

**foodwatch** 

BACKGROUND PAPER 2020

# STOP THE POISON BOOMERANG!



**syngenta**

**□ - BASF**

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**STOP THE  
POISON  
BOOMERANG!**

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## NO MORE PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF BANNED PESTICIDES!

**The largest pesticide companies in Europe - Syngenta, Bayer AG and BASF - are doing everything in their power to continue selling pesticides which are banned in the EU. The pesticides are proven to be harmful to humans and the environment, and yet they still end up on the EU market (and therefore also on our plates) via the back door. How is this possible?**

>> **Export:** The pesticide giants are exporting substances that are unauthorized or even banned in the EU due to their toxicity to third countries with less strict regulations. The EU prohibits the use of these pesticides within its Member States but does not prohibit their production for export. Countless people die every year due to poisoning from pesticides, and the major part of these deaths occur in the Global South. Exporting known toxic pesticides is a gross violation of human rights.

>> **Import:** Here comes the boomerang - residues of these dangerous pesticides are left on food products (for example fruits and vegetables) which we then import from countries outside the EU and therefore they are ending up on our plates. With all the consequences they bring. These pesticides are banned as they are harmful to our health. They can be carcinogenic, hormone disrupting and/or reduce fertility.

In order to curb the export and import of harmful pesticides unauthorised in the EU, the problem must be tackled at its source: production must be completely stopped and banned. France has adopted a new law forbidding the manufacturing and exporting of pesticides banned in the EU. Attempts by the European Commission to enforce stricter rules for imported products have failed so far due to overwhelming pressure and lobbying from Bayer & co.

**The responsibility is first on the shoulders of the chemical companies and their lobbyists who are working relentlessly to block such regulations!** As long as these companies continue to produce and export banned pesticides, people outside the EU will continue to be seriously affected and those harmful substances will continue to land on our plates.

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Now is the moment to put the pressure on the pesticide giants: All three companies - Syngenta, Bayer AG and BASF - will have their stakeholder meetings within the next weeks!

**Stop the poison boomerang! Demand that Bayer AG, Syngenta and BASF stop their production and export of pesticides that are banned in the EU! Take action now by joining the foodwatch e-mail action!**

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## 1. The problem - a poisonous and deadly boomerang

While the pesticide industry continues business as usual, every year many people suffer from acute symptoms of poisoning or chronic diseases caused by pesticides. There is a lack of reliable current data. However, a report by the UN Human Rights Council<sup>1</sup> from 2017 indicates that pesticides were responsible for an estimated 200.000 acute poisoning deaths per year<sup>2</sup>.

By far most of the fatalities are reported to come from countries in the Global South, where health, safety and environmental regulations are less stringent.

Three of the largest pesticide producers in the world, BASF, Bayer AG and Syngenta continue to export substances that are banned or not registered in the EU to other countries.<sup>3</sup>

**That is why foodwatch is now targeting these three companies, demanding that they take responsibility for their violation of human rights through the production and export of banned pesticides.**

Pesticides, that are prohibited or not registered within the EU, are not only exported by the big three to third countries, but also re-enter the EU through the back door via food imports. This is described in detail in a report by Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) published in February 2020.<sup>4</sup>

**In summary:** First, the companies export these banned pesticides to non-EU countries, harming people who live there and destroying the nature. The pesticides are used on agricultural products like fruit and vegetables, rice etc. that end up back in the EU via residues and land on your plate. The substances are a serious threat for the health of farmers and endanger consumers worldwide.

**Truly a poisonous and deadly "boomerang economy"!**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/1701059.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> In the absence of reliable data, this information going back to a study from the 1980s ultimately represents estimates or projections based on studies or analyses of regional events which includes a high proportion of suicides.

<sup>3</sup> See page 12 in <https://routetofood.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RTFI-White-Paper-Pesticides-in-Kenya.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://corporateeurope.org/en/2020/02/toxic-residues-through-back-door>

## Exports by Bayer, BASF and Syngenta of pesticides not authorised in the EU

The pesticides not authorised in the EU but are being exported to other countries fall into different categories:

- >> **Substances for which the EU decided to ban the use of within its territory** as risk assessments concluded “immediate concerns for human health or animal health or the environment,” as laid down in EU Regulation 1107/2009, Article 20, Number 2.<sup>5</sup> Although the use of those substances is not allowed in the EU, it is not forbidden for companies to produce those substances and export them to other countries.
- >> **Substances which are simply not registered in the EU:** In order to be able to withdraw a pesticide, it must first have been registered under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. Some pesticide companies did not register their products in the EU because they either knew that the products would not be approved, or because they saw no market opportunity in Europe. Instead, they continue to produce and export the products to countries outside of the EU.

