

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

“HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES AND EU’S DOUBLE STANDARDS”

WEBINAR 29/09/2020, 14:30-16:30

Hosted by MEP Eric Andrieu (S&D), MEP Anja Hazekamp (GUE/NGL) and Michèle Rivasi (Greens/EFA)

Organised by PAN Europe and Public Eye

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

There is a growing concern by European Citizens about the use of hazardous pesticides in food production and their impact on human health and biodiversity, globally. The European law that aims to ensure a high level of protection from pesticides in Europe and European Commission’s commitment under ‘Farm to Fork’ to gradually ban hazardous pesticides from agriculture and promote alternative practices, is without a doubt extremely important.

Citizens, however, responded with great concern to the recent news about European pesticide companies making profits by selling pesticides that are banned in Europe to other lower and medium income countries, taking advantage of the national weak regulations in relation to human and environmental protection from pesticides [see [LeMonde](#), [BBC](#), [UN Press Release](#)]. Often these pesticides are applied in hot climates by workers that use no protection equipment at all, putting their health at great risk. The consequent environmental contamination is causing an increase in diseases in the local communities, often in children, and has a devastating impact on biodiversity [[UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food](#)].

Moreover, the EU seems to support financially these practices through food trade, as [it imports food grown under such conditions from these countries](#).

As civil society organisations, we consider it unacceptable for the EU to give its consent to such dangerous practices. We also believe that EU farmers should not be exposed to unfair competition from abroad. This is not only a matter of health and environmental protection but also of social and ethical rights.

With the European Green deal putting environmental health and biodiversity in the forefront of the EU policy, and the EU committing through the ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy for a sustainable food production and consumption system in Europe, the time is right to consider the role of the EU as a global leader on sustainability, human and environmental protection and take a stand against the export of banned pesticides by EU countries. France has already committed [to ban imports and exports of EU banned pesticides in 2022](#) and Commissioner of Agriculture Janusz Wojciechowski [stated](#) that the EU should not allow ‘imports of products made with pesticides that are banned in the EU’. The latter was also addressed in ‘Farm to fork’ strategy and Commission's report on the REFIT of PPP and MRL Regulations.

With this meeting the MEPs aim to bring these issues on the table and discuss the role of the EU and potential political solutions together with the European Commission, the European Chemicals Agency and civil society.