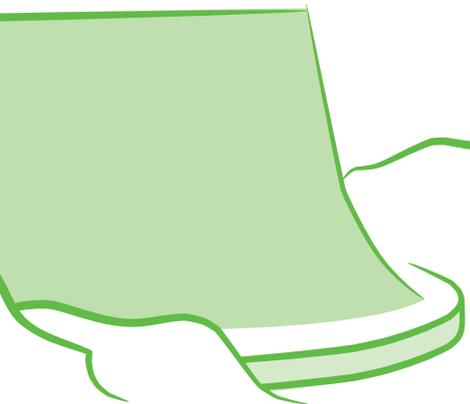
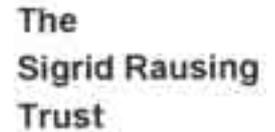
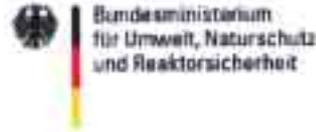


**Guiding Lighthouses
for Future
Plant Protection Policy**



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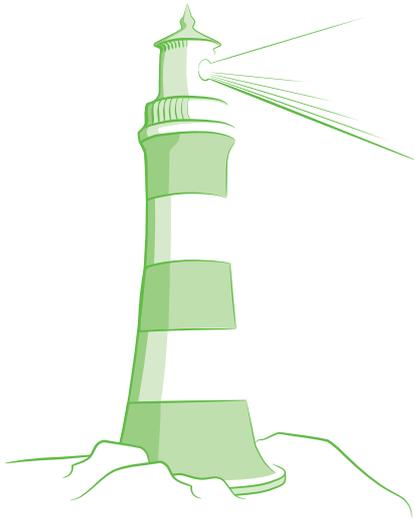
Guiding Lighthouses for Future Plant Protection Policy

Pesticide issues have been in the public focus for over 40 years. During the last 20 years, the German branch of the Pesticide Action Network has worked towards sustainable agriculture and alternative methods of controlling undesirable and harmful organisms. Much has changed in the last 20 years, much still remains to be done. In order to point the way in which, in our opinion, plant protection policies should develop in the future, PAN Germany has set up 7 “guiding lighthouses”. For PAN Germany, these “guiding lighthouses” represent indispensable guidelines and signposts, such as are needed in every field of politics in any intact democracy.

Nowadays, there is consensus among society that the environment and human health should be protected and that they should principally take priority over economic interests. Pesticides are useful, but are also harmful. Society is not in agreement as to an absolute, universally accepted view on the balance between the benefits and the disadvantages of pesticide use. Such a consensus will probably never be reached. The items to be weighed up against each other differ far too much. The discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of pesticide use is made more difficult by the fact that transparency and communication are lacking in many fields of plant protection policy.

The aim of these “guiding lighthouses” is to give an impulse to thought and discourse in society about how our foodstuffs are produced, the necessity of using chemicals such as synthetic pesticides and about the unavoidable remaining risks. We are of the opinion that discourse is necessary. Society finances an agricultural system that brings high profits to the few, provides some with acceptable incomes, but puts many at a disadvantage and even at risk. Society also bears the burden of the high cost of regulation and compensating measures.

The 7 modules of the “guiding lighthouses” are the result of constructive discussions during a conference held on the 1st of October, 2004 in Hamburg, Germany – “German Plant Protection Policies – 20 Years PAN Germany – Perspectives from Experience”. The conference was held to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of PAN Germany.



