



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Newsletter

Spring 2008

PAN Europe News



Counselling the Ministers

In February 2008, PAN Europe authored two policy briefings aimed at informing the Council of Ministers – now charged with reviewing the Commission's proposed pesticides Regulation.

These documents were translated by network members across the European Union and forwarded to national political representatives. PAN Europe's first analysis argued against the proposal to divide the EU into three zones – within which 'obligatory mutual recognition' would force each member state to authorise all substances approved by all other countries. The second paper aimed to counter industry claims that the elimination of exposure to carcinogenic,

mutagenic, reprotoxic and endocrine disrupting pesticides would impact on agricultural productivity. Our submission helped to confirm the Commission's earlier estimate that just 4.5% of active substances might be affected.

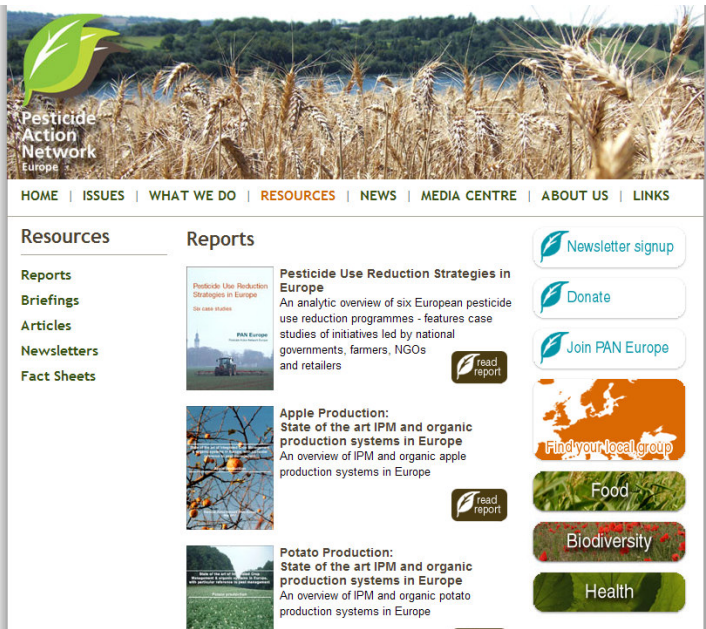
PAN Europe would like to welcome Henriette Christensen – our new Brussels-based Policy Adviser. Henriette joined us in January. Her knowledge and understanding of EU political processes is already proving invaluable.

New look PAN Europe

PAN Europe has a new logo and a new website!

Our new logo was designed by Futerra – the UK's leading sustainability communications agency – whose other clients include Greenpeace, the BBC, Carbon Trust, and the British Council.

PAN Europe's new website can be found at www.pan-europe.info. Of particular interest to network members are the 'Resources' section which provides availability to all of PAN Europe's reports, briefings, articles, newsletters, fact sheets and position papers, and the 'News' section which gives up to date bulletins on what's going on both inside and beyond PAN Europe. The 'Links' page is also useful in



terms of helping you to find essential on-line information resources on all things relating to the world of pesticides. You can also use

our new web tool which enables internet browsers to access the homepages of all PAN Europe network members.

Message in a Bottle

In spring 2008 PAN Europe coordinated an EU-wide analysis of pesticide residues found in wine. Working with MDRGF, Greenpeace Germany and Friends of the Earth Austria (Global 2000), PAN Europe purchased 40 bottles of wine from across the EU and sent them to laboratories to be tested for pesticide residues. The results gained international media coverage making front page news headlines as far away as South Africa.

All 34 conventional wine samples analysed were shown to contain pesticide residues. On average over four different pesticides were detected in each bottle – with one sample containing 10



In Vino Veritas

different residues. Wines found to contain pesticides included three cru class vintages from Bordeaux as well as more affordable wines from France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Portugal, South Africa, Chile, and Australia.

Of the 24 different pesticides identified five are classified as carcinogenic, mutagenic, reprotoxic or endocrine disrupting in the European Union. A further three are suspected carcinogens. Speaking at the PAN Europe press conference held in the European Parliament, Professor Nicolas van Larebeke, an expert on the health impacts of pesticide exposure made clear the dangers associated with pesticide residues in the EU food chain: "In bio-monitoring studies on adults, adolescents, young mothers and children it has been shown that very low doses of mutagenic and endocrine disrupting substances, such as those present in the body of almost every citizen of industrial countries, are indeed associated with adverse health effects". Details of the wine analysis were reported in newspapers



Francois Veillerette, President of MDRGF and Board Member of PAN Europe speaking at the media conference in the European Parliament on 26 March. Background Hiltrud Breyer MEP (Greens/ EFA)

worldwide including; USA Today, International Herald Tribune, Liberation, Bild, Welt, Sueddeutsche Zeitung, Spiegel, Kleine Zeitung, The Daily Mail and The Daily Telegraph, and in radio and television broadcasts in France, Austria, UK and South Africa. A full analysis of the results, together with the PAN Europe press release are available to be downloaded from the PAN Europe website: www.pan-europe.info

Breaking the language barrier...

