



On International Day of No Pesticide Use, PAN International Urges Move Towards Agroecology

December 3, 2017

December 3 is the anniversary of the worst peacetime chemical disaster in history. Twenty-seven tons of lethal gases leaked from Union Carbide's pesticide factory in Bhopal, India on this date in 1984, immediately killing thousands of people and poisoning half a million others.

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) International, which marks its 35th anniversary this year, is a global organization with five regional centers around the world. PAN honors the memory of the Bhopal victims every year with an international "Day of No Pesticide Use," an annual reminder that agricultural chemicals are harming communities around the world every day.

"Pesticide Action Network stands in solidarity with the survivors of the disaster in Bhopal, India, and with the millions of people worldwide who have suffered health impacts due to pesticide exposure, or face the consequences of the pollution of their air, water and soil with hazardous pesticides" said Sarojeni Rengam of PAN Asia and the Pacific. She added, "We are launching our [sign-on campaign](#)¹ to target governments and the UN to ensure corporations stop such violations of human rights".

Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) are synthetic pesticides that have been categorized by various world agencies like the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and various governments and treaties as being acutely toxic, leading to long term health harms, or being toxic to the environment.

Susan Haffmans of PAN Germany says "This list of HHPs is produced by PAN International and updated periodically as an aid to governments worldwide so that they can take action on these pesticides and phase them out. Our vision is a world free of these dangerous chemicals."

Speaking from the experiences of working with communities in West Africa, Dr. Abou Thiam from PAN Africa says "PAN International urges governments around the world to phase out the Highly Hazardous Pesticides as these have been proven to be very harmful to the health and safety of people and the environment."

Across the world, innovative farmers have replaced the use of HHPs with agroecological practices for growing food, animal feed, fiber and fuel. Agroecology is the science behind sustainable agriculture. It encourages democratic, decentralized decision-making by farmers and incorporates practical, low cost and ecology-based technologies for productive farming.

Javier Souza from PAN Latin America (RAPAL) says "Agroecological practices have worked well worldwide, and farmers grow crops successfully following this approach everywhere. Governments should support farmers in transitioning from industrial agriculture to agroecological practices."

¹ Please see the sign on campaign here: <http://panap.net/2017/12/end-corporate-greed-sign-on/>

“Agroecology is a win-win approach,” adds Kristin Schafer from PAN North America. “It protects farmworkers and rural families from exposure to the worst pesticides while producing yields comparable to chemical-dependent agriculture. It also protects and restores soil health and on-farm biodiversity, making farmers much more resilient in the face of today’s changing climate.”

PAN International will keep working to ensure that future generations are protected from the worst pesticides — and that no other community ever faces what the people of Bhopal, India suffered. We will continue to promote agroecological farming that can feed the world without polluting it.

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About PAN International: Pesticide Action Network (PAN) is a network of over 600 participating nongovernmental organizations, institutions and individuals in over 90 countries working to replace the use of hazardous pesticides with ecologically sound and socially just alternatives. PAN was founded in 1982 and has five independent, collaborating Regional Centers that implement its projects and campaigns.