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**Highly Hazardous Pesticides Awareness Brochure**

**International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)**

**SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (SEDI)**

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**What are pesticides?**

Pesticides are agrochemicals that are used for crop protection. A pesticide is a substance intended to prevent, destroy, repel or control any animal pest or disease caused by microorganisms, as well as unwanted weeds [1]. Pesticides can also be used as vector control and agriculture control agent in public health programmes [2]. The group includes herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides. Pesticides may be used for crops on the field, harvested produce, agricultural commodities or animal feeds and fish and 2.1% of pesticides used in the world come from Africa [3]. The cost of labor, choice of pesticide application, and the promise of swift pest control have made the use of pesticides judicial or rampant all over the world [4]. A survey on pesticides usage in Nigeria indicated that about 15,000 metric tons annually of pesticides comprising about 135 pesticide chemicals marketed locally under 200 different produce brands and formulation were imported during 1983-1990 thus making Nigeria one of the largest pesticides users in sub-Sahara Africa [5].

More than 95% of the applied herbicides and 98% of insecticides reach non-target soil micro-organisms than their target pest, as they are sprayed proportionately across the entire field, irrespective of the affected areas [6]. Hence, of the total quantity of applied pesticides, about 0.1% reaches the target organisms while the remaining quantity pollutes the soil and environment. In the early 1990s, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that there were 3 million acute pesticide poisonings a year worldwide, almost all in developing countries: 700,000 occupational; 300,000 accidental; and 2 million by intent [2]. There are 25 million occupational pesticide poisonings each year among agricultural workers in developing countries alone [7].

**What are HHPs?**

Pesticides are inherently hazardous, and among them, a relatively small number of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) cause disproportionate harm to environment and human health including: severe environmental hazards, high acute and chronic toxicity [8]. Pesticides that appear to cause severe or irreversible harm to health or the environment under conditions of use in a country may also be considered to be and treated as highly hazardous”.

Stakeholder reflection on the failure of existing pesticide controls to reduce the incidence of damage to human health and environment led FAO and WHO to launch a new initiative for a progressive ban on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) in 2006. The HHP initiative recognizes that WHO Class II pesticide active ingredients (‘moderately hazardous’ in terms of acute mammalian toxicity as determined in laboratory testing), such as endosulfan, paraquat and chlorpyrifos, can be as problematic in reality as the ‘extremely’ and ‘highly’ hazardous pesticides which make up WHO Class I. This conclusion is also drawn from PAN’s poisoning cases data in West Africa [9] and locust cost externality assessment in Senegal [10]. In 2009 PAN International published its ‘List of Highly Hazardous Pesticides’ as a contribution to UN discussions [11]. It provides a catalogue of the most harmful pesticides that is more comprehensive, and takes into account more potential pesticide hazards, than current listings by official bodies.

HHPs are considered to represent a fraction of all registered pesticides worldwide; in some cases as small as 6 percent (Southern African countries) while in other cases as high as 30 percent of the registered products [8]. They are still in use in many low and middle income countries because of inadequate regulation and monitoring and are primarily used in agriculture and in public health (DDT and Clothianidin) for malaria vector control, but also used in domestic gardens. They have been detected in air, water, soil, animals and humans and have been found in local food systems and global food commodities such as bananas, coffee and rice, but the most contaminated crops are fruit and vegetables. They can also cause loss of biodiversity, kill fish and birds and poison wildlife and should be progressively phased out by more sustainable alternatives.

**Most common HHPs in Nigeria**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pesticides** | **Pesticide group** | **Effects**  |
| Paraquat dichloride | It is used as a plant desiccant effective against grasses  | Acute toxicity |
| Atrazine | Herbicide | Long term effects; environmental toxicity; toxic to termites |
| Acetochlor | Herbicide | Long term effects |
| Butachlor | Herbicide | Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA |
| Propanil | Herbicide | Removed from PAN HHP list in 2013 |
| Pendimenthalin | Herbicide | Removed from PAN HHP list in 2013 |
| Oxidiaxone | Herbicide | Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA |
| Alachlor | Herbicide | Long term effects; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention |
| Glyphosate | Herbicide | Long term effects; toxic to bees |
| 2,4-D | It is a selective post emergence herbicide used for the control of many annual broadleaf weeds  | Removed from PAN HHP list in 2013 |
| Aldicarb | Carbamate insecticide | Acute toxicity; environmental toxicity: toxic to bees; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention  |
| Cadusafos | Nematicide | Acute toxicity; environmental effects |
| Diquat dichloride | Herbicide Dessicants, defoliants and harmful killer  | Acute toxicity |
| Lambda-cyhalothrin | Insecticide and acaricide | Acute toxicity; long term effects; toxic to bees |
| Fentin hydroxide | Fungicide | Acute toxicity; Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA; Long term effects |
| Metolachlor | Selective pre-emergence herbicide  | Removed from PAN HHP list in 2013 |
| Parathion-methyl | Insecticide and acaricide | Acute toxicity; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention |
| Procymidone | Fungicide | Long term effects; Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA |
| Endosulfan | Insecticide | Acute toxicity; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention; Listed in Annex III of the Stockholm Convention  |
| Imidacloprid | Insecticide | Environmental toxicity; toxic to bees |
| Isoproturon | Systemic herbicide  | Removed from the PAN HHP list since 2013 |
| Heptachlor epoxide | Broad-spectrum insecticide  | Removed from the PAN HHP list since 2011 |
| Captafol | It is a protective, wide spectrum foliage and soil fungicide  | Acute toxicity; long term effects; Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention |
| Mancozeb | It is a protective fungicide, effective against a wide range of foliage disease  | Long term effects |
| Benomyl | Eradicant fungicides  | Long term effects; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention |
| Lindane | It is used against sucking and biting insects  | Long term effects; very toxic to bees; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention; Listed in Annex III of the Stockholm Convention |
| DDT | Effective against wide variety of insects, including domestic insects and mosquitoes  | Long term effects: Endocrine disruptor or potential endocrine disruptor, Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA; Environmental toxicity: Persistent in soil, water, sediment; toxic to aquatic organism; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention; Listed in Annex III of the Stockholm Convention |
| Zineb | Protectant fungicide  | Endocrine disruptor or potential endocrine disruptor |
| Malathion | Wide range insecticides used against aphids, red spider, thrips and leafhoppers.  | Long term effect; toxic to bees |
| Molinate  | Herbicide | Long term effects |
| Methoxychlor  | Insecticide | Environmental effects |
| Chlorotoluron | Post emergence herbicide | Long term effects |
| Carbofuran | Insecticide | Acute and environmental toxicity |
| Carbaryl | Insecticide | Long term effects and environmental effects |
| Folpet | Fungicide | Long term effects |
| Parathion | Insecticide | Acute toxicity and long term effects |
| Methyl bromide | Fumigant – Rodenticide and nematicide  | Ozone depleting chemical according to the Montreal Protocol |
| Fenthion | Organic: non-systemic insecticide  | Environmental effects: highly toxic to bees |
| Parathion | Organic: non-systemic insecticide  | Acute toxicity; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention |
| Hexachlorocyclohexanes  | Fungicide | Long term effects; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention |
| 1-3-dichloropropene  | Fungicide; nematicide | Long term effects: Probable/ Likely carcinogen according to EPA |
| Ethylene dibromide  | Fumigant nematicide | Long term effects; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention  |
| 2,4,5-T | Herbicides-hormone weed killer  | Removed from PAN HHP list in 2013 |
| Hexachlorobenzene | Acaricide  | Acute toxicity; long term effects; highly bioaccumulative; Listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention; Listed in Annex III of the Stockholm Convention |
| Monocrotophos | Insecticides | Acute toxicity; toxic to bees |
| Cyanazine | Pre and post-emergence herbicide  | Removed from the PAN HHP list since 2013 |