At the 2007 annual PAN Europe conference held last year in Paris, board members received numerous requests for further translations of PAN Europe's reports and briefings. Since then several documents have been made available in other languages. PAN Europe's 2007 briefing 'Cut Back on Pesticides for Healthier Lives' is now available in Bulgarian, Slovenian and Slovakian.

Also available in Slovakian – and to coincide with the FAO 'Year of the Potato' – is PAN Europe's overview of IPM potato production, 'Potato Production: State of the art IPM and organic production systems in Europe'. PAN Europe's report 'Pesticide Use Reduction Strategies in Europe' is being translated into French – just in time for the French Presidency of the EU, while AWHHE's Armenian IPM manual is now available in English.



Now available in Bulgarian...

News from the Network

Global 2000 campaigns for fair trade, organic pineapples (29 April)

Once seen as an exotic fruit, pineapples are increasingly part of the mainstream European diet. Europe now imports more pineapples than ever before. Here in Austria consumers eat 12 million kg of pineapples every year – three times more than a decade ago.

Almost one third of pineapples exported worldwide are grown in Costa Rica – a country which exports 75% of its entire pineapple harvest. Rising consumer demand has led to rapid growth in the production of Costa Rican pineapples which have become the country's number one non-traditional export.

The growing demand for pineapples holds the potential to drive much needed economic gains in Costa Rica. But sadly those working in the plantations see few of the benefits. Agricultural labourers work a 12 hour day – eating, drinking, urinating and resting in the fields at constant risk of exposure to the sun, the rain and to storms. The average wage is just €0.75. And to avoid paying minimum wages plantation bosses routinely hire workers for just two or three months at a time; thus denying them access to statutory welfare entitlements.

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Costa Rica accounts for one third of global pineapple exports

workers for just two or three months at a time; thus denying them access to statutory welfare entitlements.

In addition to chronic low pay and treacherous working conditions, those working in Costa Rica's pineapple plantations face exposure to hazardous pesticides. During the growing seasons insecticides and fungicides are sprayed onto the crop. After the harvest herbicides are used to control 'weeds'. Workers often spray pesticides without proper safety equipment and with inadequate understanding of the dangers of pesticide exposure.

The expansion of intensive pineapple production in Costa Rica has also brought negative environmental impacts as well as threats to rural livelihoods. Large areas used for traditional agriculture and livestock farming have been replaced with plantations, while illegal deforestation has as trees are cleared to make way for pineapple plantations. Soil erosion, desiccation, disruption of local microclimates, and water pollution have all followed. Communities living near to plantations suffer the additional menace of exposure to agricultural pesticides. In some villages drinking water has been contaminated and villagers report an increasing prevalence of asthma, allergies and nausea. Given the widespread

environmental and labour rights abuses associated with Costa Rican pineapple production, and the role of European consumers in driving increased demand, Global 2000 launched a campaign aimed at promoting support for sustainable pineapple production initiatives.

The NGO published an investigative report aimed at publicising of the negative social and environmental impacts of pineapple production, and called on consumers and retailers to support fair trade, organic pineapple consumption. We told Austrian consumers, 'if you can afford to eat pineapples as a luxury from time to time, you should not do so at the expense of Costa Rican plantation workers and the environment', said Lisa Kernegger, campaigner at Global 2000.

As a result of Global 2000's initiatives on pineapples national supermarket chains were persuaded to expand their selection of products to include fair trade, organic pineapples. 'Since February 2008 not only M-Preis, but also Merkur, BILLA and ADEG, have all carried fair trade organic alternatives. 'By buying fair trade, organic pineapples, Austrians can continue to enjoy eating pineapples whilst providing reasonable economic rewards for Costa Rican plantation workers and at a lower cost to human health and the environment. The message is really getting through.'



French eco activists at one of hundreds of events held in celebration of the third annual Semaine sans Pesticides

MDRGF: 'Semaine sans Pesticides 2008' is biggest ever (31 March)

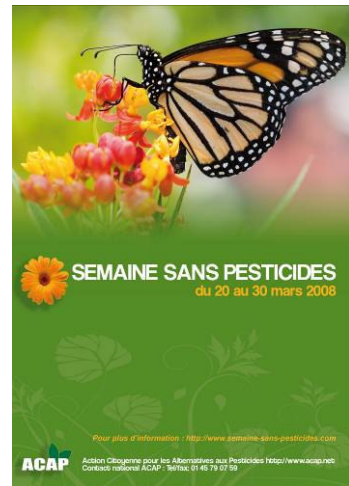
The third and biggest ever 'Semaine sans Pesticides' was held over the last 10 days of March. This year the celebrations encompassed over 400 events across France and Belgium – with coordinated actions also occurring in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Quebec, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, and United Kingdom. In France pesticide campaigners marked the occasion by holding conferences, movie projections, debates, exhibitions, and agricultural training workshops, as well as events in garden centres, farms, markets and schools. A high profile action drew attention to the catastrophic impact of pesticides on French groundwater

resources as activists in two regions of France climbed water towers and dropped banners which read: 'Save Water!'

