



PAN International Press Release

in Advance of the Conferences of the Parties to the 2017 Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

April 22, 2017

Pesticide Action Network International (PAN International) looks forward to the meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions from April 24 to May 5, 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. We urge the Parties to agree to the listing of the recommended hazardous pesticides and chemicals and to find mechanisms to ensure effective functioning of these treaties.

As part of the preparation for these combined Conferences of Parties, PAN International is providing an updated list of pesticide bans around the world, with verified information from 106 countries. We are releasing the 3rd edition of the Consolidated List of Bans, which shows that 370 pesticide active ingredients are banned in one or more countries. The updated list includes 49 new pesticides and 4 new countries.

We urge the Parties to promote agroecology as the preferred and viable alternative to the use of highly hazardous pesticides in agricultural production. Agroecological approaches to farming not only help farmers thrive in their agricultural production but also bring multiple social, health, environmental and economic benefits to the communities where agroecology is practiced.

PAN International asks Parties to these treaties to focus their attention on better compliance and decision making procedures in the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, ensuring that the most hazardous chemicals are addressed in ways that protect human health and the environment worldwide.

Due to ineffective treaty procedures, such as those in the Rotterdam Convention requiring consensus rather than implementing the will of the majority of Parties to list chemicals, a very few countries have been able to prevent progress being made towards achieving protections from hazardous chemicals for communities around the world.

In the Rotterdam Convention Conference of Parties, several countries have twice prevented the listing of a formulation of the highly hazardous pesticide paraquat because they want to continue to export this pesticide without being required to alert the importing country governments and giving them the opportunity to deny its entry into their country. Paraquat, an herbicide with high acute toxicity, is widely banned around the world as it causes many occupational and non-occupational deaths every year.

“Listing of a chemical under the Rotterdam Convention is not a ban, it just gives countries the ability to make informed choices. We hope that the Rotterdam Convention Conference of Parties will agree to the African proposal to amend the Convention to allow voting rather than requiring a consensus-based decision making process for the listing of chemicals, so that the vast majority are not blocked by a few” said Dr. Meriel Watts, senior science advisor for PAN Asia Pacific.

PAN International also urges the Stockholm Convention Conference of Parties to arrive at an enforceable compliance mechanism to hold accountable the Parties who are disregarding the provisions of the Convention. For example, Brazil, the only country to have registered its use of the ant bait poison sulfluramid, which breaks down into the listed persistent organic pollutant PFOS, is exporting it to other Latin American countries, where it is not registered and who are using it for purposes banned under the Stockholm Convention. This is a blatant disregard for the decision of the Convention regarding sulfluramid.

"It is necessary for countries to reach an agreement to list hazardous chemicals like sulfluramid in the treaty. However, there have to be robust mechanisms to ensure that Parties fully comply with the decisions taken as part of the treaty process. Right now, Brazil is not fully complying with the decision regarding sulfluramid taken under the Stockholm Convention. This needs to be addressed urgently, and overall compliance mechanisms strengthened for the Convention” said Javier Souza Casadinho, regional coordinator of PAN Latin America, RAPAL.

We also urge the Parties of the Stockholm Convention to renew their commitment to the ban on the use DDT for malaria control and minimize acceptance of requests from countries for exemptions from this ban. There are very effective Integrated Vector Management approaches, not relying on the use of DDT, that have been proven to work well in African, Latin American and Asian contexts to control malaria.

" Indoor Residual Spraying with DDT is not successful in the long-term for malaria vector control. Community level work on the ground in various African countries has shown that Integrated Vector Management can achieve successful malaria control. We call on the Stockholm Convention to not approve further exemptions from the DDT ban for malaria control" said Dr. Abou Thiam, executive director of PAN Africa.

Failing to protect communities from highly hazardous pesticides and other dangerous chemicals is a violation of their human right to health. PAN International urges the global community to help minimize contamination of the environment by highly hazardous pesticides and their impacts on human health. These pesticides must be replaced by least toxic pest and vector management approaches that are effective in the long term.

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