**Source [12]: PAN, 2016 - International List of Highly Hazardous Pesticides**

**Impacts of HHPs**

The impacts of the highly hazardous are divided into human health and environmental impacts. **Human Health impacts of HHPs**

1. Consumption of crops and plants grown under chemical pest control could cause health hazards to humans. This is especially common in the consumption of fruits and vegetables without proper washing for example, [13] reported the presence of paraquat residues in some commonly consumed vegetables in Abeokuta, Nigeria.

2. Application/Spraying of pesticides could cause physical discomfort in the absence of protective equipment.

3. It is also likely to cause skin burns when not wearing protective clothing in pesticide spraying.

4. Drinking water from sources contaminated by pesticide spraying adjacent to the resources, or overflow and drain of chemicals adjacent to drinking water resources.

5. Chemical pesticides could cause harm to the human health when drinking water polluted by pesticides and eating polluted animals and agro byproducts.

**Environmental Impacts of HHPs**

1. *Impact on Aquatic Organisms*- Pesticide residues lead to deterioration of water quality, hence reducing the number of aquatic organisms.

2. *Water Pollution and Contamination*- Spraying pesticides adjacent to drinking water resources may lead to their contamination, and use of hazardous pesticides and wrong pesticides application approach could result to pollution of surface and underground water.

3. *Soil degradation/contamination-* Long-term excessive use of pesticides will cause higher pesticide resistance and pesticide residues in the soil which will cause soil contamination.

4. *Extinction of Non-Target Species-* Highly toxic pesticides may have impact on the non-target species (bees, natural enemies, *etc*.).

5. *Air Pollution-* Unsafe handling, application and disposal of pesticides products such as empty containers and obsolete products will cause air pollution.

6. *Soil fertility imbalance-* Pesticides cause imbalance of soil fertility which directly affects crop yield.

**Effects of using specific HHPs**

There is certainty that the application of Endosulfan pesticide is moderately persistent in Ibadan soil and hinders availability of some soil nutrients [14]. There was 85% population reduction of nematode as a result of Endosulfan application. Total DDT and heptachlor found in Ibadan ground water exceeded the WHO limits for these chemicals in drinking water [15].

**Unintended costs incurred in using HHPs**

The UN Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO) analyzed externalities caused by spraying high concentrations of organophosphate insecticides (mainly malathion and fenitrothion) for locust control operations in Senegal during the last outbreak in 2003 - 2005 [8]. It estimated external costs of over 8 million euros: 2.75 million for environmental costs; 2.5 million on human health; 2.1 million in agricultural production losses; and 0.7 million in damage prevention costs.

Unintended costs of using HHPs include:

1. Increased cost of production: The use of HHPs in agricultural farming systems leads to an increase in cost of production due to the fact that these pesticides are expensive.
2. Maintenance cost: maintenance of sprayers such as power driven models with motor and hand operated sprayers. Hand operated sprayers such as Lancet, Falcon, Knapsack, Motorized mist blower, Ultra Low Volume (ULV), and Electrodyne sprayers need to be maintained regularly through procedures like washing and oiling with light oil to prevent corrosion [16].
3. Cost of pesticide poisoning treatment: First aid for pesticide poisoning victims and hospital bills.
4. Cost of pesticide poisoning prevention: During spraying personal protective equipment (PPE) are worn to reduce contact with the pesticide. These include coveralls, long rubber gloves, goggles, respirators, rubber boots and waterproof hat. These PPE are usually expensive and increase the cost.
5. Environmental pollution: The use of HHPs causes environmental degradation and pollution [16].

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