

# Realise Resist Reclaim

Celebrating **30** years **PANAP**



By Sarojeni V. Rengam and Prabhakar Nair



# PAN AP

is one of the five regional centres of Pesticide Action Network (PAN), a global network dedicated to eliminating the harm caused to humans and the environment by pesticides and promoting biodiversity-based ecological agriculture.

PAN AP's vision is a society that is truly democratic, equal, just and culturally diverse, based on the principles of food sovereignty, gender justice and environmental sustainability. It has developed strong partnerships with peasants, agricultural workers and rural women movements in the Asia Pacific region and guided by the strong leadership of these grassroots groups, has grown into a reputable advocacy network with a firm Asian perspective.

PAN AP's mission lies in strengthening people's movements to advance and assert food sovereignty, biodiversity-based ecological agriculture, and the empowerment of rural women, protect people and the environment from highly hazardous pesticides, defend the rice heritage of Asia, and resist the threats of corporate agriculture and neo-liberal globalisation.

Currently PAN AP comprises 108 network partner organisations in the Asia Pacific region and links with other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and grassroots organisations regionally and globally.



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Celebrating 30 years PAN AP

Sarojeni V. Rengam  
Prabhakar Nair

2013

# REALISE, RESIST, RECLAIM

Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific

- Cover: Original painting by Jennifer Mourin who is a self-taught Malaysian artist of Eurasian decent, living and working in Penang. Her art features and celebrates the strength, creativity and camaraderie of women – including the promotion of women's rights and need for support to breastfeed their children. It celebrates people (especially women), responding to the on-going changes in their environment and communities - as care-givers, as monitors of the development affecting their environment, and as resisters of mal-development and destruction. It also features the strength of Earth as 'the mother', protector and defender. Email: [jenmourin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jenmourin@yahoo.co.uk)
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Dedicated to the people's movements who are in the forefront of the struggle to realise their aspirations and full potential; to resist oppressive, repressive and exploitative systems and institutions and to reclaim rights to land and productive resources, food sovereignty, gender justice and environmental sustainability.

## FOREWORD by Dato' (Dr.) Anwar Fazal

The PAN story is a celebration of people getting things done, locally and globally, and making a real difference.

We stand at the brink, bearing witness to the world being dis-empowered as never before, as a new surge of global imperialism representing one of the worst axis of evil, that of violence, manipulation and waste. The world is sadly moving towards "ecocide", the economic crisis sees no end and ethics seems to be at the bottom of the list of anything.

At such times in history, it has been one and only one countervailing power that has proven itself capable of challenging such a travesty in governance. That power is the resurgence and magnificent proliferation of civil society of "people power".

This "people power" stems from a community based synergistic surge of humanity, of conscience, of solidarity. It is accompanied with an energy to resist the new viruses of militarism and "casino capitalism", infamous for its centrist call of "money, money, money" beyond anything else.

People's power also manifests itself through alternative languages - language of conscience, of humanity, of caring and sharing and of sustainability.

The twin cultures of both resistance to the "bad" and the alternative search for the "good" are articulated through a multiplicity of actions - direct and indirect, local and global. It is also articulated through key actions at



strategic events organised by peoples' movements. These capture the power and hopes, the ideas and action plans of concerned people who care for other people, who care for the environment and who care for peace and justice in the world.

"Realise, Resist and Reclaim" captures one valuable stream of a galaxy of social transformation movements that is fed and facilitated by the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) in Asia and the Pacific. Born in Penang - described by a leading journalist, Kunda Dixit, as "the island with an activist attitude" - 31 years ago in May 1982, it has led the global campaigning for safer food, for safe agricultural practices and for a pro-people ecologically sustainable future. Significantly, it also sought to ensure that the rights of women are not only respected but that women are empowered to resist and develop their future vision and frameworks of action.

All too often, social movements forget to document such important expressions of the long and difficult journey for transformational change. They forget to capture the struggles, the voices and the visions of the people for an eco-centered movement. Too often, they forget the heroic struggles, the warm memories of collective synergies and the benchmarks of change for the better.

