

Release of Legacy Persistent Organic Pollutants and Mitigating Their Effects in Downstream Communities

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Abstract : During the period of 1950-1970 persistent organic pollutants such as DDT, dioxin and PCB were released in the atmosphere and distributed through precipitation into glaciers throughout the world. Recent abrupt climate change is increasing the melt rate of these glaciers, introducing the toxins to the watershed. Studies have shown the existence of legacy pollutants in glacial ice, but neither the impact nor quantity of these toxins on downstream populations has been assessed. If these pollutants are released at toxic levels it will be necessary to create a mitigation plan to lower their impact on the affected communities.

Keywords : climate change, adaptation, mitigation, risk management

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