**Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food**

**Questionnaire for non-governmental stakeholders to inform her report to the 34th Session of the Human Rights Council**

There is significant scientific and testimonial evidence that the use of pesticides has had detrimental effects on not only the environment but also human health, through direct exposure, as well as through contamination of food, air, water and soil. Among several human rights implicated, pesticides may threaten the enjoyment of the right to food by causing long-term damage to agricultural land, water and the ecosystem, including through loss of biodiversity.

The thematic report on pesticides and the right to food will discuss the negative implications of the use of hazardous pesticides in food production, including when used excessively and inappropriately, and the impediments their on-going use present to the adoption of safer, more sustainable alternatives, including agro-ecological practices. It will highlight the link between the use of pesticides and a wide range of human health and environmental hazards, ranging from short-term to chronic impacts, including cancer, reproductive harm, and endocrine disruption. In particular, it will focus on groups especially vulnerable to the effects of pesticides, including (subsistence) farmers and farm workers, children and pregnant women, and in certain cases due to their particular circumstances, indigenous peoples, minorities, migrants and seasonal workers.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help ascertain how the right to food informs government policies and industries’ responsibility with regard to the use of pesticides. We would be grateful for your input on the following questions:

1. The use of pesticides has had detrimental effects not only on the environment but also on human health, both from direct and indirect exposure. What are the successful and unsuccessful measures taken by Governments and businesses to prohibit, ban, restrict and phase out pesticides that are harmful to human health?
2. Do you believe that is possible to shift from industrial agriculture systems to agro-ecological methods?
3. Some particularly exposed or vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, farmers, farm workers, indigenous peoples and migrant workers, are at greater risk to the effects of pesticides due to higher exposure or increased sensitivity. Please explain the efforts undertaken by Governments and businesses to prevent and mitigate detrimental impacts of pesticides on the health of these vulnerable groups.
4. Is there any study that has been conducted by your organization using disaggregated data to differentiate and detect impacts on above mentioned vulnerable groups?
5. States have an obligation and businesses a responsibility to implement the right to information on hazardous substances. How are Governments and businesses ensuring that pesticide users and consumers are informed of the hazards and risks of pesticides used in food production?
6. Please provide your views on good practices by Governments and business to assess, monitor, prevent and mitigate the risks of exposure to hazardous pesticides, and what further steps could be taken. Answers may focus on systems present at the national, regional and/or the global level.
7. Gaps and weaknesses in international and national regulatory systems allow the use of pesticides that are unsafe, even when used legally and per instruction, on the market. Please provide examples of regulatory gaps (e.g. flaws in the registration process of pesticide products, lack of rigorous testing and safety standards, and lack of full disclosure to the public) and good practices in building effective protection frameworks governing the production and use of pesticides.
8. Please provide examples of successful efforts (supported and incentivized by Governments) to reduce the use of pesticides in agricultural food production, including ecological methods of pest control and agro-ecology.
9. Please share any information regarding court decisions or on-going litigation in relation to the detrimental effects of pesticides, in particular in relation to the right to food.
10. Please provide any additional information you believe would be useful to understand challenges confronting Governments and businesses in their efforts to prevent and mitigate adverse impact of pesticides on human health, right to food and the environment.

Due to limited capacity for translation, we kindly request that you submit your answers **no later than 5 December 2016. All responses will be posted on the web pages of both Rapporteurs unless you indicate otherwise.** Please send your responses preferably via email to: [srfood@ohchr.org](mailto:srfood@ohchr.org), copying [registry@ohchr.org](mailto:registry@ohchr.org); or to:

Special Rapporteur on the right to food

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