I hope that this book can also inspire and ignite the passions of a new generation of activists, enhance links with other social movements and encourage all of us to continue our struggles for a better world - sustainable, just and peaceful.

**Dato' (Dr.) Anwar Fazal**  
**August 2013**

(Anwar Fazal is one of the country's leading visionaries and catalysts in the pioneering of local and global peoples' movements. He was instrumental in master-minding and shaping the directional framework of Pesticide Action Network (PAN) during its founding years. He is a former president of the International Organisation of Consumers Unions (IOCU) and the Environmental Liaison Centre International (ELCI). Anwar is a recipient of the Right Livelihood Award (popularly known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize") and the UNEP Global 500 Award. He is currently the Director of the Right Livelihood College located in Penang at Universiti Sains Malaysia.)

# FOREWORD by Dr. Irene Fernandez



Realise, Resist, Reclaim is a very apt summary of PAN AP's work and commitment to build a movement that will ensure a sustainable future for the generation to come. Its involvement for the last 31 years is rooted in the lived experiences and struggles of various communities particularly among the most marginalised and vulnerable women, farmers, workers and rural communities. Through a process of consciousness raising, of strengthening the resistance of people's movements and in creating partnerships between affected people, scientists and decision makers, PAN AP has arrived at the position of being a formidable force to be reckoned with by those powers that rob and deny the rights of people.

However at each stage of its growth, PAN AP has faced various challenges particularly when the global imperialist agenda of plunder of land, food, resources and rights began to be "legalised" through international finance institutions and the World Trade Organization. Being ONE with the people, PAN AP was clear that women, peasants, workers, indigenous peoples' rights and self determination cannot be compromised.



Through its increasing network of people's movements, PAN AP with greater force brought together movements to resist the forces and claim their rights; created spaces and platforms for communities to speak for themselves so that their voices were heard by decision makers and UN institutions. Many grassroots leaders became empowered, particularly when hope began to diminish as repression reigned.

I am proud that the face and pulse of PAN AP is from the struggles, aspirations and lives of simple people whose lives are daily challenged by globalisation strategies and neo-imperialist forces whose key aim is to control, dominate and disempower people for capital accumulation and profits.

I must congratulate PAN and PAN AP for its passion, determination and commitment to their cause of creating a world without poisons, land and resources to the people so that food sovereignty is achieved and ensure women are part of the decision making, are equal in constructing the new dawn of a sustainable livelihood in our lives and of our children.

PAN AP in particular is a meaningful example of making possible what is impossible in our ever challenging world. Change can only be realised and rights reclaimed when we empower people and overthrow oppression and repression.

I hope the lessons learnt and the experiences shared will motivate more communities and movements to become part of a process that can and must move forward for our liberation.

LET US REALISE THE POWER WITHIN US. RESIST WITH DETERMINATION AND SOLIDARITY. RECLAIM OUR RIGHTS FOR OUR DIGNITY AND OUR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

**Yours in solidarity,  
Dr. Irene Fernandez, Chair – PAN AP Steering Committee.  
August 2013**

(From 1992, Dr. Irene Fernandez was the chair of the Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific, working for the elimination of pesticides and developing sustainable agriculture, which led to campaigns on health, against GMOs, and taking back control of seeds. Fernandez also founded Tenaganita in 1991 in Kuala Lumpur, an organisation which she still runs.

In 2005, she was awarded the Right Livelihood Award for "her outstanding and courageous work to stop violence against women and abuses of migrant and poor workers".)