Semaine sans Pesticides is organised by 'Citizens' Actions for Pesticides Alternatives' (ACAP) – a civil society network initiated by MDRGF in 2004. The first ever Semaine sans Pesticides was held in March 2006 and involved around 90 events aimed at raising greater public awareness of the health and environmental impacts of hazardous pesticides, and demonstrating viable alternatives to toxic agrochemicals. Since its birth the movement has grown considerably. ACAP now includes some 170 individuals and organisations. Activities organised as part of Semaine sans Pesticides directly engage many thousands of French citizens on the issue of pesticide

use, while local, national and international media coverage of affiliated actions reach out to a wider audience still.

For more information please visit the SSP website at www.semaine-sans-pesticides.com



SSNC gets tough on potatoes (19 March)

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) celebrated



Europe's 'Week Without Pesticides' by highlighting the over use of fungicides in potato farming.

While the potato is a highly nutritious food commodity, Europe's potatoes receive a higher dose of synthetic fungicides than any other major crop. In Sweden the problem is particularly acute: potatoes account for just 1% of Swedish farmland, but receive 40% of all fungicides. And despite having an ideal climate for the cultivation of organic potatoes, only 2% of Sweden's potatoes are certified as organic. On 19 March SSNC published 'Potatis och Bekämpningsmedel' ('Potatoes and Pesticides') a new report documenting the impact of pesticides applied to

potatoes, together with a consumer-friendly information pamphlet. News of the study was reported on national television as well as by local newspapers.

SSNC will now use the report to inform discussions on Sweden's National Action Plan on pesticides to be finalised later this year. SSNC's work in targeting potatoes is the latest development in the NGO's strategy of naming and shaming the 'bad guys' of Swedish agriculture, and follows earlier reports such as

- 'Strawberries and pesticides'
- 'Tomatoes and climate change'
- 'Meat, climate change and eutrophication'

PAN Germany: Biodiversity vs. Pesticides (21 February)

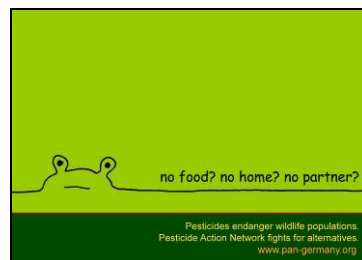
Biodiversity is a measurement of nature's variety. The concept embraces ecosystems, natural habitats, genetic diversity, varieties of plant and animal species and their interactions. Pesticides reduce biodiversity and endanger wildlife populations.

With this as a backdrop, Pesticide Action Network Germany initiated a project called 'Vielfalt versus Pestizide' (*Diversity versus Pesticides*) in the summer of 2007. The aim of the initiative is on one hand, to deliver increased respect for biodiversity and to inform people of the threats caused by pesticides, and on the other hand to analyse how biodiversity as an endangered good is represented in legislation.

PAN Germany started with a broad information campaign involving web information, postcards and information sheets. In February 2008 a

workshop with experts was organised where first hand information on pesticides impacts on biodiversity - aquatic and land systems, birds and amphibians - was presented. Further presentations focused on policy issues and analysed how agriculture in general, and more specifically the use of pesticides, are represented in the National Biodiversity Action Plan. A third programmatic element looked at European and national pesticide legislation and analysed how biodiversity is taken into account and if there is a lack of coherence. The documentation of this workshop and a general brochure on the issue (the latter also in English) will be available soon.

In May 2008, Germany will host the United Nations 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. In the run-up to this event, PAN Germany has contributed to the specific position papers on agro biodiversity of the umbrella organisation of German



environmental NGOs which will be circulated during the event.

To further enhance peoples' interest in biodiversity a second information campaign focusing on agro biodiversity is already under preparation and a colourful street parade will take place in May in the city centre of Hamburg. On policy issues, a position paper with the support of other NGOs will be published and used for lobbying.

The fact sheet 'No home? No food? No partner? - What is left when biodiversity disappears?' can be downloaded from PAN Germany's website: www.pan-germany.org. Organisations interested in the CBG NGO events please contact www.planet-diversity.org.