Regulation (EU) No 649/2012<sup>6</sup> requests exporters to notify the export of hazardous chemicals to third countries. They are only allowed to export if an explicit consent to import has been received from the importing country. However, derogations to the explicit consent requirement are possible. The regulation also implements the Rotterdam Convention<sup>7</sup> on the procedure for giving prior informed consent for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade (so called “PIC”-Substances). This Convention does not ban the export of certain chemicals, it ensures the exchange of information on those exports and the chemicals involved and provides for a mechanism allowing parties to inform exporting parties whether they agree to imports. This mechanism gives each state the sovereign right to decide on the import.

In autumn 2019 PAN Germany published a report on "Toxic Exports" in which data from 2017 was evaluated. According to this report 59.616 tons<sup>8</sup> of a total of 233 different active pesticide ingredients were exported from Germany, of which 62 are so called "highly hazardous

<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC, see: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32009R1107&from=DE>

<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32012R0649>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.pic.int/Implementation/Pesticides>: “Pesticides based on certain active ingredients frequently are exported to or produced in developing countries. These are often more toxic and have a broader spectrum of non-target effects than other products. Pesticides that are banned in wealthier countries may still be exported to poorer countries.”

<sup>8</sup> Excluding inert gases

pesticides" (HHPs)<sup>9</sup>. The particularly hazardous HHP substances made up more than a quarter of all exported substances.

According to PAN, these included “nine pesticides which are not approved for use in the EU, including the pesticides acetochlor and tepraloxym, which are classified as carcinogenic (category 2) and toxic to reproduction (category 2) by the EU; the insecticide cyfluthrin which meets the second highest risk class for acute toxicity by WHO (WHO Ib); and the growth regulator cyanamide, which is still exported in high quantities, although its use has proven to harm farmers and lost its EU approval in 2008, following repeated cases of poisoning in Italy.”<sup>10</sup>

These companies are making huge profits with pesticides that are not allowed in the EU: Syngenta makes at least 16,8% of its total turnover with these dangerous substances, according to a research from Unearthed and PublicEye which looked at data from 2018<sup>11</sup>. Thiamethoxam for instance is forbidden in Europe, because it is a threat to bees and toxic for aquatic life<sup>12</sup>. But Syngenta is ruthless and makes 7% of their sales with this insecticide. The other giants are no better: it is reported that BASF gains almost 9% of its turnover with Glufosinate, Bayer more than 2%. This herbicide is endangering mammals, may damage fertility and harm unborn children<sup>13</sup>.

**According to the United Nations, subjecting individuals to toxins known to cause major health damage or fatality is a human rights violation.<sup>14</sup> These companies are committing this abuse of human rights, they are primarily responsible, they produce and export the poison and they are not being held accountable.**

According to a motion in the Swiss Parliament in 2017, Switzerland exposes thousands of people in developing countries to products that are known to be highly toxic. Switzerland, like the pesticide companies, shifts the responsibility to importing countries: 'The notification procedure ensures that the authorities in importing countries are informed of imminent imports of dangerous industrial chemicals or pesticides and that they can take appropriate measures to protect human health and the environment'<sup>15</sup>. In other words, the government refuses to be held responsible for the sale of prohibited pesticides.

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<sup>9</sup> For details (defining criteria) on HHP see: <http://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/thematic-sitemap/theme/pests/code/hhp/en/>

<sup>10</sup>PAN Germany, English Exec. Summary: 4 pages  
<https://pan-germany.org/download/toxic-exports-the-export-of-highly-hazardous-pesticides-from-germany-into-the-world-executive-summary/>

<sup>11</sup> Calculation by foodwatch. Data taken from these graphics: <https://unearthed.greenpeace.org/2020/02/20/pesticides-croplife-hazardous-bayer-syngenta-health-bees/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-database/public/?event=activesubstance.detail&language=EN&selectedID=1937>

<sup>13</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-database/public/?event=activesubstance.detail&language=EN&selectedID=1436>

<sup>14</sup> UN Right to Food report: <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/44>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefte?AffairId=20174094>

The substance Propineb<sup>16</sup> used in the fungicide "Antracol"<sup>17</sup> is not approved any more for use in the EU. Nevertheless, Bayer has just announced that it intends to significantly expand production of "Antracol" in Dormagen in the Rhineland/Germany - for export to countries such as Japan, Brazil, Indonesia and Thailand<sup>18</sup>.