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**Pesticide Action Network International**

**Making a difference ... towards social change**

# Early Years – Tackling the Pesticide Threat

*Over the long years of struggle, people's support and the “successes” were what kept us going... And the struggle continues, now on an even wider front. This book documents the story of Pesticide Action Network's fight for pesticide-free and safe environment, people's right to resources, food sovereignty, sustainable livelihoods , and social and gender justice... and of some of the successes thus far.*



40 activists from 20 countries gather to forge a common strategy to address the global pesticide threat. Dato' Anwar Fazal chairing the first meeting which founded PAN

It began 31 years ago, in May 1982, when 30 civil society groups from 16 countries gathered in Penang, Malaysia, to forge a common strategy to address a growing global pesticide threat. The meeting, hosted by the Asia Pacific Regional Centre of the International Organisation of

Consumers Unions (IOCU, which is now Consumers International) and Sahabat Alam (Friends of the Earth), Malaysia, launched Pesticide Action Network (PAN), an international participatory and action-oriented network “to coordinate action to stop the global pesticide proliferation”.

The participants though, stressed that pesticides were only one aspect of the “larger structural problem faced by developing countries” which included “increasing dependency resulting from the spread of modern agricultural technology under the influence of international aid, financial and commercial institutions”.



The conference heard testimony from participants about the terrible toll chemical pesticides are inflicting around the globe.

Pesticide proliferation and the damage it caused in developing countries was of immediate concern to the Network. Later, as new global economic and technological developments threatened livelihood and further disempowered the poor, the concerns and struggles grew wider in response to people's needs, encompassing a range of related issues. The Network too, grew wider. Today, PAN is a global social force of more than 600 non governmental organizations (NGOs) and institutions spread over 90 countries, sharing common concerns though with different regional priorities. It has five regional centres -- in Asia-Pacific, Africa, Latin America, Europe and North America. PAN has thus grown into an effective force for change from below, working with small farmers, agricultural workers, rural women, fisher folk, indigenous people, trade unions, and consumers.

But let us for a while go back to the beginning.

## The Global Context

Back in the 1970s, thriving global trade in pesticides was causing a problem of pesticide proliferation and dependency in the developing countries. As industrial countries started regulating pesticide production and use in their countries, banned and restricted products were increasingly exported to developing countries without information on their toxicity.



“  
**It is our alarming misfortune that so primitive a science has armed itself with the most modern and terrible weapons, and that in turning them against the insects it has also turned them against the earth.**”

Excerpt from *Silent Spring*  
(1962) by Rachel Carson

Chemical corporations and international finance and aid agencies heavily promoted pesticide use in developing countries as part of the new chemical-intensive agricultural technology (the Green Revolution package), purportedly to help them increase food production and avoid mass hunger. Lured by the 'vision' of bountiful yields and massive and misleading advertisements, farmers used more and more pesticides. Between 1972 and 1985, pesticide import rose by 260 percent in Asia, 95 percent in Africa and 48 percent in Latin America.

This posed a serious threat. The excessive and indiscriminate use of pesticides soon led to several problems – pest resistance and resurgence, extensive environmental damage, and sickness, poisonings and deaths, including those of livestock, fish and wildlife.



Rachel Carson, in her ground-breaking work, *Silent Spring* (1962), had earlier documented the environmental impacts of pesticides which, along with other such accounts, had led to stronger regulatory legislation on pesticides in industrial countries. By the late 70s, several reports in the international media highlighted how pesticides banned or restricted in the industrial countries found their way to the Third World and then back to the industrial countries as residues in imported food. This was the “circle of poison”. Two publications, *Circle of Poison* by David Weir and Mark Schapiro of the Centre for Investigative Reporting in California, USA, and *A Growing Problem – Pesticides and the Third World Poor* by David Bull of OXFAM, UK, in the early 80s gave detailed accounts of the adverse impact of pesticides on the rural poor in the Third World and on consumers the world over.

Their stark accounts helped mobilise concern among activists, environmentalists and consumer groups worldwide. Given the global scale of the threat, they now felt the need to coordinate their actions. It was in this context that they met in Penang in 1982 and launched PAN, calling for a halt in global pesticide proliferation. The meeting also charted a course of action for the network. Besides dealing with pesticide proliferation, it urged the development of integrated pest management and promotion of local control over food and agriculture. These principles were to guide PAN's future programmes.

