

A Global Approach to Phase-out Highly Hazardous Pesticides is Needed



Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) are a threat to human health and the environment with significant impacts on developing and transition countries. A Global Alliance to Phase-out HHPs could make real progress towards the SAICM 2020 Goal and fulfillment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #2 on promoting sustainable agriculture.

ACTION IS NEEDED TO PHASE-OUT HHPs BECAUSE

HUMAN HEALTH

Acute effects on health range from seemingly mild symptoms to much more severe symptoms, some leading to chronic disability or death. Other chronic effects may result with no acute symptoms and little outward effect, yet still can undermine a person's health for the rest of their lives, and may also affect future generations.



COSTS

Estimates of costs are difficult to make, but several studies provide some indications of the economic consequences of HHP use.

The UNEP Cost of Inaction Report notes:

- A conservative future risk scenario analysis suggests that accumulated health costs of injury to smallholder pesticide users in sub-Saharan Africa will amount to approximately USD 97 billion by 2020.
- In Europe, there is an estimated monetized value of USD 15 million per year for hospitalisations, and USD 3.9 million from lost work resulting from pesticide poisonings.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Pesticides contaminate soil, water, air, rain, fog, snow, ice, flora, fauna, and humans throughout the world. They undermine ecosystem stability and threaten global biodiversity.



FAO, UNEP, and WHO set out some reasons for taking action on HHPs, noted in meeting document: SAICM/ICCM.4/8 “Proposal on highly hazardous pesticides.” 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. FAO/UNEP/WHO also 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.

Learning from the SAICM Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint

At ICCM2 in 2009, concerns about lead poisoning in developing and transition countries led to the formation of a Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (GAELP) coordinated by UNEP and WHO. 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.

Closing the Gap: Global Alliance to Phase-out HHPs

IPEN and PAN believe a Global Alliance to Phase-out HHPs, building on lessons learned by the successful SAICM GAELP model, is vital for assisting countries to adequately deal with HHPs and their replacement in a manner that supports the livelihoods of farmers. Such an alliance could make real progress towards the SAICM 2020 Goal, and fulfillment of SDG #2 on promoting sustainable agriculture.

For more information and references see:
SAICM/ICCM.4/INF/29.



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