

SAICM/UCT

Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHP) Community of Practice (CoP)

Discussion 2 2021 Guide

<b>Title</b>	<b>The Role of Alternatives in Phasing out HHPs</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> May 2021</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>10h00 – 11h30 (GMT +2)</b>
<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Prof Andrea Rother, University of Cape Town, South Africa</b>
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Alex Stuart, PAN UK Sheila Willis, PAN UK Francesca Mancini, FAO Mark Davis, Independent Consultant</b>
<b>WebEx registration link</b>	<a href="https://unep.webex.com/unep/j.php%3FRGID=r9edc530e677759e326086783c02fc11c">https://unep.webex.com/unep/j.php%3FRGID=r9edc530e677759e326086783c02fc11c</a>

**Two steps are required to join this discussion:**

1) Sign up to the CoP, if you have not done so previously, at:  
<https://saicmknowledge.org/community>

Should you require assistance or have questions, contact: [uctcops@outlook.com](mailto:uctcops@outlook.com)

2) Register for the 19<sup>th</sup> of May WebEx discussion at:  
<https://unep.webex.com/unep/j.php%3FRGID=r9edc530e677759e326086783c02fc11c>

We encourage you also to join the HHP CoP WhatsApp group by clicking on this link:  
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/JFBuAOTRuRZONAqm8JHpp0>

Should you **NOT be able to join the discussion** but still wish to contribute please **click the link below** and fill out the Form with your **contributions**:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=NUNFkk5Wz0ywsCREW4wD92pVK-1gQzNHlYW4gnca1WNUMFNEWUVXR1dBOVZVUFpVOTZTNjFVNTJKRyQIQCN0PWcu>

### **Discussion Format on the Day:**

- This is not a Webinar, but rather a platform for members to discuss the questions presented in the chat room of **WebEx** after an oral presentation.

The discussion presenter/s will briefly provide a verbal introduction to the topic and the questions listed in this discussion guide.

- Three questions will be posted during the 1 ½ hour discussion. The presenter/s will address questions and comments posted by members in the chat room and participants are encouraged to respond to each other as well.
- All are welcome to join the discussion which will be held in English. Feel free to write in another language if you are struggling with English and members will assist where possible.

## PRESENTER BIOSKETCH



**Francesca Mancini** is a tropical agronomist. She has been working with FAO for over 20 years in sustainable agriculture programmes with a focus on ecological pest management in Asia and in Africa. She is currently based in the Pacific where she coordinates the ACP MEAs3 programme on mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors in the region.



**Mark Davis** is an independent consultant specializing in pesticide management and sustainable agriculture. He worked for 17 years with FAO successively leading the field programme on obsolete pesticides, the Pesticide Management Unit of FAO, FAO's Climate Change Strategy and the FAO Environmental and Social Risk Management Unit. Under Mark's leadership while at FAO, the Africa Stockpiles Programme was established, the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management was comprehensively revised in 2013, the Pesticide Registration Toolkit was developed and the establishment of the DPRM at UCT was supported. Previously Mark has worked with PAN-UK, as a government regulator on agriculture and environment and as a manager of an agricultural commune. Mark currently works with the University of Edinburgh based Centre for Pesticide Suicide Prevention (CPSP) and is collaborating with PAN-UK, FAO, UNEP and WHO on HHP risk reduction initiatives.



### **Alex Stuart**

Alex joined PAN UK in August 2020. He has over 10 years of experience conducting research and training in agroecology and sustainable crop management and conducted his PhD on rodent ecology and management. Before joining PAN, Alex worked at the International Rice Research Institute, based in Philippines and Indonesia.



### **Sheila Willis**

Sheila is Head of International Programmes at Pesticide Action Network UK and an Honorary Senior Lecturer at in the Division of Environmental Health in the University of Cape Town. Her academic background is in agricultural entomology and she started her career working in participatory farmers' research in Ethiopia and Kenya. In recent years Sheila has been concerned with pesticide management as well as monitoring incidents of acute pesticide poisoning.

## DISCUSSION INTRODUCTION – Francesca Mancini

This discussion aims to promote engagement with and an understanding of alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides.

### *Availability of alternatives*

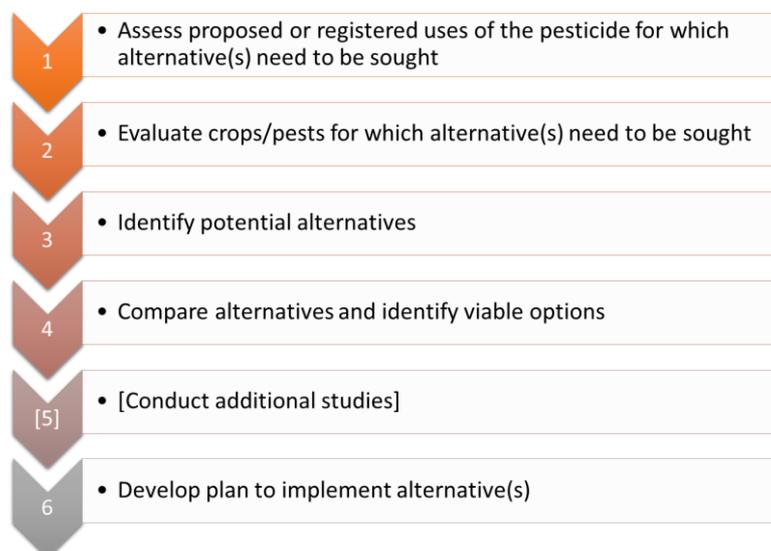
*There may often be a perception that HHPs need to remain available because there would-be no-good alternatives. This can prove to be a misconception that may persist because of user habits or advice based on limited knowledge or by persons with interest in the products concerned. In most cases, there are alternatives that pose less risk. These may include suitable biopesticides or non-chemical pest management approaches, less hazardous chemicals, or different formulations that pose less risk. Pest and vector management based on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Vector Management (IVM) would be preferred. The same applies to other agro-ecologically based production systems, such as organic agriculture.*

