

5 June 2024

Subject: Every Life counts - Urging EU commitment to stop EU production and exports of banned and hazardous pesticides in the next strategic agenda.

Dear EU Heads of State and Government,
Ministries of Agriculture,
Ministries of Environment,
Ministries of Health

With this letter we, a coalition of Civil Society Organizations engaged in protecting human rights, human health and the environment, are asking you to give priority to the right of all human beings to live in a healthy environment and have a healthy future, inside and outside Europe.

In the European Union, the pesticides regulatory framework allows a certain level of protection to citizens' health as well as the environment. In addition, protective equipment is available and currently used by EU farmers and farm workers. In Low- and Middle Income Countries (LMICs), national regulations are less protective, while farmers and farmworkers often cannot afford decent protection against pesticides exposure. Furthermore, the presence of such pesticides in households leads every year to dramatic acute poisoning accidents, as well as to suicide. While Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) have been gradually banned in the EU over the last decades, they are still produced in the EU and exported to Third countries.

The incessant exposure to toxic substances originating from human activities threatens our human rights to life, by obstructing access to safe water and food, the right to physical integrity and to live in a healthy environment. In a recent statement, the [Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights of the United Nations](#), highlights that all States, including members of the European Union, are required by international human rights law to take active measures to prevent the exposure of individuals and communities to toxic substances.

At the international level, target 7 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework calls States to reduce the risks and uses associated with pesticides. Stopping the export of EU-banned pesticides would help achieve this goal. In addition, the need to address the increasing hazard posed by the exposure to harmful chemicals led to the UNEP [Global Framework on Chemicals – For a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste \(GFC\)](#). The GFC was established at the 5th International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) in September 2023 with the support of the European Union. The GFC has set targets for governments to work towards notifying, regulating or prohibiting the export of chemicals they have been prohibited nationally, and phasing out HHPs in agriculture by 2035. In parallel, it encourages the transition to safer chemical alternatives.

At EU level, the Commission has committed to increase protection of citizens and the environment from hazardous chemicals in its [Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability \(CSS\) Towards a Toxic-Free Environment](#) and this has been supported by the Council. The CSS contains a specific commitment for the EU to lead by example and to ensure that hazardous chemicals banned in the European Union are not produced for export, including by amending relevant legislation.

Despite these commitments, the EU has missed its deadline to present such specific measures and therefore continues giving its consent to the production and export of pesticides that are banned within its territory due to their serious health and environmental concerns. The EU is fully aware that these chemicals cause great damage to health and the environment in importing countries, affecting particularly farmer workers and rural communities in LMICs where pesticide regulations are weaker. In parallel, the use in LMICs of pesticides banned in the EU leads to a massive unfair competition with European farmers. This double standard has been denounced in the course of the recent farmers protests throughout the EU.

In December 2022, hundreds of civil society organizations, institutions and trade unions delivered a [Joint Statement](#) to the European Commission, urging it to keep its promise under the CSS by taking measures to ban the export of hazardous chemicals that are forbidden in the EU.

The EU however, has been stalling, and even backtracking, due to pressure from the industry, which is fiercely opposing the adoption of an EU-wide export ban. The industry's [main argument](#) is that such a ban would harm the EU economy, result in massive job losses for pesticide producers and fail to provide any benefits for health and the environment in importing countries.

Contrary to what the pesticide lobby argues, **an export ban would neither endanger employment nor burden the economy in Europe**, as [explained in a study](#) published in April. Also, a [legal opinion](#) concludes that **WTO rules do not pose a legal obstacle to enacting an export ban on hazardous chemicals prohibited in the EU**.

In view of the informal meeting of EU leaders scheduled for the 17th June 2024 to discuss the Strategic Agenda for the next legislative cycle, we urge you to add this crucial topic in the five years strategic programme. It should be made a top political priority to end this unfair double standard, which harms importing countries without bringing substantial benefits to the EU nor to the exporting countries.

The European Green Deal, launched by the EU in 2019, has yet to deliver several of its promises to protect human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals both in Europe and globally. Stopping the export of EU banned pesticides will also inspire non-EU countries to follow suit and prohibit the export of dangerous pesticides and other hazardous chemicals that are banned in their own jurisdictions. It would send a strong message to governments and companies worldwide that such hazardous pesticides and chemicals should not be used anywhere, and would contribute to activating the debates among the GFC towards a global ban on HHPs.

Current and future generations, within and beyond Europe, need you to step up your political commitment to work towards a healthier future and safer agricultural practices for farmers, farm workers and consumers worldwide. We thus urge you to act before it is too late, and support a swift implementation of a ban on the production and export of EU-banned pesticides.