Coherency

Integration of the aims of environmental and consumer protection from all political fields

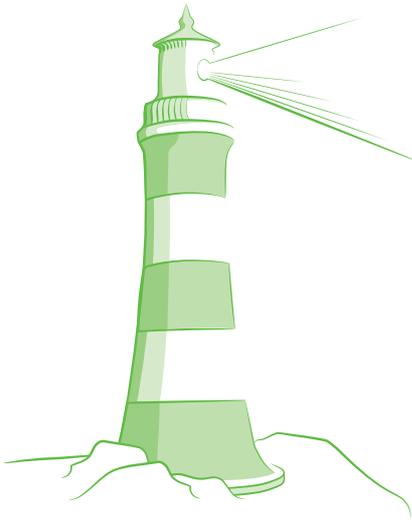


By coherent policy, we mean the reconcilability (and interaction) of all political instruments (legislation, programmes, promotion, executive etc.) with the aims of society.

Until now, coherency has been lacking in the interaction of the various political fields. Agricultural policies aimed at increasing competitiveness clash with the aim of protecting the environment and health.

Developmental policies goals are made unattainable due to the way in which European agriculture is subsidized and protected. Classes of graded goods which promote “perfect”-looking fruit and vegetables obstruct the objectives of consumer health protection and the protection of the environment.

Discussion must be promoted within society on these conflicting goals in order to achieve coherency and more efficient policies. Priorities must be set among these varying objectives which are justifiable to society, the world community and to coming generations. Prosperity, competitiveness and growth may not be given preference at the cost of justice within a global and national framework, and at the cost of compromising human health and well-being and the environment.



Transparency

Ensure freedom of information and public access to data

Above all, transparency means freedom of information and a proactive policy on access to information, respectively distribution of information to the public by government and administration.

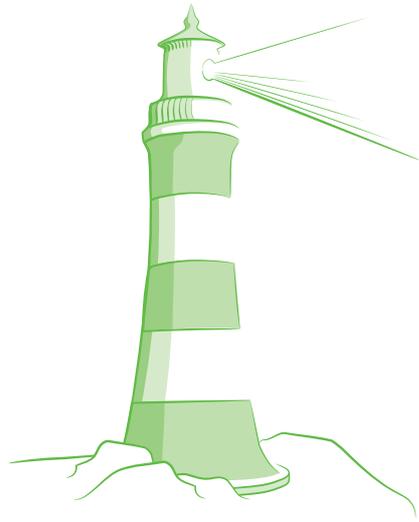
Freedom of information includes the right of access to information on political processes and on political decision-making, as well as the right to inspect documents and the access to socially relevant data and facts.

Within a framework of an pro-active information policy, data and facts can be made public in such a way that the public can make use of their right to object, or to alter their behaviour pattern according to circumstances.

In a democratic society, citizens must be able to actively participate in forming the political and social aspects of their community, having access to information which provides a basis for decision. This is only possible when civil society has access to information which is relevant to decision-making.

In future, the need for transparency must take precedence over the need to ensure company and trade secrecy during the complete lifecycle of pesticides (production, licensing, marketing, use, disposal), and with respect to the monitoring of pesticide handling and regarding the fate and effects of pesticides.





Participation

Enable active involvement in decision-making

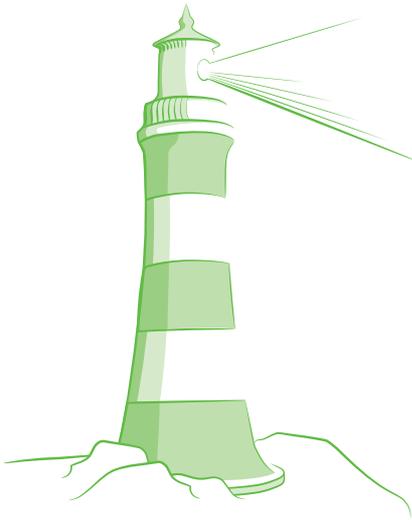
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In a democracy civil society has the right to participate in political processes and discussion. Political decisions and measures taken to implement political resolutions must be justified and comprehensible.

Around 80% of environmental legislation is passed at an EU level. The participation of civil society is very limited at this level. Only the European Commission may introduce laws and regulations to the EU. Even the European Parliament, voted for by the citizens of the EU, has no right to submit legislation.