### **Early Actions and Successes**

Curbing the use of hazardous pesticides (HPs) was of course the priority at that time.



Using pesticides without any safety measures and equipment

Following this priority, PAN set about drawing up a list of HPs whose sale and use had been banned, severely withdrawn or restricted by governments; these were to be targeted for immediate action. The first list of hazardous pesticides known as the “Dirty Dozen” was completed by 1984. At the same time, PAN also worked on and presented the concept of Prior Informed Consent (PIC) to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). This concept meant that a hazardous pesticide cannot be exported to any country without its consent after sharing all information about the pesticide with the importing country. (The PAN list of HPs, regularly updated based on authoritative sources, is now used by NGOs around the world for reliable information on pesticides.)



## The Dirty Dozen Campaign

In 1985, PAN launched its first international campaign, the “Dirty Dozen”. This campaign focused on 12 key hazardous and widely used pesticides “The First Campaign – Stop the Dirty Dozen”).

## **The First Campaign – Stop the Dirty Dozen**

**PAN's first campaign, the Dirty Dozen, aimed to stop the production and sale of 12 widely used hazardous pesticides. These were:**

- **2, 4, 5-T**
- **Aldicarb\***
- **Aldrin/Dieldrin/Endrin**
- **Campechlor or Toxaphene**
- **Chlordane/Heptachlor**
- **Chlordimeform**
- **DDT**
- **Dibromochloropropane (DBCP)**
- **Ethylene dibromide (EDB)**
- **HCH/Lindane**
- **Paraquat**
- **Parathion/Methyl parathion**
- **Pentachlorophenyl (PCP)**

**\*Aldicarb was added in 1986**

**“We selected these pesticides not only for their toxicity but for the unique hazards they pose for people in Third World countries,” says Anwar Fazal, who was then Director of the IOCU regional office for Asia and Pacific in Penang. “At the same time, they were a global problem. These chemicals were mainly used on 'export crops' such as banana, tea, cotton and rubber and they return to consumers in Europe, the US and Japan as residues in food or commodities in a 'circle of poison'.”**

The above pesticide were responsible for most of the pesticide deaths and much of the environmental damage that pesticides caused around the world. Though most of these pesticides were banned or restricted in industrial countries, they were heavily promoted in developing countries where regulatory controls were fewer and where the toll they took were proportionately high. Besides injuries and deaths, pesticides such as DBCP had caused sterility in a large number of pesticide factories and plantation workers in several countries.

Coordinated by PAN North America, the campaign was simultaneously launched in 40 countries, seeking to stop the production, sale and use of these 12 pesticides. Through this campaign, PAN also planned to raise public awareness about the dangers of pesticides in general, and about all other problems associated with pesticide proliferation which the Dirty Dozen so strongly symbolised. It was also meant to promote safer and sustainable pest control methods.

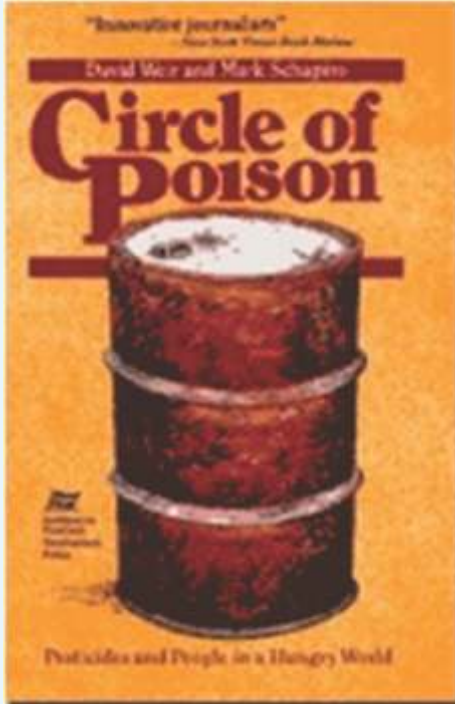


Campaign to raise public awareness to strongly symbolise the problem of pesticide proliferation by the Dirty Dozen

Over the years, the campaign brought significant success. By 1989, 60 countries had banned or severely restricted the Dirty Dozen pesticides, and by 1995, 90 countries had done so. Ciba-Geigy and Schering AG, two of the main producers, stopped production and sale of chlordimeform, an acutely toxic pesticide and a proven human carcinogen, in 1988. Shell Chemicals, the sole producer of the “drins” – aldrin, dieldrin and endrin -- stopped production and sale of these pesticides worldwide in 1991.