Greenpeace blacklists 327 highly toxic pesticides (7 February)

Greenpeace Germany has published a list of 327 pesticides identified as being particularly hazardous to health and the environment. The list which includes 168 pesticide substances currently used in the EU was drawn up following an analysis conducted by two independent experts who examined the impacts of 1134 pesticide substances in use worldwide.

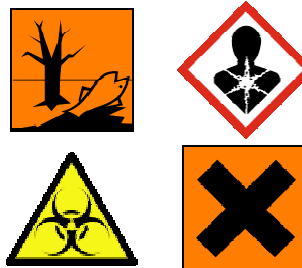
'In conventional agriculture highly hazardous pesticides are still sprayed on fruit, vegetables and cereals at an alarming scale,' explained Greenpeace toxics expert, Manfred Krautter. 'Chemicals that can cause cancer, impair the ability to reproduce or damage hormonal

and immune systems should not be detected in our food. The EU must also stop permitting substances which are harmful to the environment and threatening to bees or birds, and which contaminate groundwater. The legislation on approving pesticides now being discussed in Brussels must be improved accordingly.'

Consumers incur frequent dietary exposure to 13 of the most hazardous pesticides identified by the study. The BASF product iprodione, for example, is detected in over 2% of all food samples analysed in the European Union - despite being classified as a carcinogen under the EC Directive on Dangerous Substances. Another good example is imazalil, an insecticide manufactured by Syngenta and

Bayer. Imazalil is the EU's most common food contaminant, and is detected in one sixth of food samples analysed, despite being acutely toxic and suspected of causing cancer and damaging reproduction.

Greenpeace calls on both supermarkets and politicians to adopt pesticide blacklists in order to eradicate hazardous pesticides from the food chain. The report is available on-line in both German and English.



HEAL: New report on breast cancer urges MEPs to cut back on pesticides (2 April)

Around 1 in 10 women in Europe will develop breast cancer at some point in their lives. Reducing this figure cannot be achieved without decreasing exposure to certain chemicals, including pesticides, according to a report launched by the Health & Environment Alliance (HEAL) and CHEM Trust during a lunchtime event held in the European Parliament on 2 April.

The report entitled: "Breast cancer and exposure to hormonally active chemicals: An appraisal of the scientific evidence" was written by a leading EU researcher on endocrine disrupters, Professor Andreas Kortenkamp, Head of the Centre for Toxicology at the School of Pharmacy, University of London. This scientific review focuses on the role of hormone disrupting chemicals, with particular reference to early life and multiple chemical exposures.

Professor Kortenkamp concluded his presentation of the new report by emphasizing that "we will not be able to reduce the risk of breast cancer without addressing preventable causes, particularly exposure to chemicals." European Parliamentarians also heard from two other prominent European experts: Dr Annie J. Sasco from the Bordeaux University and Dr Nicolas Olea from the University of Granada. Hosted by MEP Avril Doyle, the event attracted cross-party attendance from Members of European Parliament (MEPs), including MEPs Against Cancer and the European Parliamentary Group on Breast Cancer, as well as representatives from the European Commission – DG Environment and from Europa

Donna, the European breast cancer coalition.

The report's message that tougher controls are needed on man-made chemicals resonated across the European media, with extensive coverage in Euronews and several national television stations, the largest German public radio Deutschlandfunk (DLF) and articles in the Guardian on-line, Le Monde, Euroactiv and the British Medical Journal among others.

Lisette van Vliet, HEAL Toxics Policy Advisor, encouraged Parliamentarians to act on the scientific recommendations and listed some urgent areas to reduce chemicals' contribution to the breast cancer incidence rate. For the EU pesticides policy reform, van Vliet recommended that MEPs should keep the strong amendments adopted by the Parliament on the so-called 'cut-off criteria' for carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxins (CMR) and hormone disrupting pesticides. MEPs also had an opportunity to ensure that the cut-off criteria make specific reference to eliminating exposure to pesticide residues in food products. Just days after the meeting, the European Parliament passed a resolution

on combating cancer with an overwhelming majority of MEPs agreeing to amendments that highlight the need to reduce carcinogens and other chemicals. This acknowledgement that curbing environmental pollution, including pesticide use, must be considered in any future strategy to combat cancer, is a victory for health advocates and environmental activists alike.