Civil society must have an initiative right to decide how food are produced and what form agriculture should take in the future. At present, the development of foodstuff production technology is determined by food and chemical companies, as well as supermarkets and distribution chains.

Participation in a democracy does not mean that civil society takes over governmental legislative and executive tasks. It means, for example, that in the case of pesticide registration and authorization, decisions can only be made by government representatives. On the other hand however, NGOs should be involved when advisory bodies are set up and when the legal framework of pesticides policies and pesticide authorization is defined. Participation should always be balanced and the involvement of all interested parties should be ensured. Domination by a few interested parties should be avoided.



Responsibility

All parties involved in food production and marketing should take on responsibility

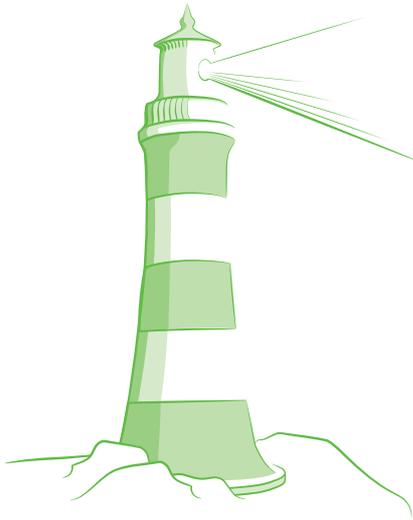
All those involved in the production and trade of foodstuffs should take their share of responsibility. They should be aware that healthy food can only be produced in a healthy environment and that rural life in Europe and in the poorer regions of the world should not be further endangered. In European agricultural and plant protection politics there are, however, very powerful groups representing particular interests which do not fulfil their responsibilities. Politics has an obligation to ensure that all interested parties from all sections of society should be satisfactorily and equally treated.

Politics is also required to identify those who cause harm to human well-being and the environment and to make them accountable. It is unacceptable that companies and politicians should be able to avoid the consequences of catastrophes and their aftermath such as in Bhopal in 1984 or the negative effects of day-to-day poisoning. Product liability must be introduced as a guiding principle.

Pesticide concerns must fulfil their responsibilities and strictly adhere to the regulations of the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). This should take place not only on paper but also in practice. The foodstuff business and the food trade should also actively make their contribution. Not only should they ensure that the products they market abide by valid regulations, but also that detrimental aspects of agricultural production be eliminated. They should give consumers ideas and motivation on how they can assume responsibility in their purchasing behaviour.

Consumers themselves should also take on greater responsibility. The conflict of interests that arises when consumers demand on the one hand, cheap and perfect agricultural produce, but on the other goods which are free from pesticide residues, can only be solved by the consumers themselves taking on individual responsibility. "Shopping basket consumer and environmental protection" has a far greater influence than any position paper can ever have.





Precautionary principle

In order to prevent potential harm to humans and the environment, action may be taken when grounds for suspicion exist



According to the precautionary principle, anything which has or could have a negative or detrimental effect must be avoided or kept to a minimum.

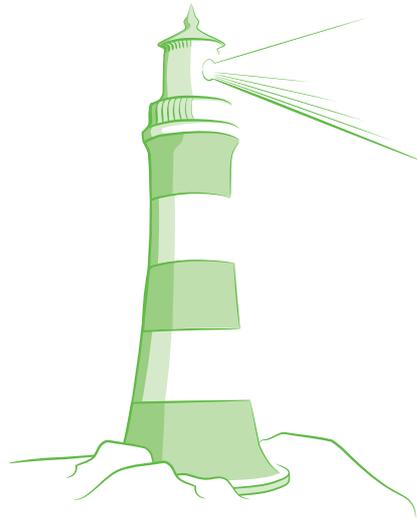
The precautionary principle should be a comprehensive paradigm in decision-making.