According to PAN, the largest quantities of pesticides without EU approval exported from Germany in 2017 were cyanamide (2.500 to 10.000 tons), Acetochlor (25 to 100 tons), Iprodione (25 to 100 tons), and Tetraloxydim (10 to 25 tons). Cyanamide was exported to Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Columbia, Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey and other countries. Acetochlor was exported to Chile and China, among others.<sup>19</sup>

In another example, 'Actelic Super' a pesticide that Syngenta exports to Kenya is carcinogenic, could damage the DNA, disrupt the endocrine system, are neurotoxic and affect fertility. 'Actelic Super' has the active ingredient Permethrin. Active ingredients are the chemicals used to control insects or weeds. Permethrin is potentially carcinogenic and toxic to bees and fish and has been banned since 2000 in the EU. It has also been banned in Switzerland since 2007, while Swiss-based Syngenta continues to produce and export it. From the 173 registered pesticides in Kenya, 45 are banned in the EU.<sup>20</sup> The example of Kenya is not just a single case, an exception or a mistake. It is a deliberate strategy.

Bayer & Co organise large-scale promotional activities in developing countries to sell pesticides that are banned in the EU. They pick up local farmers by bus and take them to pesticide fairs. In the documentary from Route to Food<sup>21</sup>, we see that Bayer organises dance performances for advertising harmful pesticides to farmers, who have insufficient knowledge of the dangers to themselves and local residents.

The three pesticide giants try to justify their sales of banned pesticides by promising successful, fast and modern solutions for agriculture. According to the local sellers, users should not worry about the safety of the pesticides. As a representative of Bayer East Africa states in the documentary: "We make sure that the product is registered, and the farmer is aware of it and uses it correctly."

<sup>16</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-database/public/?event=activesubstance.detail&language=EN&selectedID=1771>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.cropscience.bayer.in/Products-H/Brands/Crop-Protection/Fungicide-Antracol.aspx>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.tagesschau.de/investigativ/monitor/eu-pestizide-101.html>, text dated from 20.02.2020 (serious source, German public television 1 (ARD))

<sup>19</sup> <https://pan-germany.org/download/giftige-exporte-ausfuhr-hochgefaehrlicher-pestizide-von-deutschland-in-die-welt/>, page 15 including explanations on the problems how to exactly determinate the export quantities.

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=93&v=uAQRCDKAH54&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=93&v=uAQRCDKAH54&feature=emb_title)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAQRCDKAH54>

## Banned since 2004 and longer: Atrazine

Atrazine is a very powerful herbicide. The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) considers it to be "very toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects, may cause damage to organs through prolonged or repeated exposure and may cause an allergic skin reaction"<sup>22</sup>. It is also reported to be an endocrine disruptor<sup>23</sup>.

Atrazine has been banned in the EU since 2004. Prior to that it was banned in 2001 in France and in Germany since the 1990s. It is also banned in Switzerland. But it is still produced and exported from the EU and Switzerland, primarily by the Swiss company Syngenta<sup>24</sup>.

The use of Atrazine is regulated in the European Union by Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009<sup>25</sup>. Pursuant to that regulation, Atrazine is not approved for use in plant protection products and consequently, plant protection products containing Atrazine are not allowed to be placed on the market or used in the EU. As explained above the regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 **does not regulate the production or export of Atrazine**.

