUANTIFIED IN RECYCLED POLYETHYLENE PELLETS](#)

Published in *Data in Brief*

An analysis of plastic pellets collected by IPEN members in 23 countries found 491 chemicals present in the plastics, including pesticides, pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals, and plastic additives.

[ADDRESSING THE TOXIC CHEMICALS PROBLEM IN PLASTICS](#)

Published in *Cambridge Prisms: Plastics*

This review shows that since the chemical composition of plastics wastes is largely unknown, and many plastics chemicals are hazardous, they inherently hinder safe plastic recycling.

[TOXIC CONTAMINATION CAUSED BY PLASTIC WASTE IN COUNTRIES OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH](#)

Published in *Plastic Waste Trade* (book), Springer Nature

This book chapter discusses how the trade in plastic waste from wealthier nations to developing countries poses threats to health and the environment.

ORIGINAL RESEARCH TOWARD A TOXICS-FREE FUTURE

[PBDES AND DECHLORANE PLUS CONTAMINATION IN COMMUNITY E-WASTE RECYCLING: ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS IN NORTHEASTERN THAILAND](#)

Published in *Toxicology*

This study shows high concentrations of toxic plastic chemicals in and around e-waste disposal sites, posing health threats to workers and the surrounding communities.

[IMPACTS OF SPILLED DEBRIS FROM THE X-PRESS PEARL DISASTER IN SRI LANKA ON MARINE PLANKTON](#)

Published in *Environmental Research*

An analysis of plastic debris from the 2021 X-Press Pearl shipping disaster showed potential impacts on the marine food chain from toxic plastic chemicals.

[GLOBAL SURVEY OF DIOXIN- AND THYROID HORMONE-LIKE ACTIVITIES IN CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND TOYS](#)

Published in *Environment International*

This study shows that children can be exposed to dioxin-like compounds from recycled plastic toys, noting that limits for POPs in toys should be strengthened to protect children's health and the environment.

NURTURING CAPACITY AND PARTNERING TO STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND THE GLOBAL TOXICS-FREE MOVEMENT

IPEN BY THE NUMBERS

IPEN welcomed 13 NGOs to the network as new Participating Organizations; by year-end, we numbered 676 Participating Organizations across 131 countries. Working together to call national attention to local issues on hazardous chemicals, pesticides, plastics, and waste, IPEN and its Participating Organizations collaborated on 60 projects in 38 countries.

To magnify the impact of our network's local advocacy and research beyond borders, IPEN supported 95 IPENers from 35 countries to attend international policy meetings and speak with their delegates.

Beyond meetings and projects, we also met and shared information virtually—hosting 38 webinars, 14 of which had simultaneous translation, reaching over 2000 participants. IPEN released over 30 new publications, studies, analyses, and briefs, and we continued to translate key reports to aid in global information sharing, with over 50 documents translated into the six UN working languages or other local languages as needed.

Over 15 years, IPEN invested \$10M USD on lead paint elimination efforts, resulting in 30+ countries adopting new regulations.

IPEN WOMEN'S CAUCUS AND YOUTH CAUCUS

The IPEN Women's Caucus convened twice this year at the Plastic Treaty INCs-4 and -5 to share local developments from its members who are shining a light on the gendered health threats from toxic chemicals in their countries. Elsewhere, the Women's Caucus also continued growing its [blog series](#), highlighting women's perspectives in Kenya, Jamaica, South Korea, Egypt, and many others. The Women's Caucus also co-organized a virtual consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights, Dr Marcos A. Orellana, to share input and worked with IPEN at large to provide a submission to the Global Framework on Chemicals for the development of a Gender Action Plan.

IPEN's budding Youth Caucus spent 2024 further formalizing its organization of work through continued newsletters and meetings. We also co-convened a [webinar](#) on the intergenerational impacts of plastic pollution with the Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP with Youth Caucus Co-Chair Sonia Buftheim as a panelist, and Co-Chair Stanley Okwara represented youth perspectives for the toxic chemicals in a recycled pellets campaign in Nigeria.