When action is taken on the basis of reasonable grounds for suspicion, it must be accepted that measures taken to decrease risk can exceed those which are necessary to hinder potential damage. This is in particular the case when the extent of the uncertainty regarding possible negative effects is greatly disputed.

Therefore: action must be taken to avoid damage or the possibility of damage before it occurs. This also applies when the connection between cause and effect can not yet be finally proved.

The burden of proof must be reversed vis-à-vis the current procedure. A chemical must be classified as dangerous until sufficient proof is provided that the chemical does not represent a danger to ecosystems and human health.

Highly qualified scientific information should be a central component of all measures taken to detect threats to humans and the environment at an early stage. The evaluation of such threats is based on defined sociopolitical protection aims. The more important the subject for protection, the earlier protective measures must be taken (e.g. the protection of threatened species or ecosystems or the health of the unborn and children), even when scientific proof is lacking.



Minimization of risk

Support of precautionary plant protection by way of farsighted reduction goals

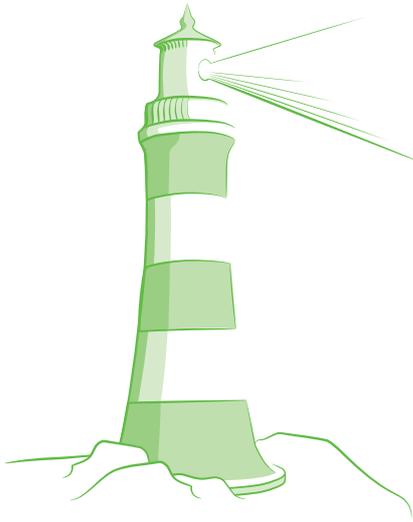
All future technical, social and economic developments should aim to reduce the environmental impact resulting from pesticide use.

In the past, the precautionary principle has not proceeded very far within the system of chemical plant protection. The potential risks posed by individual pesticides are analysed, evaluated, and regulated within a risk management which has been developed since the 1960's. At best, the choice is between various chemical products. The authority responsible can, among other things, in the case of a particularly dangerous pesticide, investigate whether another less dangerous pesticide is available.

In future, the minimisation of risk should be universally valid in chemical plant protection. The question should always be posed as to whether or how plant production, political, or economic instruments can be used to make high-risk technologies redundant.

The substitution principle must be legally anchored by a clear mandate to the government. In future, it should be made compulsory by law to give preference to non-chemical solutions to plant protection problems, even if these solutions cause reasonable economic disadvantages