As part of its breast cancer and chemicals work, HEAL and CHEM Trust also launched the following educational and advocacy resources available in several EU languages:

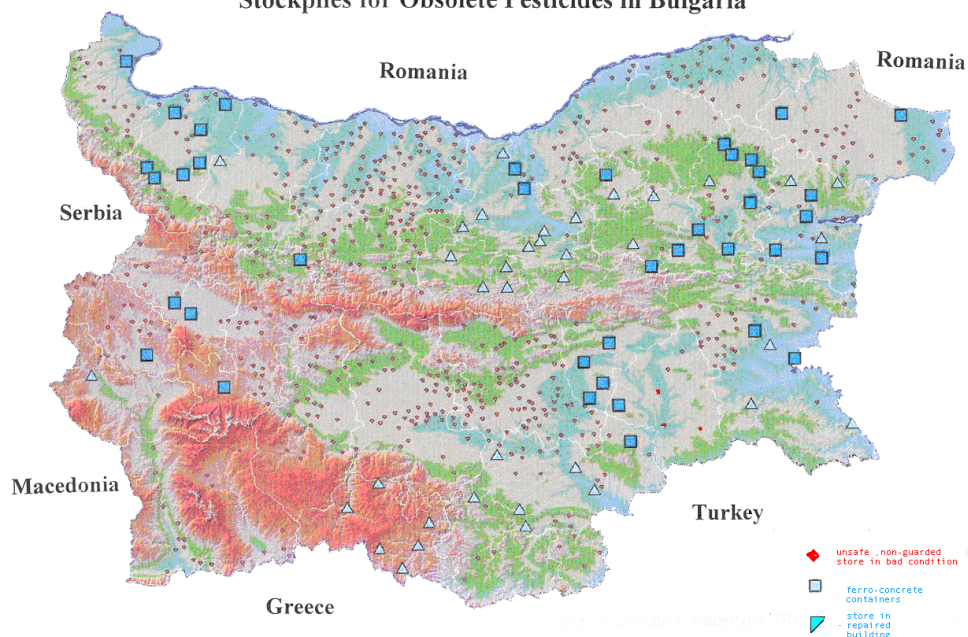
- 'Factors influencing the risk of breast cancer – established and emerging' (a briefing for the public);
- 'Breast Cancer: Preventing the preventable' (a leaflet for women and breast cancer sufferers);
- Breast cancer portfolio of peer-reviewed and published papers.

All publications are downloadable on the Chemicals Health Monitor project website: www.chemicalshealthmonitor.org and available in hard copy upon request.



Irish Parliamentarian Avril Doyle (Conservative) urging MEPs to use the EU pesticide reform to remove and replace hormone disrupting pesticides with less harmful alternatives

Stockpiles for Obsolete Pesticides in Bulgaria



In 2003, Friends of the Earth Bulgaria worked to identify 717 stocks of obsolete pesticides. Three quarters were being stored under dangerous conditions

FOE Bulgaria: From the Past to the Future of Pesticides (14 April)

'Five years since we started our agrochemicals campaign, it seems incredible to me that 'pesticides' was once a strange and unfamiliar word among the people of Bulgaria. I remember I kept on having to explain not only the difference between fertilizers and pesticides, but even the distinction between pesticides and artificial food additives such as synthetic flavourings and preservatives,' says Valentina Lukova, head of the toxic substances programme at Friends of the Earth Bulgaria.

'Our project began in 2003. We were certain that stores of obsolete pesticides were located throughout Bulgaria – but none of the authorities seemed to know where they were. And so we went out to the villages and conducted research. In total Friends of the Earth Bulgaria identified 717 stores of obsolete pesticides. 412 were unguarded with no monitoring or control: 524 were being stored under dangerous conditions – in buildings lacking any roof, or simply stacked out in the open.

establishing the numbers of people in danger of being exposed to the obsolete pesticides. Worryingly many rural inhabitants told us of people who had been using obsolete pesticides on their land in ignorance of the dangers and without any personal protective equipment. Everything we found out was published and widely disseminated – we gave out information leaflets to raise awareness of the dangers these chemicals presented.

'Having completed our nationwide assessment, we worked to engage politicians in taking action to address the problems we identified. We sent letters to the local municipalities demanding action. Where the situation was worst, we consulted with regional mayors about the possibility of taking legal action to request grants for removing or repairing the pesticide stores. We lobbied in the Parliamentary Committees and were eventually successful in forcing the Government to answer questions. National and local media coverage was substantial and a lot of officials faced difficult enquiries from the press. As a result a lot of the pesticide stores that we worked to identify no longer exist.

'I often compare the past situation with the present. Farmers in Western Europe rely too much on pesticides. And with greater integration among member states this problem may once again spread to Bulgaria. After a drop in pesticide use since the early 1990s, Bulgaria is again set for a fresh invasion of new pesticides. It is quite possible in some years' time that a lot of modern pesticides will be banned and again left in the stores all over Bulgaria and we might once again have to make maps of obsolete stocks.

'While pesticide use is still low, Bulgaria needs to plan ahead to prevent a return to increased dependence on pesticides. And that's why we're now looking to work on the creation of a National Action Plan and to lobby now for stronger pesticide legislation. Much work on pesticides was done in the years between 2003 and 2007. We cheered our local victories and suffered our defeats. But across the country – whether out in the fields counting obsolete stocks or in the cities engaging with politicians – we have always been working towards a world safe from hazardous pesticides.'