Atrazine has been exported from the European Union to third countries in recent years and 11 notifications of exports to 7 countries have been submitted by exporters for 2017. In 2015, a total of 2.484,00 tonnes were exported to Azerbaijan, Pakistan, United States, Ukraine, Sudan, Brazil and South Africa<sup>26</sup>. According to a report from Public Eye published in May 2017, France, where Atrazine is still being produced authorised 142 exports of the pesticide out of the EU since 2004<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://echa.europa.eu/fr/substance-information/-/substanceinfo/100.016.017>

<sup>23</sup> Classification: <https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-database/public/?event=activesubstance.detail&language=EN&selectedID=972> and PAN-List page 26: <https://pan-germany.org/download/pan-international-list-of-highly-hazardous-pesticides/>

<sup>24</sup> Primary manufacturer: <http://www.panna.org/resources/publication-report/syngenta-atrazine> and main notifier (number 5): [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L\\_.2004.078.01.0053.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2004.078.01.0053.01.ENG)

<sup>25</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32009R1107>

<sup>26</sup> Answer given by Mr Vella on behalf of the Commission. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-8-2017-004368\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-8-2017-004368_EN.html)

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.publiceye.ch/en/media-corner/press-releases/detail/switzerland-is-exporting-banned-pesticides-to-developing-countries>

## 2. Imports of foodstuffs containing residues of banned pesticides – the boomerang effect

**As long as companies continue to produce harmful pesticides unauthorised in the EU and export, they will end up back on our plates in Europe via residues on imported foods.**

According to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the following non EU-approved pesticides (i.e. plant protection products containing active substances that are not allowed to be applied on products grown in the EU), were reported to exceed the legal limit in Europe on the following imported foods:<sup>28</sup>

>> <b>Aubergines</b>	Carbofuran, Chlorfenapyr
>> <b>Bananas</b>	Carbendazim
>> <b>Grapefruits</b>	Isocarbophos, Bromopropylate, Diazinon, Fenthion
>> <b>Sweet Peppers</b>	Carbaryl, Fenithroton, Carbofuran, Propiconazole
>> <b>Table Grapes</b>	Acephate, Carbendazim

A study by the Dutch newspaper Trouw<sup>29</sup> confirms this information for the Netherlands: 21% of the vegetables and 19% of the fruit (from a data collection of 3.000 samples) contain residues of hormone-disrupting pesticides. Most of these come from countries outside the EU. In particular, in products from the Dominican Republic, Uganda and Kenya endocrine disrupting substances have been found.

In Germany according to EFSA multiple residues of pesticides were found in 39,4% of all samples, 5,3% exceeded the limits. Banned pesticides were found in numerous foods, such as chlorfenapyr in asparagus, chlorpropham and thiaclopid in kale, and thiamethoxam, triazophos and tricyclazole in rice<sup>30</sup>.

The EFSA 2018 report on pesticide residues also revealed that in France three-quarters of the samples taken for control on imports contained quantifiable residues and nearly a quarter of them had levels above the

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/annual-pesticides-report-2018>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/duurzaamheid-natuur/groenten-en-fruit-zijn-vaak-vervuild-met-hormoongif~b14bcc2c/>

<sup>30</sup> France: p66 ; Germany: p.69ff <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2020.EN-1814>

Maximum Residues Levels (MRL). In addition, most of them contained residues that are not approved in the EU.<sup>31</sup>

Together with some 40 NGOs foodwatch called for an end to imports of food treated with banned substances in a letter to Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides on 11 March 2020<sup>32</sup>.

Several MEPs have also protested against banned pesticides in imported products via a letter to the Commission on 26 February 2020<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.env-health.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Letter-Commissioner-Kyriakides\\_11032020.pdf](https://www.env-health.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Letter-Commissioner-Kyriakides_11032020.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> [https://www.foodwatch.org/fileadmin/-FR/Documents/MEPs\\_Letter\\_to\\_COM\\_Residues\\_of\\_prohibited\\_pesticides.pdf](https://www.foodwatch.org/fileadmin/-FR/Documents/MEPs_Letter_to_COM_Residues_of_prohibited_pesticides.pdf)

### 3. A poisoned legal framework

Although there are a number of laws on pesticides in the EU<sup>34</sup>, no law exists that prohibits the export of “Highly Hazardous Pesticides” (HHP) from EU Member States, even for those pesticides whose use in the EU is banned for health and environmental reasons<sup>35</sup>.

This is clearly double standards in EU pesticide legislation: a standard for use within the EU and a (lower) standard for use outside the EU. This double standard is highly problematic for reasons of health and environmental protection and violates human rights.

EU Regulation (EC) No 304/2003<sup>36</sup> allows companies to produce pesticides that are banned in the EU and export them to other countries. They only have an obligation to inform. The companies state that importing countries are free to decide whether they want to import such chemicals. However only for a small, single figure percentage of exported chemicals - the so called “PIC- pesticides“ covered by the Rotterdam Convention is such information transparent and freely available.

