

International Panel

18th June 2019 | 6 pm | Bern

An aerial photograph of a green tractor with a long horizontal spray boom, moving across a vast field of green crops. The tractor is positioned in the center of the frame, leaving a trail of darker green behind it. The entire image is framed by a thick red border.

# Highly hazardous pesticides: a global health concern

**Public Eye**

## International Panel

# Highly hazardous pesticides: a global health concern

Approximately three million tonnes of pesticides are applied worldwide every year, an amount that has been constantly increasing since the 1990s, especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), which account today for over half of pesticide use. While farmers and rural residents are exposed most directly, residues of pesticides are found everywhere: in our food, our drinking water, in the rain and in the air. Warnings about the negative impacts of pesticides on human health and the environment are escalating.

The most dangerous pesticides, known as “highly hazardous pesticides” (HHPs), are used heavily in LMICs, despite being – for the most part – no longer authorised in Switzerland and the EU. According to estimates of Public Eye, in 2017 pesticides classified as such by the Pesticide Action Network generated 22 billion USD in revenue globally. Switzerland-based Syngenta plays a central role in this controversial business.



In India, thousands of farmers are poisoned every year. In Brazil, the world's largest consumer, millions are exposed to a cocktail of pesticides in the drinking water. Scientific studies conducted in this agricultural superpower show disturbing rates of congenital deformities, cancer and other chronic diseases in the regions with the highest levels of pesticide use.

In order to reduce risks to human health and the environment, UN agencies and experts call for urgent action to phase out the most hazardous pesticides and replace them with safer alternatives. We talk to high-level panellists from different horizons about the responsibility of states such as Switzerland, pesticide manufacturers, farmers and civil society to address one of the major concerns of our times.

## PANELLISTS

### ▸ **ADA CRISTINA PONTES AGUIAR**

Medical researcher, Federal University Ceará, Brazil

### ▸ **BASKUT TUNCAK**

UN Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes

### ▸ **JAYAKUMAR CHELATON**

Director Pesticide Action Network India

### ▸ **LAURENT GABERELL**

Expert on agriculture, biodiversity & intellectual property, Public Eye

### ▸ **ROMAN MAZZOTTA**

Head Crop Protection Legal; Syngenta Country President Switzerland

### ▸ **REGINALD FITZGERALD**

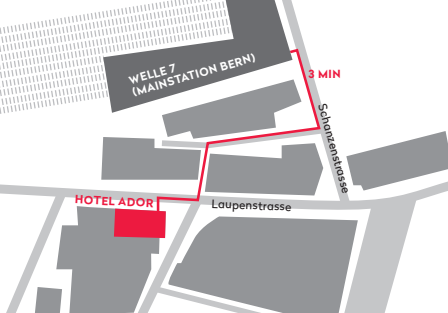
Swiss Centre for Applied Human Toxicology at the University of Basel

## MODERATION

### ▸ **MAREN PETERS**

Business journalist, Schweizer Radio SRF

*The panel will be held in English.*



**18th June 2019**  
**6–7.30 pm**  
**HOTEL ADOR**  
**Laupenstrasse 15 | Bern**

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