



DDT Levels on Decline, POPs on Rise

[Source: DTE](#)

A recent study reported that since 2004, the insecticide [Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane](#) (DDT) along with 11 other [Persistent Organic Pollutants \(POPs\)](#), has decreased significantly in both **humans and the environment** due to **stringent global regulations**.

- **Other POPs** and replacements for banned lethal POPs with similar properties have increased to **high levels**.
 - POPs are **organic compounds (i.e. carbon-based)** that **resist degradation** by environmental processes such as chemical breakdown, biological processes, and sunlight. They can **remain in the environment for long periods** for decades and centuries.
 - They can cause **cancer, liver damage, reduced fertility**, and higher risk of **asthma** and **thyroid** as they can **disrupt the endocrine system**.
- The **Global Monitoring Plan for POPs** has been implemented by the [UN Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) and funded by the [Global Environment Facility \(GEF\)](#).
- The study was conducted in 42 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific Islands with limited data on POPs to monitor 30 POPs listed under the **Stockholm Convention** as of 2021.
 - [Stockholm Convention \(2001\)](#) is an international environmental treaty effective from 2004 that aims to **eliminate or restrict the production and use of POPs**.
- DDT is the **first modern synthetic insecticide** developed in the 1940s which is a **colourless, tasteless, and odourless** compound.
 - It is still used in some countries (such as **South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe**) for malaria control under strict regulations.

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