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## *COUNTRY SITUATION REPORT ON HIGHLY HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES (HHPs) IN BRAZIL*

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### **Executive Summary**

This report is part of a series of articles regarding highly hazardous pesticides (HHP) in Latin American countries. The report presents a panoramic view and an analysis of Brazil's status with regard to HHPs, from a new normative category due to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management (ICCPM). This report uses reference information obtained through research on governmental and non-governmental websites, specific publications about pesticides, contributions of researchers, and news articles from the media.

In 2009, the Pesticide Action Network International (PAN International) independently produced the first List of Highly Hazardous Pesticides. It took into account the criteria promulgated by both the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as other relevant information, such as endocrine changes found in humans and toxicity to bees, based on indicators used by PAN International to identify HHPs.

The term “highly hazardous pesticides” has been recognized worldwide since the FAO Council proposed the “progressive ban on HHPs.” Thus, FAO, together with WHO, inserted the definition of HHPs in the fourth updated version of the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. According to the ICCPM (2014, p.4), HHPs have been identified as those that “present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards to health or environment, according

to internationally accepted classification systems such as WHO or GHS or their listing in relevant binding international agreements or conventions. In addition, pesticides that appear to cause severe or irreversible harm to health or the environment under conditions of use in a country may be considered to be and treated as highly hazardous.”

In this report, the list of HHPs made by PAN International compares active ingredients authorized by Brazilian governmental authorities for all uses, i.e. household, agriculture, and other non-agricultural uses. The report shows that there has been an increase of pesticide use in Brazil; in fact, it is one of the countries that uses pesticides the most. In 2016, Brazil bought 551,313.25 tons of active ingredients. In addition to the massive marketing of pesticides and similar products, this increase in consumption is also due to public policies intended to spur agricultural production, such as rural credit, and tax incentives for trade and industry. The increase in consumption is also a result of an expansion in commodities production, e.g. soybeans, corn, sugarcane and agro-energy crops modified for herbicide tolerance, which heavily use pesticides.

According to the Agricultural Phytosanitary System (Agrofit) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (“MAPA” in Portuguese), pesticide sales hit a record high in Brazil in 2014. Between 2007 and 2014, sales rose from 623,353,689 to 1,552,998,056 kilograms, an increase of 149.14%. Simultaneously, the country’s land area occupied with temporary and permanent crops increased from 62,338,730 to 76,246,588 hectares (or 22.31%), according to data from the Automatic Recovery System of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. Bottom line, Brazil was using an average of 16.87 kilograms of pesticides per hectare.

Bill 6.299 / 2002, also known as the “poison package,” written to suppress Law 7.802 / 1989, is in progress and represents a major setback to the regulation of pesticides in Brazil. To speed up the pesticide registration process in the country, the bill makes significant procedural changes to allow the use of pesticides, minimizes the roles of the Ministries of Health and Environment, and removes the registration ban for teratogenic, mutagenic and carcinogenic products. Of the active ingredients currently authorized in Brazil, 106 are on the list of HHPs identified by PAN International in 2016, which are commercialized in 864 formulated products registered. Also, there are 62 active ingredients used in Brazil that are banned in other countries, according to the *Consolidated List of Banned Pesticides* of PAN International (2017). However, if we compare the list of authorized HHPs in Brazil with the latest version of the PAN 2018 HHPs list, we would have to add another five, for a total of 111 HHPs currently authorized for use. The number may be

even higher due to the increase of pesticides approved since the arrival of the new Bolsonaro government.

According to a dossier published in 2015 by the Brazilian Association of Collective Health (*Associação Brasileira de Saúde Coletiva* – ABRASCO), the main problems caused by pesticides are: residues in food; rain and water contamination; contamination of breast milk and in natural cow milk for human consumption; and negative impacts on biodiversity. One of the strategies to solve these problems (not focused exclusively on HHPs) is to advocate for the approval of Bill 6,670 / 2016, which would establish the National Policy for the Reduction of Pesticides in Brazil (“PNARA” in Portuguese).<sup>1</sup> This project is the result of a several years-long partnership among civil society and government bodies, including participation by nine Ministries. Another important strategy is the promotion of agroecology, for which there are important connections, networks and social movements, such as the National Articulation of Agroecology (ANA), and the Brazilian Association of Agroecology (ABA).

Finally, worthy of note are the Permanent Campaign Against Pesticides and for Life, and the National Forum to Combat the Impacts of Pesticides, as well as State Forums. These work as instruments of social control, bringing together civil entities acting at the national level, such as government agencies (for example, the Brazilian Government Agency for Law Enforcement) and representatives of the academic and scientific sectors. There are also coordinating actions within the scientific society, involving researchers and workers' organizations, such as ABRASCO, the Citizen Science Movement (MCC), and the Union of Scientists Committed to the Society and Nature of Latin America (UCCSNAL).

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<sup>1</sup> Full access to PNARA in Portuguese at: <http://contraosagrotoxicos.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/PNaRA.pdf>