GM increases pesticide application (13 February)

A new study from Friends of the Earth debunks one of Biotech's biggest claims: that GM crops can deliver decreases in pesticide use. Reviewing over ten years of data, the NGO's



investigation shows not only that this prediction is wrong, but the adoption of GM crops has led to ever greater pesticide use. Biotechnology companies have yet to introduce a single GM crop capable of giving higher yields, enhanced nutrition, or drought-tolerance – while disease tolerant GM crops are almost non-existent. Instead virtually 100% of the global acreage planted with commercial GM crops has one or both of two basic traits: herbicide-tolerance and insecticide-resistance.

According to Friends of the Earth, herbicide tolerant crops are 'pesticide-promoting' because they enable farmers to spray a particular herbicide more frequently and indiscriminately without fear of damaging the crop. Greater application of a specific herbicide generates

herbicide resistant weeds. (GM crops have spawned an epidemic of herbicide resistant weeds in US, Argentina and Brazil for example.) And with weeds showing greater resistance farmers are led to apply yet more pesticides, which is perhaps no accident given that the major companies selling GM seeds also sell pesticides.

The report entitled 'Who benefits from GM crops? The rise in pesticide use' was Friends of the Earth's third annual GM review and was published to coincide with the yearly progress update from the 'International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications' (ISAAA). The ISAAA is an industry funded organisation that 'delivers the benefits of new agricultural biotechnologies to the poor in developing countries'.

Greenpeace: food tests 'half blind' (31 January)

When monitoring fruit, vegetables and cereals, even the best national laboratories are incapable of detecting over half of the pesticides which may be present. This is the conclusion of the study 'The Limits of Pesticide Analysis' published by Greenpeace Germany on 31 January.

While around 1,350 pesticides are applied to food crops worldwide, food samples tested for pesticide residues can only be analysed for 600 agrochemicals. The laboratories of most German States, for example, test food samples for fewer than 400 different pesticides. Many of the pesticides not tested for are hazardous – thus posing an unquantifiable health risk to consumers.

'Half blind is putting it mildly! Our food control authorities cannot reveal anything like the true levels of pesticides in the food chain.' This is the verdict of Greenpeace pesticides chemistry expert Manfred Krautter. 'We have to assume that our food contains a lot more

hazardous pesticides than previously thought.'

The study was conducted by Günter Lach, one of the leading German experts on pesticide analysis, on the basis of information provided by German food testing labs. Lach recommends: "New and optimized methods for analysis have to be developed – or else pesticide contamination should be avoided right from the start.' During the course of the last three years alone the German Federal Office for Customer Protection and Food Safety (Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit (BVL)), which forms part of the Ministry for Agriculture, has approved 38 active pesticide substances, of which 12 are not tested for during the course of routine food analysis by state labs. Examples include the pesticide amitrole, manufactured by Bayer CropScience, which can interfere with the hormonal system and is permitted for use in cultivating apples, pears and grapes. Or sulfosulfurone, a suspected carcinogen, manufactured by Syngenta and Monsanto which was approved



Governments are incapable of detecting over 50% of the pesticide substances applied to food crops

for wheat cultivation in 2004.

'It is irresponsible to register dangerous pesticides which cannot even be monitored in a rudimentary way. This puts consumers' health at risk. The EU must amend its pesticide approvals protocols such that these pesticides are no longer marketed', said Krautter. Greenpeace is also calling upon food producers and the food industry to make sure that pesticides, which are practically invisible in our food, are no longer applied to food crops.

The study is available on-line in both German and English.

Pesticide News

UNESCO: Global farming 'must change' (15 April 2008)

A UNESCO report recommends urgent changes to the way food is produced, including a move towards more sustainable farming practices such as crop rotation and use of organic fertilisers. The study also notes the 'considerable influence' of big multinational corporations in North America and Europe.

US Government sued after approving 4 pesticides (8 April)

Environment and farmworker advocates have filed a law suit against the Bush administration for allowing the continued use of four pesticides, saying the government brushed aside its own findings that the chemicals are dangerous to workers, children and wildlife. The pesticides in question include methamidophos and methidathion.

Pesticides cause Parkinson's (28 March)

Strong evidence that exposure to pesticides significantly increases the risk of Parkinson's disease has been published by the BMC Neurology journal. US researchers found those exposed to pesticides had a 1.6 times higher risk after studying 600 people. Experts said it was now highly likely that pesticides played a key role - albeit in combination with other factors.

Neurotoxins Linked to Brain Disorders (20 February)

The Collaborative on Health and the Environment's Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative has published a Scientific Consensus Statement on Environmental Agents Associated with Neurodevelopmental Disorders. The statement, signed by more than 50 scientists and health professionals, summarizes the latest science about environmental contaminants associated with neurodevelopmental disorders, such as learning disabilities,

autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), intellectual disabilities and developmental delays. Summarizing the negative impact of pesticides on neurodevelopment the document states: 'There is now evidence that childhood exposure to pesticides, such as organophosphates, enhances the risk for developmental disorders including deficits in memory, poorer motor performance and an array of other conditions. There is also evidence of specific genetic susceptibility to pesticide exposure and related health effects'.

