

To: Ms. Paulina Hennig-Kloska, Polish Minister for Climate and Environment & current chair of the Environment Council; Mr. Magnus Heunicke, Danish Minister for the Environment and Gender Equality, upcoming chair of the Environment Council; all Ministers of the Environment of EU Member States

16th June 2025

***Subject: Every life counts: European Union to stand as a global leader on the protection of human health and the environment from hazardous pesticides***

Dear Chair of the Environment Council, dear Environment Minister

We, the undersigned civil society organisations, are writing to express our deep concerns about the European Commission backtracking on its 2020 commitment to address the issue of the export of hazardous pesticides banned for use within the EU. Although this commitment was reiterated in the new Commission's "*Vision for Agriculture and Food*", we have seen no signs of meaningful process. We therefore urge you to raise the matter during the upcoming meeting of the Environment Council to ensure decisive action is taken to save this legislative initiative. This action will benefit the protection of human health, human rights and the environment abroad, and also benefits the economy, farmers and citizens' health in the EU.

In October 2020, in its [Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability](#), the European Commission committed that the EU will "lead by example" and ensure that hazardous chemicals banned in the EU "are not produced for export". It promised to provide legislative measures by the end of 2023. The initiative was expressly [welcomed](#) by the European Council in March 2021.

This commitment came after an investigation had [revealed](#) that the EU was exporting more than 80,000 tonnes of hazardous pesticides banned from use on European fields. The vast majority of these exports were, and continue to be, destined for low- or middle-income countries with weaker regulations, where dangerous pesticides banned in the EU will have devastating impacts on both human health and the environment.

In May 2023, the Commission launched an impact assessment procedure, along with a [public consultation](#), and commissioned a study to examine the possible legislative measures to ensure that "hazardous chemicals banned in the European Union" are no longer "produced for export". The initiative to stop the production and export of banned pesticides received overwhelming support.

However, the Commission did not conclude its work and did not deliver a legislative proposal in 2023, in line with its commitment. Meanwhile, new but unreleased data suggest that exports of banned pesticides are on the rise and the situation worsened instead of improved.

In February 2025, the new Commission included in its "[Vision for Agriculture and Food](#)" a renewed commitment to assess the export of hazardous chemicals, including pesticides that are banned in the EU. But progress is slow and uneven, and civil society groups are now

increasingly concerned that the promised export ban will be dropped altogether due to [lobbying pressure](#) from the chemical industry.

We therefore urge you to ensure that the European Council sends a strong signal to the European Commission that it must deliver on its promise to ensure that hazardous chemicals banned in the EU “are not produced for export”, and urgently finalize the impact assessment and come up with a legislative proposal.

Such action would align with previous [Council's position](#) and with the joint initiative from Denmark, Austria, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden in December 2024, which called on Environment Commissioner Roswall to act “to end export of hazardous chemicals that are banned in the European Union, reminding her that the Commission had “not fully delivered on the Chemicals Strategy”.

Prohibiting the export of banned pesticides is essential not only to protect human health, human rights, and the environment globally, but also to uphold fair competition for European farmers. Indeed, as European farmers are no longer allowed, and rightly so, to use these dangerous products, the EU should stop supporting their use in third countries and prevent these banned substances from returning to the European market as residues in imported products. This will strengthen the European Union's role as a global leader in the transition to a safer and more sustainable chemical and agricultural industry.

Please find enclosed a joint statement supported by over 500 civil society organisations, trade unions and farmers organisations, which will be released publicly on June 24th in Brussels.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Angeliki Lysimachou  
Head of Science and Policy  
Pesticide Action Network Europe

on behalf of:

Broederlijk Delen  
Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)  
Child Rights International Network (CRIN)  
Dreikönigsaktion der Katholischen Jungschar (DKA Austria)  
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)  
Foodwatch  
Friends of the Earth Europe, Greenpeace EU  
Humundi  
Pestizid Aktions-Netzwerk e.V. (PAN Germany)  
Public Eye  
Veblen Institute for economic reforms