



Action for Solidarity Environment Equality and Diversity

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# Pesticides

- Called 'Agricultural poison' when I was young
- Industry changed that into 'crop protection'
- But healthy crops don't need protection
- Healthy crops protect themselves



# The impact of pesticides

- Today extremely widespread use
- **Some 3 million tons** applied in 2017
- **\$ 60 Billion** a year worldwide
- Unprecedented damage to human and animal health, environment, climate and biodiversity

versvoko's  
foodteams



# And the damage?

- \$ 11,4 Billion profit in pesticide sales (2014)
- Polluters do not pay for the damage – not yet
- Society, nature, environment pay the cost

That's you and me



# Impact of pesticides on life

- Thanks to independent research we know the impact of pesticides on biodiversity and soil, health and especially the young and unborn
- Endocrine disruptors can cause vital damage in an extremely low dose:
- **Most pesticides are endocrine disruptors**



# Industry lobby

- Present pesticides as harmless
- Myth: 'necessary to feed the world'
- Weaken and influence regulation
- Attacking independent scientists
- Asbestos, tobacco, chemicals, pesticides



# The Green Revolution

- Widespread monocultures, growing on artificial fertilizers and many times doused with pesticides
- Most of these crops are for animal feed, sugar and agro fuels: soy, corn, beets, canola
- In Argentina they call it the green desert: nothing lives there except the monoculture plants
- Nature is gone, those who live next to the fields are poisoned and suffer illness and birth defects



# The pesticide paradigm

- Reduce the soil to dead substrate
- Add the chemicals you like
- Kill everything you don't like
- Concentrate power in a few big companies
- Philosophy of war by the companies of war



# Agriculture at a crossroads

- **The current model is not sustainable:** it is exploiting and poisoning the earth, affecting climate and biodiversity
- It has **negative impacts** on fertile soil, the very thin layer of the earth that societies depend upon
- The UN estimates that in the current pace of erosion and soil destruction we have **60 years left**
- IAASTD (2008): **Agro-ecology the way forward**



# Moving forward: paradigm shift

- All over the world millions of farmers and thousands of scientists show:
  - The change towards a more diverse and inclusive system
  - Use local resources whenever possible
  - Stop the war against nature, stop working with death as a basis
  - Work with nature and with life as a basis
  - Share knowledge and experience
  - Appreciate the abundance of nature

**We can do much better**  
**You students have an important role to play**



# And Syngenta?

- **They cause huge damage to the world every day.**
- They should be held accountable for the damage to our planet. Be put on trial for violation of human rights and ecocide.
- **Is Syngenta really that bad? Don't they do quite a few nice things?**
- Syngenta might employ some very friendly people who sincerely believe that they can help the world.
- But Syngenta's business model is selling pesticides and patented seeds.

**The more profit the better - for them and their shareholders**

**Not for the world**



# Some facts about Syngenta

- **Bee-killers:** Syngenta and Bayer are the main producers of neonicotinoids ('bee-killers')
- **Paraquat:** banned in EU, massive sales elsewhere
- Silencing the scientist, the case of atrazine (banned in EU)
- Industry lobby groups **FEFAC, ECPA, ERF etc. lobbying for less regulation and to weaken precautionary principle**
- Syngenta merged with **ChemChina** (State of China)



# Conclusions

- Pesticides companies are fossils, based on paradigm of the past: floating on oil, death and a very narrow view
- Improving agriculture + health + biodiversity + diversity = phasing out pesticides
- **Scientific Study** should not only for your own salary and the profit of a small group of shareholders
- **Science could be for the sake of all**, a science of life where humans are not trying to dominate nature
- **Advanced and much broader view**



# Some references

- Agriculture at a Crossroads, IAASTD (2008)
- Wake up before its too late (UCTAD 2013)
- Report of Special UN Rapporteurs on the right to Food and on hazardous substances (2017)
- ETC Group: Who will feed us (2017)

