

Statement from the Farmer's Major Group UNEA 3

5th December 2017, Nairobi, Kenya.

1. Pollution of Air, Water, Land and Soils adversely affects the environment, people's health and livelihoods and biodiversity. Over 200,000 workers and farmers die every year due to pesticide poisoning with 99% fatalities occurring in developing countries and many others suffer cancers, hormonal disruption and other chronic effects. Fertilizer and pesticide companies reports huge profits at the cost of people and planet.
2. Agrobusiness driven intensive agriculture and extractive industry with incentives from governments are known to grab land and resource and deny access to land especially for women and men small farmers, Indigenous Peoples and other communities. Despite proliferation of platforms and programmes we need more, concerted and urgent action on the part of the member states to prevent pollution of land and soil.
3. This model of industrial agricultural has been facilitated on developing countries through international and regional institutions, international financial institutions and multilateral trade agreements is not sustainable and accentuates pollution of air, soil, and water.
4. Small farmers, women and indigenous peoples have been practicing sustainable agriculture through centuries but now with the introduction of new patent regimes and technologies such as IPRs, communities' resources particularly seeds are being commodified by TNCS, making it difficult for small farmers to access these resources.
5. More than environmental pollution these issues need to be looked from the human rights perspective. Marginalised communities bear disproportionate burden of dispossession and disease due pollution.
6. States must prevent and stop the killing and enforced disappearances of land and environment defenders who are relentlessly fighting to save the mother earth and penalize the perpetrators, and ensure effective mechanisms and laws to prevent dispossession of land, territories and resources.
6. Member states must ban and phase out the highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs), set up a process to elaborate on a comprehensive legally binding document on HHPs, advance agroecology and natural farming that builds on farmers, women and indigenous peoples knowledge, experience and supported by science; Stop the land grabbing by corporations and the use of GMOs that is another pollutant and support the Human Rights Council's ongoing discussions on elaborating the legally binding treaty on TNCS and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.