# The Global Pesticide Scene in the 70s



Among other things, the two publications, *Circle of Poison* and *A Growing Problem – Pesticides and the Third World Poor* brought the following issues into sharper focus and worldwide attention in the early 80s.

### ***Pesticide proliferation:***

Highly hazardous pesticides, banned or restricted in the industrial countries, were exported and freely available in developing countries. The industry expected exports to grow rapidly in the 80s. In Asia particularly, exports were expected to double during the decade.

### ***Health problems and poisonings:***

By the early 80s, pesticides were estimated to cause 750,000 annual cases of poisoning and 13,800 deaths globally. Significantly, 50 percent of

these poisonings and nearly 70 percent of the deaths would be in developing countries, though these countries used far less pesticides than industrial countries.

### ***Pesticide dependency and pest resurgence:***

The overuse of pesticides to get more yields destroyed the natural predators or controls of pests, leading to a resurgence of pests. To maintain yields, farmers used even more pesticides (running on a “pesticide treadmill”).

### ***Pesticide resistance and livelihood losses:***

With increasing pesticide use, pests developed resistance and destroyed more crops, causing livelihood problems for small farmers and farm workers. By the 70s



and early 80s, resistant pests had ravaged rice crops in many parts of Asia and cotton crops, the source of livelihood for a large number of small farmers, in Africa, Central America and Mexico. Even some minor pests turned into major problems. Overall, “the number of documented resistant pest species trebled from 137 in 1960 to 432 in 1980”. In rice alone, the number of resistant pests had risen from eight in 1965 to 14 in 1975 (David Bull).

***Environmental damage and loss of food sources:***

Pesticides contaminated soil and water in rice fields, ponds and streams. This degraded the soil, killed fish in the rice fields and other water bodies which affected farm productivity and caused loss of important food sources such as fish, livestock and wildlife for the poor.

***Lack of information and irresponsible promotion:***

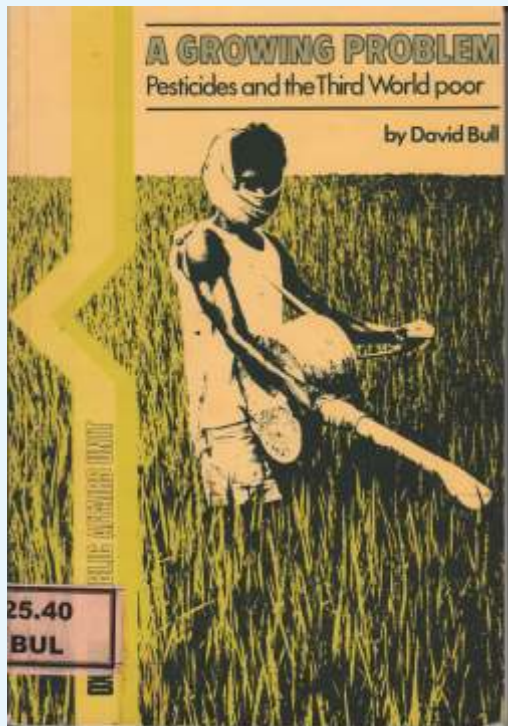
Pesticides were often badly labelled (insufficient information on toxicity and safe use), poorly packaged and stored, and “irresponsibly promoted”, giving an “erroneous impression of their safety”. Illiteracy, lack of training and protective equipment, poor working conditions and the tropical climate worsened the problems.