*Finding viable alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides can either be relatively fast or require several months or years, depending on factors such as the extent to which the pesticides are in use, the complexity of the pest problem(s) and, more importantly, the resources and technical capacity available in the country acting.*

Identifying alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides:

- ***starts with the understanding of the pest/crop problem.*** *The need to register new pesticide active ingredients, products or specific pesticide uses, including low-risk or biological active ingredients, should always be assessed against the pest problem and within an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach.*
- ***is not the mere replacement*** *of a hazardous pesticide (or a class of pesticides) with another, less hazardous product? Pesticide history has shown the limitations of the replacement approach leading to a pattern known as “regrettable substitution”.*
- ***is a multi-stakeholder, consultative process*** *aimed at improving the overall crop performance and pest management strategy and it therefore involves several agricultural stakeholders including farmers, researchers, extension officers, agro-chemical industry and civil society and financing sector including finance ministry (Incentives). This means a wider process beyond pesticide management and beyond pesticide regulatory stakeholders (registrars).*

Key steps in the identification of alternatives are:



## QUESTION 1 (10:15 GMT +2) Mark Davis

### Background

Replacements for HHPs need to fulfil a range of expectations to satisfy various stakeholders. These can be complex and need to be understood early in the process of removing HHPs and replacing them with alternatives in order to ensure success. Replacements for HHPs need to:

- Provide effective solutions to the pest/disease problems that the HHP previously dealt with (this might include several pest problems on different crops)
- Be equally or more readily available to farmers or other users.
- Give confidence to farmers that solutions are available and that their needs are being addressed.

At the same time, removing HHPs creates opportunities to reassess the pest/disease problems that farmers are dealing with, the prevention and treatment methods that are available and the compatibility of new pest management strategies and tools with policy directions such as sustainability, conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation and SDG attainment.

The aspirations listed may seem to be contradictory, but they do not have to be. They can be complementary and can even bring about additional benefits such as lower costs to farmers, higher prices for pesticide free produce, higher productivity resulting from higher pollinator populations and more.

### Question 1:

#### **What is the role of alternatives in replacing Highly Hazardous Pesticides?**

- Consider whether an alternative to an HHP is exclusively aimed at providing the same pesticidal action or something else in addition?
- Will an HHP be replaced by a single solution or product or could the HHP be replaced by many?
- What is needed for farmers to be assured that alternatives to HHPs are effective, available and address their needs?
- What would happen if farmers do not have confidence in HHP alternatives?

#### **Resources/Information for the Discussion:**

1. A short guide Alternatives to Highly Hazardous Pesticides, PAN-UK/SAICM 2017 (attached)
2. Addressing Highly Hazardous Pesticides in Mozambique, FAO 2016 (attached)
3. Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides, FAO 2016 (attached)

## QUESTION 2 (10:35 GMT+2) Sheila Willis

### Background:

National authorities, sustainability standards and others often tell us that they are having difficulty phasing out an HHP because ‘there is no alternative’. When we look into the issue, we consistently find that there are multiple potential alternatives but there may be many reasons they are not accessible to those that need them. A pesticides regulator, for example, may only look for alternatives among chemical pesticides, particularly the ones that are already registered. This is understandable but means that alternative products and effective and low-cost *practices* might be overlooked. Even if these are identified it is not within a regulator’s power to disseminate skills and knowledge of new practices to farmers. Farmers may report that there are no alternatives, but they also lack the opportunity to do the necessary research or to test possible alternatives to make sure that they are suitable and effective for the intended use.

### Question 2:

**How might potential alternatives be identified and who should be involved in the process of evaluating and disseminating them?**

- List the stakeholders that should be involved in identifying potential alternatives to HHPs.
- Farmers are more likely to switch to an alternative when they are confident that it will work effectively. How can that confidence be built?
- Sometimes effective solutions to a certain pest are found in *suites* of complementary methods of control. How can they be effectively evaluated and disseminated to replace an HHP?
- How can these changes be brought about to improve the range of alternatives available to farmers?

### Resources/Information for the Discussion:

1. Rotterdam Convention; [Alternatives to hazardous pesticides \(pic.int\)](#)
2. [Guest Article: Highly Hazardous Pesticides: Finding Alternatives and Reducing Risk by 2020 | SDG Knowledge Hub | IISD](#)
3. [Alternatives to Highly Hazardous Pesticides by PAN UK – Issue](#)

## QUESTION 3 (11:00 GMT+2) Alex Stuart

### Background:

Agroecology is based on applying ecological concepts and principles to optimize interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system.

Instead of relying on synthetic pesticides and fertilisers to control pests and provide the nutrients for crop growth, agroecological farming nurtures biological systems that do the job for us. Maximum use is made of the beneficial interactions between different organisms. For example, sowing legume plants between crops can fix nitrogen from the air, inhibit movement of pests among crop plants, and provide habitat for natural enemies.

### **Question 3:**

**From your experience, what are the barriers to replacing HHPs with agroecology? Please share any examples of successful interventions to overcome these barriers.**

#### **Resources/Information for the Discussion:**

1. FAO Agroecology Knowledge Hub. Via: <http://www.fao.org/agroecology/en/>
2. PAN UK webpage on agroecology. Via: <https://www.pan-uk.org/agroecology/>
3. PAN Agroecology position paper. Via: <https://ipam-global.org/pan-agroecology-position-paper/>
4. 2015 PAN International book '[Replacing Chemicals with Biology: Phasing out highly hazardous pesticides with agroecology](#)'.