

## Civil society activities



### *Exports of pesticides banned in the EU. Letter to the European Commission*

The European Union is guilty of an immoral and scandalous practice that environmental NGOs have been denouncing for years. It bans the agricultural use of the pesticides that are considered the most dangerous for the environment or health on its territory, but authorizes their export to third countries, often poor and lacking the capacity to control these products. In addition to the immoral nature of selling these toxic products outside Europe's borders, they return to Europe as residues in agricultural products that the EU imports in large quantities. Faced with this "poison circle", agrochemical companies are trying to increase the authorized maximum residue limits (MRLs) of these banned products in imported products! Following an [in-depth investigation](#) carried out with Greenpeace UK's investigation unit, Unearthed, the Swiss NGO Public Eye reveals the colossal scale of exports of banned pesticides from the EU: in 2018, EU member countries approved the export of 81,615 tons of pesticides containing substances banned on their own territory because of unacceptable health or environmental risks, to 85 countries, three-quarters of which are developing or emerging countries, where the use of such substances presents very high risks. These exports were the subject of a [webinar organized by our partner PAN-EU](#) on September 29, with the participation of 3 Justice Pesticides' board members, Corinne Lepage, former French Minister of the Environment, Michèle Rivasi, Member of the European Parliament from the Greens/EFA group, and Larissa Bombardi, a Brazilian geographer specialized in EU-Brazil relations. Justice Pesticides naturally partnered with 75 associations in the open letter sent on November 5, 2020 to the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission., and the Commissioners for Health, Agriculture and the Environment, asking them to put an end to the double European standard, which bans the most dangerous pesticides at home, but allows itself to export them to third countries, and which residues return to the plates of European consumers through imports of contaminated agri-food

products. In its response on December 9, 2020, the Commission says it is considering options to achieve the goal of preventing exports of dangerous chemicals, notably pesticides, including through potential legislative change, and is assessing concerns about tolerances for pesticide residues in imported products. So it's a case to be followed in the coming year.