***Lack of or ineffective legislation:***

There was no or poor legislative control of pesticide import, distribution and use in most developing countries, nor measures to protect farm labour.

***Circle of poison haunts northern consumers:***


Exported hazardous pesticides came back as residues in imported food “to haunt consumers in most northern countries in a circle of poison” (David Weir).



## Charting the course

The newly-formed PAN in 1982 called for the following measures in pursuit of its immediate and long-term goals.

- ◆ Imposition of export and import controls on the movement of hazardous pesticides.
- ◆ Immediate notification by any government when it bans or restricts a chemical pesticide, and public release of information by all governments on the export and import of pesticides... and on the known health effects of these products.
- ◆ Expansion of traditional, biological and integrated pest management and an end to unnecessary sale and use of chemical pesticides.
- ◆ Development of agricultural practices with no use or minimal use of chemical pesticides in order to encourage *local self-reliance in agriculture including local control over production, use and consumption of food and other resources*.
- ◆ Withdrawal of financial support by all international funding and development agencies to any project which involves the use of pesticides which cannot be safely used under local conditions.
- ◆ Reversal of the practice by nine international "Green Revolution" research centres, including the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines, of developing and distributing seed varieties which are heavily dependent on expensive and hazardous inputs like chemical pesticides and fertilisers. There should be greater concentration on plant breeding on varieties tolerant to the actual conditions in farmers' fields including pests and diseases.
- ◆ An end to the vicious circle whereby hazardous pesticides used in the Third World end up as residues in food products consumed by people all over the world, as well as contaminants in water, soil and the environment generally.



Use of pesticides without safety equipment.

## **Pushing for Pesticide Code and Prior Informed Consent (PIC)**

PAN's second major initiative in those early years was to lobby the FAO and national governments for a strong International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. This meant the inclusion of PIC in the FAO Code or the International Pesticide Code adopted in 1985 and also in the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP's) London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade.

The Pesticide Code set voluntary standards for the distribution and use of pesticides “particularly where there is no or an inadequate national law to regulate pesticides”. It covered various aspects of global pesticide trade –pesticide management, health protection, information exchange and packaging, labeling and advertising practices. However, being voluntary, the Code was not legally enforceable, and it did not address the basic question of controlling international trade in pesticides. Even so, it was an important tool because it went beyond the guidelines of other international agencies. Inclusion of PIC in the Code would strengthen it and help developing countries deal with the influx of HPs. For this, it was necessary to collect information and show how weak the Code was and how poorly it was implemented in various countries.

Right from the beginning, PAN had strongly argued for the inclusion of PIC in the International Pesticide Code. However, even after eight rounds of drafting and tortuous negotiations, where PAN participants had contributed to strengthen each successive draft, the FAO had, at a late stage and under industry pressure, dropped PIC from the Code and also other key provisions such as for effective monitoring and mechanisms to enforce the Code. This had left the Code rather weak.

As the Code itself provided for monitoring its implementation by citizens, PAN Regional Centres decided to do so. In a well-coordinated effort, PAN's Regional Centre (then an adjunct of IOCU) in Asia-Pacific agreed to produce a citizens' guide to monitoring, the African Regional Centre (Environment Liaison Centre International based in Nairobi) took overall charge of monitoring and compiling the data, the Pesticide Education and Action Project, then the Regional Centre in North America, offered to produce a briefing papers for delegates to the next FAO meeting to be held in 1987.

The monitoring started in at least 30 countries but 13 developing countries were later selected for concentrated investigations. The PAN Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the Institute for Consumer Policy Research, USA, in 1987, monitored the situation in three countries – Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. The studies found that the Code was violated in a large number of cases and in several aspects – in sales and distribution, advertising, packaging, labelling and field use; in some cases, imported hazardous pesticides were sold in unlabelled plastic bags, and farmers had no clue to their toxicity. To stop such violations, the report, “Violating the Pesticide Code”, said that the Code should be made mandatory and that PIC should be included. Other regional studies too showed that infringements were all too common.