France bans 30 pesticides (1 February)

The French government has banned 30 pesticides as part of a plan to cut pesticide use in half over the next 10 years. The list of substances includes carbendazim, procymidone and vinclozolin. Another 20 pesticides will be banned by year's end.

New Zealand man wins compensation for brain damage caused by vineyard herbicides (25 January)

A brain-damaged man in New Zealand has won his battle for compensation for harm caused by wine industry herbicides. Camp site owner Pete Kiley has lived next door to vineyards since buying the camping ground in 1993. Kiley, 60, filed a claim in 2005 over brain damage he believed was caused by chemicals blowing over the fence from vineyards. New Zealand's Accident Compensation Corporation has now approved his claim after a neuropsychologist confirmed Kiley had dementia caused by exposure to agricultural chemicals. Kiley blames his illness on exposure to paraquat and glyphosate-trimesium.

Spanish people contaminated (8 January)

Researchers in Granada find more evidence of widespread

pesticide contamination in human subjects. 387 Spanish citizens tested for traces of pesticides all showed levels of contamination; women are more contaminated than men; the elderly are more contaminated than the young; and diet is an important factor in determining the concentration of pesticide residues.

Female farm workers at higher risk of asthma (1 January)

The researchers based at the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences assessed pesticide and other occupational exposures as risk factors for adult-onset asthma in more than 25,000 farmwomen in North Carolina and Iowa. Farm women who applied or mixed pesticides were shown to have a 50% higher prevalence of allergic asthma.

Paraquat phase out in Sri Lanka (29 December)

Sri Lanka's 'Pesticide Technical and Advisory Committee' has endorsed a 3 year phase out for the herbicide paraquat. Assistant Director of Agriculture K.B. Gunarathne said the decision was based on the very high mortality rate due to paraquat poisoning.

Indoor pesticide use during pregnancy linked to child cancer (20 December)

A French study published in January 2007 confirms that pregnant women using pesticides in their household are twice as likely to have children who will develop leukaemia or lymphoma. These results confirm previous research results and, according to the authors of the study, conclusions raise questions about the advisability of preventing pesticide use by pregnant women.

For latest news updates as well as links to original news sources visit the PAN Europe website at <http://www.pan-europe.info>

Legal Updates

Du Pont loses methomyl appeal (23 March)

Pesticides giant Du Pont has lost in its attempt to keep methomyl on the EU market while it challenges a European commission decision to ban the substance. In a ruling delivered earlier this month judges said a deadline to end EU approvals of methomyl by 19 March should stand. Last summer the court granted Du Pont a reprieve for a similar ban on the pesticide flusilazole. Methomyl is a neurotoxic insecticide classified by the World Health Organisation as being 'highly hazardous'. Flusilazole is a reprotoxin and carcinogen.

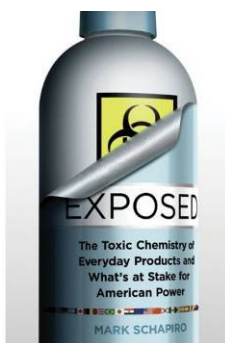
France wins pesticide import case (26 Feb)

The European court of justice has rejected European commission claims that France is breaching EU free trade rules by requiring extra safety assessments of pesticides by importers for products that already have market approval in other EU states. EU pesticide approval rules allow products approved in one member state a fast-track authorisation in other states. But France requires these 'parallel imports' to be identical in composition, formulation and presentation before it grants the fast-track approval.

Sumitomo loses appeal on procymidone (23 Jan)

Japanese conglomerate Sumitomo has lost its appeal against the European Court of First Instance decision to take procymidone off the market while Sumitomo challenges a ban due to come into force in June. Procymidone is an EU classified reprotoxin, carcinogen and endocrine disruptor and is among the most common residues in fruit and vegetables in Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Netherlands, Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Finland

Book Review



'Exposed: the Toxic Chemistry of Everyday Products and What's at Stake for American Power'

I have to begin by stating that Mark Shapiro has a connection with the Pesticide Action Network (PAN). His previous book, 'Circle of Poison: Pesticides and People in a Hungry World' was one of the contributing factors in the creation of PAN International. So his new book has much to live up to!

The book tackles the complicated issue of chemical legislation and the different approaches taken by the European Union and the United States. In particular it investigates how US companies are able to adapt to stricter environmental requirements legislated by the EU whilst adopting the lowest common

denominator approach for the US domestic market.