Yours sincerely,

Undersigned signatories,

PAN Europe	Belgium
Ekō	Global
FTAO	Belgium
WECF - Women Engage for a Common Future	Netherlands
Muchi Children's Home	Zambia
Humusz Szövetség	Hungary
Aitec	France
Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Aafrica	SENEGAL
Association of Ethical Shareholders Germany	Germany
Générations Futures	France
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul	Brazil
NGO Shipbreaking Platform	Belgium
FDCL - Center for Research and Documentation Chile-Latin America	Germany
Veblen Institute	France
ISDE, International Society of Doctors for Environment	Italy
Dreikönigsaktion der Katholischen Jungschar	Austria
Civil Society Advocacy Network on Climate Change and the Environment - Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
Adéquations	France
Pestizid Aktions-Netzwerk e.V. (PAN Germany)	Germany
AerztInnen fuer eine gesunde Umwelt (ISDE Austria)	Austria
Red de Acción en Plaguicidas y sus Alternativas en México (RAPAM)	México
Coordination gegen BAYER-Gefahren	Deutschland
FOS ngo	Belgium
Via Pontica Foundation	Bulgaria
Foodwatch Netherlands	Netherlands
EarthNews Media	Nigeria
BAN Toxics	Philippines
Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED)	Nepal
Euro Coop	Belgium
Alliance for Action on Pesticide in Nigeria (AAPN)	Nigeria
Association For Promotion Sustainable Development	India
Datalog I.C.T. & General Merchandise Ltd	Nigeria
Association APEDDUB	Tunsia
Neo-Agri	France
Aalem for Orphan and Vulnerable Children, Inc.	Liberia
Red Mexicana de acción frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC)	México

Asociación Nacional de Empresas Comercializadoras de Productores del Campo A.C. (ANEC)	México
HAMRAAH FOUNDATION	INDIA
Fundación Semillas de Vida, A.C.	México
Interwaste Research and Development (East Africa) Trust	Kenya
Global Institute of Public Health	India
Biowatch South Africa	South Africa
Urban-Rural Environmental Advocacy (U-REA)	Nigeria
Productores Orgánicos De La Huasteca Veracruzana	México
Semillas de Identidad	Colombia
Acción Ecológica	Ecuador
La Grande Puissance de Dieu	Benin
Colectivo zacahuitzco	Mexico
Grupo de Estudios Ambientales (GEA AC)	México
PAN Asia Pacific	Asia Pacific region
Centro de investigaciones Interdisciplinarias para el Desarrollo Rural Integral CIIDRI de la Universidad Autónoma Chapingo	Mexico
GREEN TIMES	SOUTH AFRICA
ECOTON	Indonesia
Sovereign Agroecology & Food Empowerment (SAFE)	South Africa
Indalo Organic Farming	South africa
Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment & Management (CECIC)	Uganda
Consumers' Association of Penang	Malaysia
waterCAN	south africa
Inades-Formation Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire
Destiny Onome ELOHOR	Nigeria
ENSSER (European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility)	EU
African Centre for Biodiversity	South Africa
Chemical Alert Africa (CAA)	South Africa
Bangladesh Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Foundation	Bangladesh
Broederlijk Delen	Belgium
Focus Association for Sustainable Development	Slovenia
SOLIDAR	Belgium
Solidar Suisse	Mozambique
CNCD-11.11.11	Belgium
Sustainable Agriculture and Environment/ and University of Tehran.	Iran
Hnutí DUHA - Friends of the Earth Czech Republic	Czech Republic
South African Organic Sector Organisation	South Africa

Journalists for Human Rights	North Macedonia
WICCA - WOMEN IN CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION	Cameroon
Adessou Kwaku Sena	Côte d'Ivoire
EDEN center	Albania
Journalists for human rights	North Macedonia
FIAN.MEXICO	Mexico
FIAN MÉXICO	México
INADES-FORMATION BURKINA	BURKINA FASO
Community Action Against Plastic Waste (CAPws)	Nigeria
Amigos de la Tierra	Spain
UnPoison	South Africa
Rethink The Stink	South Africa
Family Health and Development Foundation (FAHEDEF)	Cameroon
Association for Solidarity through Humanitarian Imperative Action (ASHIA) International	Cameroon
Association For Promotion Sustainable Development	India
Khanyisa Education and Development Trust	Reoublic of South Africa
GLOBAL 2000	Austria
SAFCEI	Zimbabwe
Campaña Nacional Sin Maíz No Hay País	México
Family Health and Development Foundation (FAHEDEF)	Cameroon
Research Centre For Crisis and Alternative Development Strategy (INKRISPENA)	Indonesia
Feedback EU	The Netherlands
Conservation Alliance International	Ghana
Hogar sin Tóxicos	Spain
CGFED	Vietnam
UFRGS	Brazil
Red Temática de Toxicología de Plaguicidas	México
Pesticide Action Network Netherlands	Netherlands
Probioma	Bolivia
RAPAL Uruguay	Uruguay
Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific	MALAYSIA
Alianza por una Mejor Calidad de Vida, RAP-Chile	Chile
Centro de Investigación Laboral y Asesoría Sindical, AC	México
Magyar Természetvédők Szövetsége / Friends of the Earth Hungary	Hungary
Inades-Formation Burundi	Burundi
ZERO - Associação Sistema Terrestre Sustentável	Portugal