FOSTERING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

IPEN catalyzed a multi-sectoral Global Outreach Group to coordinate global efforts to capitalize on the new momentum from the launch of the Global Framework on Chemicals to address chemicals. IPEN's Global Outreach Group for the GFC is bringing together organizations with thousands of members globally from the health sector, labor, agriculture, and women's rights groups. The Global Outreach Group convened for the first time in late 2024 to begin strategizing on raising awareness with our respective networks on the potential of the GFC and planning joint projects to promote national policies on chemical and waste issues.

Other strategic collaborations spearheaded by IPEN include our continued work with the researchers who co-authored studies showing that plastics and chemicals have exceeded [the “planetary boundaries” for ecosystem sustainability](#). Together with other leaders in the field, IPEN launched a Petrochemical Transition Strategy Panel to envision safer alternatives to fossil fuel dependency. We also worked with the researchers and medical professionals from [Project TENDR](#) on links between chemical exposure and children's health and updated the [report on the state of the science on EDCs](#) with the Endocrine Society. We also contributed to the UNEA Science to Policy (Science-Policy) Panel discussions, calling for policies to uphold science, promote transparency, and avoid conflicts of interests. These collaborations with scientists and academics further the toxics-free movement by creating spaces where these experts can engage in policy deliberations and bring their science to bear in policy development.



IPEN ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

Yuyun Ismawati from Indonesia was elected as new IPEN Co-Chair as Tadesse Amera from Ethiopia completed his two three-year terms as Co-Chair. Peter Pierrou from Sweden replaced Frida Hök as Executive Committee member.



Welcome Yuyun! Our thanks to Tadesse for his years of service as IPEN Co-chair.

CHANGING THE NARRATIVE, MOBILIZING VOICES: COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH, AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

IPEN strengthened its media presence throughout the year, in particular, becoming a go-to source for understanding the Plastics Treaty negotiations.

Select earned media coverage include:

At INC-4:

- Associated Press: [Global Plastic Pollution Treaty Talks Hit Critical Stage in Canada](#) and [At Plastic Treaty Talks in Canada, Sharp Disagreements on Whether to Limit Plastic Production](#)
- Reuters: [As Plastics Treaty Talks Open, Countries More Divided than Ever](#)
- Our press briefing with Indigenous leaders on the [Arctic's Plastic Crisis](#) garnered significant coverage from Canada's [National Observer](#), [Alaska Public Media](#), [Inside Climate News](#), and op-eds in the [Anchorage Daily News](#), and [Environmental Health News](#).



CHANGING THE NARRATIVE, MOBILIZING VOICES, CONTINUED

At INC-5:

- Associated Press: [Negotiators Fail to Reach an Agreement on a Plastic Pollution Treaty. Talks to Resume Next Year](#) and a [video on the closed-door Intersessional Meeting](#) before INC-5.
- Bloomberg: [Interview segment](#) for Bloomberg News and [Plastics Failure is a Canary in the Climate Coalmine](#) in Bloomberg Opinion.
- Deutsche Welles: [Interview with IPEN Co-Chair Yuyun Ismawati](#)
- France 24: [Plastic pollution talks: the key sticking points](#)
- The Independent: [Vested Interests and a Flawed System: Why the Talks to Agree Historic Treaty Against Plastic Pollution Collapsed](#)
- The New York Times: [As Plastic Talks Continue, a Reminder of What We're All Exposed To](#)
- NPR: [Parsing the Global Plastic Pollution Problem](#)
- Wall Street Journal: [Plastics Treaty Negotiators Meet in Busan in Hopes of Reaching Compromise](#)



Why are plastic industry lobbyists at the UN talks on plastic pollution in South Korea? | DW News



IPEN was also frequently tapped by reporters for expert commentary on chemical issues, such as on [PCBs](#) and [PFAS](#) for The Guardian, on [PVC for Vogue](#), and on [mercury](#) and [recycled bottles](#) for The New York Times.