PAN criticises that “(to) date, only 3,3% of all pesticides in use world-wide are regulated strictly e.g. globally restricted in trade or banned worldwide by binding international conventions such as the Stockholm Convention (POP Convention), the Rotterdam Convention (PIC Convention) or the Montreal Protocol.”<sup>37</sup>

**This means that European citizens are still exposed to pesticides via imported food, which are banned in the EU due to their carcinogenic or hormone-disturbing properties.**

United Nations (UN) rapporteurs strongly criticise the double standards<sup>38</sup> and the UN Human Rights Council explicitly recommends tackling them<sup>39</sup>: “... strive to eliminate the existing double standard between countries, which is particularly detrimental to countries with weaker regulations”. The UN Human Rights Council also demands

<sup>34</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/approval\\_active\\_substances/eu\\_rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/approval_active_substances/eu_rules_en)

<sup>35</sup> PAN Germany, English Exec. Summary: 4 pages

<https://pan-germany.org/download/toxic-exports-the-export-of-highly-hazardous-pesticides-from-germany-into-the-world-executive-summary/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/HR/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003R0304>

<sup>37</sup> PAN 2019: [https://www.meine-landwirtschaft.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/schwerpunkt/pestizide/PAN\\_Germany\\_Giftige\\_Exporte\\_2019.pdf](https://www.meine-landwirtschaft.de/fileadmin/user_upload/schwerpunkt/pestizide/PAN_Germany_Giftige_Exporte_2019.pdf)

English Exec. Summary: 4 pages

<https://pan-germany.org/download/toxic-exports-the-export-of-highly-hazardous-pesticides-from-germany-into-the-world-executive-summary/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21306&LangID=E>

<sup>39</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/017/85/PDF/G1701785.pdf?OpenElement>

regulation of companies so that they "respect human rights and avoid environmental damage".

### **The need to change the legal framework in the EU and expand France's new legislation is urgent.**

Attempts by the European Commission to enforce stricter rules on imported products have not succeeded yet. CEO shows that the European Commission has abandoned its original plan to ban the import of residues of hazardous chemicals<sup>40</sup>, under the pressure of the pesticide industry.

In the meantime, France took the initiative of banning the "production, storage and sale of plant protection products" intended for third countries and containing substances prohibited by the EU in the Agriculture and Food Law enacted on 30 October 2018 (article 83), which will be enforced in 2022.

This decision has since been under fire from the pesticide lobby that is trying to block it. The "Crop Protection Industry Association" - **UIPP, the national branch of the European Crop Protection Association which represents most pesticide industry actors** - joined by the Union française des semenciers (French Seed Union) even tabled a priority constitutional question (QPC) in France, pretending that such ban would be contrary to the freedom of enterprise. The French Constitutional Council decided on January 31 2020 that the legal ban was acceptable.<sup>41</sup>

The reaction from the pesticide lobby says a lot: "We regret this unilateral decision, as we note that we are the only country in the world to have regulations that now prohibit the manufacture and export of unregistered products to countries outside the European Union. We also note that the other Member States will continue to manufacture and export these unregistered products, which means that it will have a disastrous impact on the 2.700 jobs directly and indirectly concerned"<sup>42</sup>.

**Ultimately what we need in order to protect human rights, consumer rights and the protection of the environment is a full ban across the whole of the EU on production, storage and sale of pesticides containing substances prohibited by the EU, and a full ban on imports of food products containing such substances.**

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<sup>40</sup> <https://corporateeurope.org/en/2020/02/toxic-residues-through-back-door>

<sup>41</sup> English version of the French Constitutional Council decision on January 31, 2020 : <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/en/decision/2020/2019823QPC.htm>

<sup>42</sup> [https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/environnement/le-conseil-constitutionnel-valide-l-interdiction-d-exporter-des-pesticides-interdits-en-ue\\_2116904.html?fbclid=IwAR3bUeMrkM1NIDJ82iebtSN0mbFA6qTLh25v4kbGfsWfI7uo4iE2VQpsNtM](https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/environnement/le-conseil-constitutionnel-valide-l-interdiction-d-exporter-des-pesticides-interdits-en-ue_2116904.html?fbclid=IwAR3bUeMrkM1NIDJ82iebtSN0mbFA6qTLh25v4kbGfsWfI7uo4iE2VQpsNtM)

