

A toxics-free future is essential for sustainable development

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As public interest civil society organizations, we join the global campaign for a toxics-free future as an inherent part of sustainable development. Our vision is a world where chemicals and wastes are no longer a source of harm and where all people have the right to a safe and healthy environment, free from toxic threats to surrounding environments and to future generations. We will:

1. Apply the precautionary principle and give priority consideration to the application of preventive measures. (Rio Principle 15)
2. Advance equal participation of women in decision-making, work to obtain gender disaggregated data, and promote policies that protect women from harmful chemicals and wastes. (SDG5)
3. Advocate for best interests of children during the design, implementation and enforcement of public health, environmental and labor laws to protect children from toxics and pollution. (SDG3, Rights of the Child)
4. Work to phase out the production and use of chemical pesticides, especially highly hazardous pesticides and develop national programs to promote and implement agroecology to support sustainable agriculture. (SDG2)
5. Reveal pollution and chemicals in products and processes and uphold and implement the right to information about emissions of chemicals and wastes and full disclosure about their presence in products. (SDG12, Rio Principle 10)
6. Identify, characterize, and advocate for sustainable clean-up of contaminated sites including the meaningful participation communities, and ensure intergenerational equity and promote ecological restoration. (SDG15)
7. Raise public awareness about harmful chemicals and wastes including through monitoring air, land, water, food, products, and people and promote the development and implementation of safer processes and alternatives, including non-chemical alternatives, and strengthened laws to minimize and prevent pollution. (SDG6, 12, 16)
8. Work to reduce and eliminate ocean pollutants including mercury, persistent organic pollutants, endocrine disrupting chemicals, and plastics. (SDG12, 14)
9. Conduct waste audits, promote recycling and zero waste, and push for cradle to cradle policies without toxic chemical recycling into new products. (SDG11)
10. Advocate and enforce occupational health and safety policies that provide meaningful right to know, prioritize prevention and precaution, establish exposure limits protective of the most vulnerable, and provide equal protection in the workplace and the community. (SDG8, 9)
11. Work with governments to ban single use plastic packaging and products and lead in paint, varnishes, lacquers, stains, enamels, glazes, primers and coatings. (SDG3, 12, 14)
12. Actively participate in decision-making and implementation of policies and agreements on chemicals and wastes at the national, regional, and global levels. (SDG16, Rio Principle 10)
13. Demand that the private sector complies with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; takes responsibility to internalize all costs of chemical production including wastes and recycling infrastructure; adopts extended producer responsibility; provides comprehensive toxicity information on chemicals including nanomaterials; achieves zero discharge of toxic chemicals and wastes in production; and implements green chemistry to make products that are non-toxic, durable, and reusable. (SDG8, 9, 12, 17, Rio Principle 16)