



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release: Monday May 17, 2004**

### **GLOBAL TOXICS TREATY**

#### **59 Countries ratify legally binding instrument to ban toxics worldwide – Alaska Senators fail to advocate for ratification**

Anchorage (AK) - In May of 2001 the U.S. signed onto the Stockholm Convention, which bans 12 of the world's most dangerous chemicals. On February 17, 2004 the 50th country ratified the convention beginning the 90-day count down towards the treaty going into effect. Although the U.S. signed onto the convention in 2001 the treaty was never ratified through congress, which will leave the U.S. without a seat at the table when discussing future chemicals for the **Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Treaty**.

The Stockholm Convention is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs). POPs are chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in the fatty tissue of living organisms and are toxic to humans and wildlife. POPs circulate globally and can cause damage wherever they travel. In implementing the Convention, Governments will take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of POPs into the environment.

Tribes from all over Alaska submitted resolutions calling for the U.S. to negotiate a strong treaty in 2000. "Today tribes are disappointed to see that although the treaty will go into effect the U.S. is failing to follow through with the commitment they showed in 2001 at the signing of the convention. Our traditional foods are contaminated with these toxic chemicals and it is up to our state representatives to fight for our protection," states Shawna Larson of Alaska Community Action on Toxics.

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On May 17th, Alaska Community Action on Toxics will celebrate the Stockholm Convention entry into force with a **RACHEL CARSON CELEBRATION**. NGOs all over the world will celebrate with activities that raise public awareness about POPs and the Stockholm Convention; that promote Convention ratification in countries that have not yet ratified; and that highlight emerging issues that will be important at the first Stockholm Convention Conference of the Parties (COP1).

**WHAT:** INTERNATIONAL POPS ELIMINATION NETWORK *GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION* and ALASKA'S 6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL RACHEL CARSON CELEBRATION

Update and Call for Action on POPs Treaty

Free Film "Rachel Carson's Silent Spring", PBS Documentary

Community Readings of "Silent Spring" and other works by Carson

**WHEN:** MAY 17<sup>TH</sup> AT 7:00PM

**WHERE:** ANCHORAGE MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND ART  
121 W. 7<sup>TH</sup> AVE., DOWNTOWN ANCHORAGE

**EVENT SPONSORS:** ALASKA COMMUNITY ACTION ON TOXICS, ALASKA WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK, ALASKA YOUTH FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION and STELLER SECONDARY SCHOOL

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