This book is more wide ranging than the last one and deals with such nasties as: endocrine disruptors, phthalates, genetically modified organisms and persistent organic pollutants to name a few.

The case of phthalates makes for particularly alarming reading: phthalates are a family of polyvinyl-chloride plastic softeners used to make hard plastic pliable and soft. Phthalates are used in a wide range of items from car dashboards, shower curtains and rain coats to children's toys, including plastic teething rings used by infants.

Despite the fact that the direst fears of the physiological effects of phthalates have yet to be conclusively proven the EU chose to address the problem and err on the side of caution. It is an excellent illustration of the different approach to legislating on public health issues between the US and Europe: the risk based approach of the US compared to the hazard based approach of the EU.

Whilst the book actually paints a fairly rosy picture of the EU legislative system and the way it keeps its citizens safe from harm, the reality is perhaps not quite as rosy. The power of

corporate lobbyists is huge and ever growing, it is estimated that there are 15 000 professional lobbyists in Brussels who spend in the region of €60-95 million per year to buy access to EU decision makers. We have seen already that there is beginning to be a shift toward the US approach in the debate and discussions over the proposed Directive and Regulation on pesticide use and approval that is slated to be completed in 2008. We are beginning to see a move away from the precautionary principle into a more US style risk based approach to legislating on health issues. It is vital that the EU maintains its current approach and continues to put the health of its citizens over and above the needs of industry. The dangers of not taking such an approach are clearly illustrated in this book which should be essential reading not only for the public but for EU decision makers too.

'Exposed – the Toxic Chemistry of Everyday Products and What's at Stake for American Power', by Mark Shapiro. Published 1 September 2007 ISBN 1933392150.

This article was written by Nick Mole, Policy Advisor at PAN UK

Academic Review

Insect repellents, insecticide treated bed nets and malaria

Bed nets with insecticide have been proven to be highly effective at reducing morbidity and mortality from malaria. However, much of the supporting data has been drawn from sub-Saharan Africa, where insects mostly bite indoors during the night. In areas where insects feed in the early evening, the use of bed nets needs to be supplemented. This is the case in the Amazonian sub-region of South America, where 87% of the 1.14 million cases of malaria recorded in the Americas in 2000 occurred.

This study set out to determine the effectiveness of using a plant based insect repellent (*Eucalyptus maculata citriodon*) in combination with bed nets, as against using bed nets alone in areas where vector mosquitoes are active in the early evening. This double blind, placebo controlled, cluster randomised study took place in rural and peri-urban districts in the Bolivian Amazon. A plant based repellent was chosen because a natural product has greater potential for local production, making it a more realistic and sustainable choice than a chemical based repellent.

The authors tested the blood of participants for the presence of the malaria parasites *P. falciparum* and *P. vivax* at the beginning of the malaria season in March 2003 (to provide baseline data) and then at monthly intervals to July 2003. The participants were given new bed nets, and either the insect repellent or clove oil for the placebo group, which the participants applied at dusk.

The conclusion was that the use of the plant based insect repellent in combination with bed nets can significantly reduce the risk of malaria in areas where vectors feed in the evening. The trial provides evidence especially for health professionals and travel health organisations to advocate these combined measures in high risk areas with early evening or outdoor feeding vectors.

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Regulations restricting import of hazardous pesticides reduce suicide rate in Sri Lanka

Pesticides are widely used in developing countries in suicide attempts. Between 1950 and 1995 suicide rates in Sri Lanka increased eight-fold to a peak of 47 per 100,000 people. Previous research indicates that pesticide self-poisoning accounts for about two thirds of such suicides.

Pesticides vary greatly in their acute toxicity to humans. They are rated by the World Health Organisation and the most toxic are placed in class I. In 1995 import of WHO class I pesticides was restricted in Sri Lanka. This was followed up in 1998 with restrictions in the import of endosulfan, a WHO class II pesticide frequently used in self-poisonings.

By 2005 suicide rates had halved. The lack of access to toxic chemicals at a time of emotional despair is almost certainly the key factor responsible for this dramatic reduction. Other events such as war or economic recession can result in changes in suicide rates. However, they could not explain the changes in suicide rates over the timescale studied in Sri Lanka. The success of these regulations in reducing suicide rates provides a potent argument for ensuring that all acutely toxic pesticides used in self-poisonings are phased out of use.

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Organic farming preserves biodiversity

Modern farming has significantly altered our landscape reducing the variety of plants and animals found in the countryside. A new Canadian study has compared the variety of plants on 14 organic and 16 conventional farms. They found clear differences in both the variety and in the particular species found. Fields and hedgerows on organic farms consistently harboured more plant species (both native and exotic) than on conventional farms.

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PAN Europe, Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street, London EC2A 4LT, United Kingdom
+44 (0) 20 7065 0920 www.pan-europe.info coordinator@pan-europe.info