

EU Commission promises to end export of EU banned pesticides – PAN Europe reacts

Brussels, 18 January 2021: Reacting to the European Commission's reply [1] to PAN Europe's demand to ban the export of pesticides not approved in the European Union and the import of agricultural products made with those same pesticides, Angeliki Lysimachou - Science Policy officer at PAN Europe - said today: "PAN Europe welcomes the Commission's commitment to put an end to the disgraceful practice of double standards and we look forward to seeing the EU taking leadership on the elimination of hazardous pesticides globally."

The EU Commission's letter from December 2020 came as a response to an open letter signed by more than 70 civil society organisations [2], arguing that EU companies are taking advantage of weak human health and environmental laws in many third countries in order to sell pesticides that are considered too dangerous for use in Europe, and that, in turn, banned pesticides are allowed as residues in food imported and sold on the European market.

In its answer, the Commission highlights its role "to assist [third countries] in their decisions" on whether to import certain hazardous chemicals such as pesticides. It also states that "as part of its action on the European Green Deal, the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability nevertheless aims to go further still, by preventing the export of hazardous chemicals, including pesticides, banned in the EU. The Commission is currently considering the various options for implementing this objective, including a revision of the legislation."

"The Commission has now to fulfil its promise and ensure that EU law is modified so that companies making profits from the export of pesticides known to be too dangerous for human health and the environment to third countries, and the import of food produced with such chemicals, is considered a crime." added Lysimachou

"Efforts must not be limited at the European level, and the Commission must help to establish a new UN mechanism to promote a phase-out of highly hazardous pesticides globally." concluded Lysimachou.

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Notes:

[1]

https://www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/letter%20reply%20SG%20E_2_revLV.pdf

[2]

https://www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/Banned_pesticides_open_letter.pdf