

Annex: Global petition with 187,300 signatories delivered to FAO Director-General on 3 December 2021

Director-General Qu Dongyu
UN Food and Agriculture Organization
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy

Dear Director-General Qu Dongyu,

We are writing to express our deep concern over your plans to strengthen official ties with CropLife International. We strongly urge you to reconsider this alliance.

This collaboration with CropLife, an association of corporations which produce and promote dangerous pesticides, directly undermines FAO's priority of minimizing the harms of chemical pesticide use worldwide. Reliance on hazardous pesticides undermines the rights to adequate food and to health for present and future generations. More than one third of CropLife member company sales are Highly Hazardous Pesticides that pose the highest levels of risk to health or the environment.

Recent estimates show that there are 385 million cases of acute pesticide poisonings each year, up from an estimated 25 million cases in 1990. This means that about 44% of farmers and agricultural workers around the world are poisoned each year by an industry dominated by CropLife members. Pesticide products produced by CropLife member companies decimate pollinator populations and are wreaking havoc on biodiversity and already fragile ecosystems.

CropLife's sole purpose is to advocate for use of its members' products — which are both antiquated chemical solutions and techno-fixes (genetically modified seeds) that lock farmers into ever-escalating use of pesticides, in conjunction with proprietary seeds that have systematically undermined the rights and welfare of the majority of the world's food producers. A partnership with CropLife represents a perpetuation of this deeply unjust and unsustainable system. It undercuts your agency's critical — and urgently needed — support for agroecology, which FAO itself notes “can support food production and food security and nutrition while restoring the ecosystem services and biodiversity that are essential for sustainable agriculture.”

We strongly urge you to continue to support the transition to people-led agroecology, and discontinue this deeply inappropriate alliance with an industry that places the interests of profit above that of public welfare and the planet.

Javier Souza, Coordinator
Pesticide Action Network International

Million Belay, Coordinator

Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)

David Azoulay, Environmental Health Program Director
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)

Sofía Monsalve, Secretary General
FIAN International

Kirtana Chandrasekaran and Martín Drago, Food Sovereignty Program Coordinators
Friends of the Earth International

Sophia Murphy, Executive Director
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Andrea Carmen, Executive Director
International Indian Treaty Council (IITC)

Pam Miller and Tadesse Amera, Co-Chairs
International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)

Sue Longley, General Secretary
International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied
Workers' Associations (IUF)

Laurent Gaberell, Agriculture and Food Expert
Public Eye

Chee Yoke Ling, Executive Director
Third World Network

***On behalf of the 187,300 signatures collected across more than 107 countries by
Pesticide Action Network, Center for Environmental Law, Friends of the Earth, and
SumOfUs.org.***