



Dear Colleague,

We are writing to ask for your support to establish a Global Alliance to Phase-out Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) at the upcoming ICCM4 meeting in Geneva.<sup>1 2 3</sup> We believe such an Alliance, building on lessons learnt by the successful SAICM Global Alliance for the Elimination of Lead in Paint, is vital for assisting countries to adequately deal with HHPs and their replacement in a manner that supports the livelihoods of farmers.

In the meeting document 4/8 “*Proposal on highly hazardous pesticides*”, FAO, UNEP, and WHO set out some reasons for taking action on HHPs.<sup>4</sup> They make the link between exposure to HHPs and the rising incidence of cancer and developmental disorders. The agencies express particular concern about the impacts on children who are especially vulnerable to pesticides during critical periods of development. Finally, FAO/UNEP/WHO point out the costs to society of these impacts and note that lack of capacity limits the ability of many developing countries to adequately manage risks from pesticides.

At ICCM2, concerns about lead poisoning in developing and transition countries led to the formation of a Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paint coordinated by UNEP and WHO.<sup>5</sup> This Alliance has accomplished tangible progress where none existed before with minimal secretariat burden on the UN agencies. We believe that similar advances should be made with HHPs. More information on this topic is available in our INF document, SAICM/ICCM.4/INF/29. In addition, some possible objectives of a Global Alliance to Phase-out HHPs are shown below. A

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<sup>1</sup> At ICCM3 more than 65 countries and organisations submitted a resolution that included “*a progressive ban on HHPs and their substitution with safer alternatives*”. This reflected the FAO Council’s recommendation in 2006 of a “*progressive ban on highly hazardous pesticides*”.

<sup>2</sup> In December 2014, at SAICM’s Open-Ended Working Group the entire African region called for a Global Alliance to Phase out HHPs. This call was widely supported and resulted in an agreement to develop a proposal for such an approach for ICCM4.

<sup>3</sup> Three of the intercessional regional SAICM meetings held since ICCM3, involving more than 140 countries, reiterated concern about HHPs and called for more information on ecosystem-based approaches to pest management as alternatives to HHPs.

<sup>4</sup> Meeting documents in all UN languages are located here:

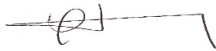
[http://www.saicm.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=525&Itemid=700](http://www.saicm.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=525&Itemid=700)

<sup>5</sup><http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/hazardoussubstances/hazardoussubstances/LeadCadmium/PrioritiesforAction/GAELP/tabid/6176/Default.aspx>

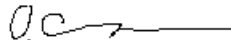
proposed Terms of Reference for the Alliance will be an INF document and it is attached to facilitate accessibility.

Just prior to ICCM4, the global community will adopt 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs). *“Promote sustainable agriculture”* is part of Goal 2 and includes a target to *“ensure sustainable food production systems...that help maintain ecosystems.”* The phase-out of HHPs is intimately linked to achieving this goal. Agroecology is regarded as the basis of sustainable agriculture but countries need assistance and cooperative work to implement it.

The reality in many developing and transition countries is that ordinary conditions of pesticide use are often a source of significant harm to farmer and ecosystem health. HHPs are not addressed in a comprehensive way in any international cooperative agreement. More than 1000 civil society and public interest NGOs from 100 countries strongly support the 2006 FAO Council call for a progressive ban on HHPs and call for their substitution with ecosystem-based alternatives. Now is the time to take action. Thank you for your consideration.



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The Global Alliance to Phase-out HHPs could have the following objectives:

- (a) To raise the awareness of government authorities and regulators, farmers and rural communities, private industry, consumers, workers, trade unions and health-care providers about the harms of highly hazardous pesticides and the availability of safer alternatives;
- (b) To catalyse the design and implementation of appropriate prevention-based programmes to phase-out highly hazardous pesticides, replace them with nonchemical alternatives, agroecological and other ecosystem-based approaches to sustainable food and fibre production, and public health vector control, as a priority. When processes for phasing-out highly hazardous pesticides are put in place arrangements must be made to ensure a fair and safe transition that protects workers' health and employment;
- (c) To provide assistance to farmers to enable them to phase out highly hazardous pesticides while maintaining their agricultural livelihood;

- (d) To provide assistance to health professionals on identifying and reporting pesticide poisonings to promote efficient surveillance and identification of highly hazardous pesticides;
- (e) To provide assistance to government authorities with identifying appropriate alternatives, particularly for public health vector control;
- (f) To promote the establishment of appropriate national regulatory frameworks to stop the manufacture, import, sale and use of highly hazardous pesticides, as well as the sound disposal of highly hazardous pesticides;
- (g) To provide guidance and promote assistance to identify, avoid and reduce exposure to highly hazardous pesticides including for communities near areas of cultivation and urban areas.