## 4. Toxic lobbying business as usual

### Lobbying for a free trade of toxic pesticides

The NGO Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) obtained documents from the European Commission. These documents show the strength and the persistence of pesticide companies and trading partners, documenting an endless number of visits, letters and reports, complaints and threats to the World Trade Organisation by the US, Canada and others.<sup>43</sup>

Bayer-Monsanto, BASF and Syngenta are again the main names to be mentioned. For example, Bayer lobbyists approached a Cabinet member of staff of the European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. The staff member stated that the aim of the EU rules is "to protect consumers from discontinued substances and their residues in food". The Bayer lobbyists replied that this "will not only affect their business in the EU, but also in third countries exporting to the EU"<sup>44</sup>.

The European Commission and the Member States are not only under pressure **from the pesticide industry itself, but also of countries with high agricultural exports, such as the United States and Australia. foodwatch has already pointed out the dangers from the new generation free trade agreements negotiated by the EU with several trade partners in previous reports**<sup>45</sup>. One of those risks is that most of those countries see any protective measure that the EU would take, including on pesticides, as a **barrier to trade** and are more than ready to challenge such policy decisions.

It is interesting to note for example in the context of EU Member States ratification of CETA, the EU-Canada trade agreement, that Canada still uses 42 pesticides which are not allowed in the EU, including Atrazine. This topic is also a major issue for the MERCOSUR trade agreement, between the EU and Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

MEPs have stressed that as the Commission begins negotiations with the United States on a free trade agreement, these imports of food products with pesticide residues must be taken seriously<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> See: 'Toxic Residues Through The Back Door'. <https://corporateeurope.org/en/2020/02/new-report-eu-commission-watered-down-its-stance-toxic-residues-imported-food-appease-trade>

<sup>44</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/017/85/PDF/G1701785.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>45</sup> Foodwatch international report, Trade at any cost? <https://www.foodwatch.org/en/campaigns/free-trade-agreements/report-trade-at-any-cost/>

<sup>46</sup> [https://www.foodwatch.org/fileadmin/-FR/Documents/MEPs\\_Letter\\_to\\_COM\\_Residues\\_of\\_prohibited\\_pesticides.pdf](https://www.foodwatch.org/fileadmin/-FR/Documents/MEPs_Letter_to_COM_Residues_of_prohibited_pesticides.pdf)

## 5. Poisoned profits - Bayer AG, BASF & Syngenta

Syngenta, Bayer AG, BASF together with the non-European DowDupont, and BASF are dominating the international pesticide sector. The three European pesticide giants comprise three of the six member companies of Croplife International<sup>47</sup>, the worldwide lobby organisation for pesticides.<sup>48</sup> A big part of their poisoned profits come from sales of highly hazardous substances:

### >> Syngenta

According to a report from Public Eye and Uearthed published in 2020, **39,2% of their sales is classed as highly hazardous to health or the environment (i.e. Highly Hazardous Pesticides -HHPs)**. Among them Paraquat, of which one sip can kill a person and is linked to thousands of annual poisoning cases of farmers in the Global South. The report suggests, that Syngenta makes at least 16,8% of their sales with substances that can kill people and destroy the environment – and are therefore forbidden in the EU<sup>49</sup>.

### >> Bayer AG

**36,7% of their sales is classed as Highly Hazardous Pesticides - HHP-**, according to the report from PublicEye and Uearthed. Among which Glyphosate, but also the highly toxic and EU-wide forbidden Acetochlor and Glufosinate.

### >> BASF

**BASF makes 24,9% of their turnover with Highly Hazardous Pesticides -HHPs-**, according to the report from Uearthed and PublicEye. Among which Glufosinate, a reprotoxic chemical which may damage fertility and harm unborn children - and is forbidden in the EU.

Stop the poison boomerang! Demand that Bayer AG, Syngenta and BASF stop their production and export of pesticides that are banned in the EU! **Take action now by joining the foodwatch e-mail action!**

<sup>47</sup> <https://croplife.org/>

<sup>48</sup> All market positions taken from the following document: <https://agrow.agribusinessintelligence.informa.com/-/media/agri/agrow/ag-market-reviews-pdfs/supplements/agrowtop202019online.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Calculation by foodwatch. Data taken from these graphics <https://unearthed.greenpeace.org/2020/02/20/pesticides-croplife-hazardous-bayer-syngenta-health-bees/>



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