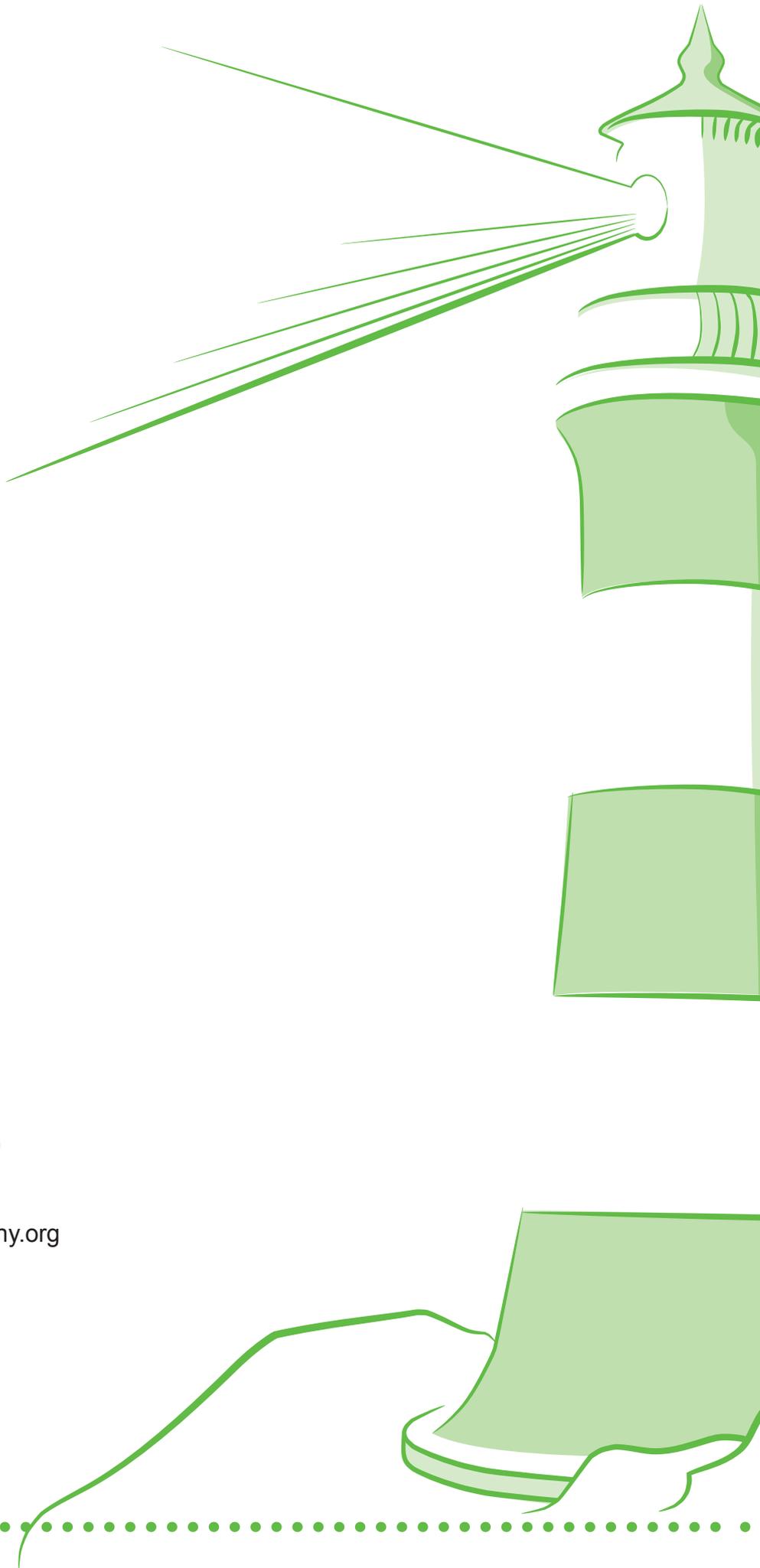
Fairness Unfair agricultural subsidies must be abolished to promote fair trade worldwide

We regard structural economic inequality where no one is to blame, as well as unfair legal and political treatment, to be unjust.

European agricultural policy is financed by the whole of society. However, in the past specially favoured companies received large direct payments, whereas some smaller companies received only small amounts. For decades, the subsidy system has promoted intensification in agriculture. Above all, large scale enterprises profited from the system and small holdings could no longer survive, thus negatively affecting particularly rural regions. The cost of this exodus from rural areas, as well as the control and clearance of the resulting negative ecological and social effects, must be paid for by society. The present reform of the common agricultural policy attempts to reverse this trend. This new political direction must be consistently followed in the future.

The European agricultural policy has not only caused inequality within Europe. Export subsidies and price support have had devastating effects, particularly in the poorer areas of the world. Due to subsidies, cheaper agricultural products dominate markets on other continents, limiting the accessibility of products from developing countries to world markets and hindering their development.

German politics must work at a European level and also within the World Trade Organisation (WTO), within a framework of bilateral and regional trade agreements, towards greater market accessibility for developing countries and the reduction of subsidies which cause harm to the environment. Unfair competition caused by the industrial countries' export subsidies vis-à-vis Southern countries must be abolished. Developing countries debts must be written off in such a way that the majority of the population benefit from the relief and that dependency on export commodities is reduced.



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