1. Title

From Science to Policy – is the Knowledge on Diffuse Pollution by POPs Sufficient to Support Policies

2. Type

Inter-Divisional Symposium

3. Organizer(s) & Convener

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4. Rationale

Pollution of POPs is a global problem and is not restricted to industrial areas. POPs are very stable and consequently can last in the environment for years or decades. Soils play an important role in the global cycling of POPs as they serve as a sink and a source. Although several chemicals have been banned recently or in the last decades, they are still found with significant concentrations in soils and may eventually affect the quality of food and feed. In many cases it happened, that agrarian products were not marketable due to concentrations of POPs exceeding limit values.

There are numerous papers on monitoring and fate of POPs and emerging pollution, which are known in the scientific community, however a comprehensive transfer to policy and decision makers is still lacking.

5. Objectives

The aim of this interdivisional symposium is to aggregate scientifically sound arguments against the proceeding pollution of soils by POPs, and to raise public awareness of clean soils. The key messages of the symposium shall be:
• Identify the main threats and pressures on soil by diffuse pollution
• Which data do politicians need from the science
• Which support does science need from policy.
• How to foster the nexus water – soil – science.
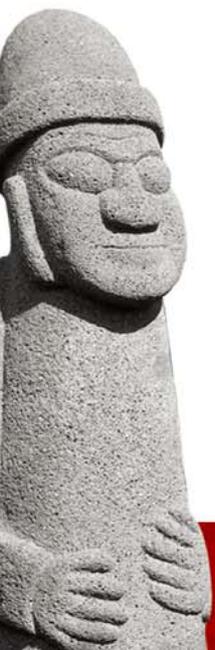
6. Description

The symposium shall discuss the following topics:

•the actual status of pollution by POPs and emerging sources of POPs,

• criteria to prioritize emerging substances in soils, taking into account their production volumes, potential to bio-accumulate and adverse health effects,

• need of co-operative action e.g. on monitoring methodology including technical issues as sampling and analytical methods discuss in view of the existing international guidelines and standards

• the status of assessment strategies of background contamination and identification of local / regional contamination in view of (eco-)toxicological aspects and legal standards

• existing regulations in view of the global problem of diffuse pollution

The symposium is aimed to be interdivisional and will refer to results from soil chemistry, physics and biology, it will consider the chemical pressures on soils by POPs released any kind of human activity, it will understand soil as a non-singular media interlinked with water and air, it will give input to the sustainable use and management of soils. Finally, the symposium will also discuss the need of unpolluted soils to ensure clean food and feed.