



Global Network Releases Updated List of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs)

Activists around the world call for action on health-harming chemicals

Dec 19, 2016

Today Pesticide Action Network (PAN) International released an updated List of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs). The expanded list, which was first published in 2009, now includes 297 chemicals, many still in widespread use in both industrialized countries and the Global South.

Compiled after extensive review of existing scientific research, this list includes pesticides that are very toxic to humans, those that cause cancer or interfere with the hormone system, and those that have severe negative effects on the environment. The widespread use of these pesticides around the world is well documented, and PAN calls for action by decision makers everywhere — from government leaders to private retailers and food processors — to move towards phasing out these highly hazardous pesticides.

Agricultural communities, farmworkers, farmers, wildlife and the environment all over the world suffer considerable harm from these HHPs. “Decades of experience has shown that, despite numerous ‘safe use’ programs, the safe use of these chemicals is simply not possible. A transition away from HHPs is critical to protect human health and for environmental safety” says Susan Haffmans of PAN Germany.

In 2006 the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) proposed a “progressive ban of highly hazardous pesticides.” To build on this work of the FAO and the World Health Organization, PAN published the HHPs list in 2009 and continues to update it. The list provides a reference for stakeholders along the entire food chain — from field to fork — to assess if they are applying HHPs or selling food and fiber grown with HHPs.

PAN promotes agroecology as the appropriate approach to replace the use of HHPs on the farm, and has published several handbooks and field guides to facilitate the transition away from these harmful chemicals. “Agroecology is the proven, innovative and profitable way to produce crops without the use of HHPs. It protects communities, preserves the soil, protects water and is beneficial for the ecosystem”, says Dr. Abou Thiam of PAN Africa, who has been facilitating several projects in communities in West Africa that demonstrate the success of agroecology.

With agroecological practices the use of HHPs and their impacts on people’s health and the environment can be eliminated. Javier Souza, regional coordinator of PAN Latin America, RAPAL, says “farmers using agroecological approaches and practices have shown that it is possible to produce foods such as vegetables, pineapples, wheat, corn and coffee without using these Highly Hazardous Pesticides.”

In PAN Asia Pacific, the severe poisonings suffered by plantation workers in palm oil plantations in Malaysia and other Asian countries is an urgent reminder of why HHPs need to go. “The hazards of HHPs are revealed by the health harms suffered by plantation workers and farm communities” says Sarojeni Rengam of PAN Asia Pacific. “Unless HHPs are



phased out, the reality of field work in much of the world will continue to expose communities, especially farmworkers, to these extremely hazardous pesticides.”

HHPs are also having devastating impacts on bees and other pollinators. “According to a recent UN report, more than 70 of the 100 crops that provide 90 percent of the world's food rely on bees for pollination,” says Judy Hatcher of PAN North America. “The alarming collapse of bee populations in large parts of the world can in part be attributed to their exposure to HHPs. These chemicals must be phased out to protect key species, communities and the environment.”

Keith Tyrell from PAN UK says “We want to see much more support for farmers to transition away from HHPs to agroecological systems, including government funding and research inputs, as well as support from retailers and consumers. The HHPs list is a step towards helping make this happen.”

For more about PAN International and the 500+ organizations in more than 100 countries that have joined the global call to ban highly hazardous pesticides and replace them with agroecological alternatives, visit <http://pan-international.org/>.

For the PAN HHP list, visit <http://pan-international.org/resources/>

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