Around the world, our network's advocacy drummed up media on national chemical concerns. Some examples across the globe include:

- ESDO and IPEN's report on [PFAS contamination from Bangladesh's textile industry](#) was covered by [The Guardian](#).
- Uruguay's [La Diaria](#) featured an interview with Rapal Uruguay on the hazards of chlorpyrifos.
- Highlights from SRADev Nigeria's press briefing on chlorpyrifos were broadcast on a [national news segment](#).
- AGENDA Tanzania collaborated with the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority (GCLA), the National Environment Management Council (NEMC), and industry partners on a lead paint elimination workshop that was highlighted in a [national news segment](#).
- PAN Ethiopia was interviewed for a [national news segment](#) on Ethiopia's lead paint elimination efforts.
- ECOTON in Indonesia was featured in a [segment](#) on Australia's SBS News about Australia's exports of contaminated paper waste to Indonesia for recycling.





The New York Times

As Plastic Talks Continue, a Reminder of What We're All Exposed To

As international talks continue this week, a dozen U.N. officials reveal scientists tracked their exposure to many chemicals found in plastics.



IPEN's study showing workplace exposures to toxic plastic chemicals among high-ranking UN officials and plastic waste workers drew major media coverage during the Plastics Treaty INC-5 negotiations

CHALLENGES: PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

In 2024, we experienced an escalation of efforts to limit and exclude NGOs from participating and contributing to UNEP-organized policy events, especially in regard to the Plastics Treaty negotiations as they progressed. In a departure from prior norms of transparency, observers were excluded from the intersessional meeting held between INC-4 and INC-5, and several days of negotiations during the week-long INC-5 took place in closed sessions with no reason given for the abrupt change from accepted meeting norms. IPEN has alerted the media to this lack of transparency and continues to pursue discussion with the INC Secretariat and the many countries supportive of civil society participation.



We have also seen increases in industry influence at the Plastics Treaty negotiations, with the number of fossil fuel lobbyists ballooning with each INC: 196 lobbyists were identified at INC-4 and 220 lobbyists registered at INC-5. IPEN partnered with the Center for International Environmental Law to flag this growth, and we continue to counteract the industry's disinformation tactics. This year, IPEN targeted the industry narrative on recycling as a solution and misleading practices like “mass balance” accounting, which would allow plastic producers to claim large amounts of recycled content in new plastic products where very little or even no recycled plastic has been used. Also, at the Science-Policy Panel meetings, we are advocating for a robust conflict of interest policy and strong commitments to transparency.

With Plastics Treaty negotiations set to continue, the slate of international policy meetings continues to grow, and this full schedule is balanced against IPEN's commitment to our network's local research and public outreach. IPEN always seeks to ensure its resources are optimally distributed between supporting POs to attend global policy forums and partnering with POs on national studies and campaigns, but finding the balance in focus remains a moving target.



TOWARD A TOXICS-FREE FUTURE

At the end of 2024, IPEN surveyed its network and began our 2025-2030 strategic planning. Having seen IPEN's framing of the Plastics Treaty as a global health treaty adopted by a majority of countries and our key issue of regulating toxic plastic chemicals being the only control measure to advance throughout the year, IPEN will work to reinforce the public health lens, ensure the measure does not stall, and continue pushing for open participation of civil society. Furthermore, with the new global commitment to eliminating HHPs, IPEN foresees numerous opportunities to make advancements on banning toxic pesticides in the coming years. Relatedly, there is also growing attention to threats from endocrine disrupting chemicals and to the prevalence of PFAS "forever chemicals." Both are topics in which IPEN has amassed significant expertise after many years of research and capacity-building, and we will continue to leverage this to win controls on these globally harmful substances.

With our time-tested strategy of original research, policy expertise, and strategic engagement at the local and global levels, IPEN will continue to be the leading civil society network protecting human health and the environment from toxic chemicals.



for a toxics-free future

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