MPP -Movimento dos pescadores e pescadoras artesanais	Brasil
Conselho Indigenista Missionário	Brasil
Movimento Ciência Cidadã	Brasil
Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas	Brasil
Somali Greenpeace Association	Somalia
Kétker Közösségi Alapítvány	Hungary
DKA	Austria
Consultants for Sustainable Development	Hungary
Via Pontica Foundation	Bulgaria
HAND Association	Hungary
Hungarian Society for Environmental Education (HSEE)	Hungary
Védegylet Egyesület / Protect the Future Association	Hungary
South African People's Tribunal on Agrotoxins	South Africa
PowerShift e.V.	Germany
FAUNA Foundation for Animal Wellfaire and Nature Protection	Hungary
German NGO Forum on Environment and Developmentlopment	Germany
Profilantrop Association	Hungary
Amigues de la Terra València	Spain
Centre for Environment Justice and Development	Kenya
Holocén Természetvédelmi Egyesület	Hungary
Barn Owl Foundation	Hungary
Közép-magyarországi Zöld Kör	Hungary
Amis de la Terre (FoE France)	France
Fenntarthatóság Felé Egyesület	Hungary
Veblen Institute	France
Agroecology Europe	Belgium
EnvMed	Germany
Ecological Restorations	Ghana
Nanny Africa	CAMEROON
Muchi Children's Home	Zambia
CREPD (Centre de Recherche et d'Education pour le Développement)	Cameroon
Hazards Campaign	United Kingdom
Informationsstelle Peru e.V.	Germany
Ecoropa	Germany
Center for Sustainable Rural Development Kranj	Slovenia
Health and Environment Justice Support	International
Nexus3 Foundation	Indonesia
La Grande Puissance de Dieu	Benin

ROOHCAM	Cameroon
Sustainable Environment Development Initiative	Nigeria
Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth)	Malaysia
Association For Promotion Sustainable Development	India
Red de Acción en Plaguicidas sus Alternativas de América Latina América Latina	América Latina
RANTINCHI FOUNDATION	ECUADOR
GroundWork, Friends of the Earth South Africa	South Africa
Association APEDDUB	Tunsia
Mouvement d'Action Paysanne	Belgium
EcoNexus	UK
Western media for environment and conservation -Wemeco	UGANDA
Fundación Alborada	España
Somali Greenpeace Association	Somalia
Clean Air Action Group	Hungary
Aalem for Orphan and Vulnerable Children, Inc.	Liberia
Association pour la Conservation et la Protection des Écosystèmes des Lacs et l'Agriculture Durable	RDCongo
Environmental Planning & Education Network	Hungary
Bio Vision Africa (BiVA)	Uganda
TROCA - Plataforma por um Comércio Internacional Justo	Portugal
SM Sunrise Global Visions (SSGV)	Nigeria
Supporters for the Health and Rights of People in the Semiconductor Industry (SHARPS)	KOREA
ABA - Agroecology (Brazilian agroecology association)	Brazil
Sociedad Cooperativa de Productores del Tianguis Orgánico Chapingo	México
University of Kerala	India
Asia Citizen Center for Environmental Health	Republic of Korea
Armenian Women For Health and Healthy Environment/ AWHHE/ NGO	Armenia
Asociación Nacional de Profesionistas en Agroecología (ANPA)	Mexico
Action for Sustainable Development	Cameroon
Foundation for Environment and Development (FEDEV)	Cameroon
UKF college of Engineering and Technology	India
FNSZ	Bulgaria
Pakistan Fisherfolk forum	Pakistan
Department of Environmental Science University of Kerala	India
Nagykovácsi Természet- és Környezetvédő Egyesület (NATE)	Hungary
Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO	Bangladesh
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum	Pakistan

Szerkő Környezeti Nevelési Egyesület	Hungary
Humusz Szövetség	Hungary
Alerte des medecins sur les pesticides	France
Pesticide Action Network North America	Belgium
Public Eye	Switzerland
Friends of the Earth France	France
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)	US/Switzerland
HAMRAAH FOUNDATION	INDIA
ECOCITY	Greece
ecoton	indonesia
IDEF	Côte d'Ivoire
Csermely Environmental Organisation	Hungary
CSEMETE Nature and Environment Protect Association	Hungary
Friends of the Irish Environment	Ireland
Inades-Formation Tanzania	Tanzania
OISCA International	India
Women on Farms Project	South Africa
Aitec	France
Zöld Akció Egyesület (Green Action)	Hungary
Transparency Reliance to Unify Equal Life or TRUE-LIFE	Liberia

[See here for a list of latest signatories](#)