All regional evidence was quickly compiled and used to lobby hard with the FAO and UNEP, national governments (to help them take a firm stand at the UN meetings), delegates to the UN meetings, and also citizens in various countries so that they can put pressure on their governments. Because of all this lobbying by PAN and other NGOs, the FAO accepted PIC in principle in 1987. And so also UNEP.

In the face of all this mounting evidence, the FAO in 1987, was still resisting the inclusion of PIC. PAN groups extensively briefed developing country delegates to the FAO meeting, and PIC received strong support from them (and also from the Nordic countries). Largely due to these efforts by PAN and other groups and in spite of industry resistance, FAO finally accepted the PIC in principle in a Conference Resolution 5/87 adopted in its Twenty-fourth Session. In 1989, both FAO and UNEP jointly incorporated PIC into the International Pesticide Code and the London Guidelines.



Pesticide monitoring report in three countries (1987)



This was PAN's first success at advocacy at the international level. And it was mainly due to the strong links PAN had forged between local, national and international action of their partners and like-minded groups. Local groups and grassroots organisations had helped document the adverse impacts of pesticides. PAN regional groups collated the information and presented it to UN agencies and others.

Going by most accounts, it can be said that the information PAN provided to FAO delegates in its summary report (covering 13 developing countries), “Monitoring and Reporting the Implementation of the International Code of Conduct on the Use and Distribution of Pesticides”, and its lobbying had played an important role in getting the PIC accepted.

Further, in 1992, the UN Conference on Environment and Development, or the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil included PIC in its agenda 21 (the Earth Charter) and sought a legally binding instrument or convention on PIC. Accordingly, FAO and UNEP adapted the International Convention on PIC in Rotterdam in 1998; the Rotterdam Convention on PIC came into force in 2004. The PIC concept had indeed come a long way from its beginnings in the early 80s!



Looking back, PAN's pesticide campaigns and advocacy over its first decade, besides contributing much to the development of the Code and the Convention, created awareness about the dangers of pesticides among people and gave activists access to information and policy-makers. In 1982, it was hard to get information on pesticide problems. Not only did PAN make existing information readily available and useful to people but it *created new databases of information* in areas where there was no information, says Monica Moore.

As far as the Asian region is concerned, the International Pesticide Code has been a useful tool. Documenting and highlighting pesticide problems in the region built PAN's credibility and gave it access to pesticide legislators. It has since been asked to comment on national pesticide initiatives in the region.



## **Policy Advocacy – Down Memory Lane**

In terms of policy advocacy, we have had much impact. I remember, in 1985, walking the corridors of FAO lobbying for the inclusion of PIC in the Pesticide Code, one of the clearest memories of that time was the FAO Council meeting in 1985 where I nearly jumped up from my seat when the then FAO Director-General, Edouard Saouma, looked at the corner where NGOs sat and pointedly called us “environmental terrorist”; he said we were pushing environmental protection while more than half the world starved because of lack of pesticides. Now we are regularly invited as experts to FAO meetings and involved in all major discussions on pesticide issues as part of the multistakeholder process in the UN. Not only that, now there is clear acknowledgement that pesticides pose problems to human health and the environment, and that we need to look at reduction and strong regulations to curb their misuse and overuse. Several major international policy documents reflect this line and call for international efforts to reduce the use of pesticides. These policy documents include the UN Conference on Environment and Development's (UNCED's) Agenda 21 (adapted in 1992), and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, World Bank Operational Policy on Pest Management, OECD donor policies, the Convention on Biodiversity the FAO Council resolution on the progressive ban on Highly Hazardous Pesticides and the Strategic Approach on Chemicals Management (SAICM). Many developed and developing countries have also declared Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as their pest management choice, with national IPM programmes using farmer field school approaches showing impressive gains in pesticide reduction.

Sarojeni V. Rengam



Over the years much awareness has been raised towards the elimination of hazardous pesticides

# Towards Sustainable Agriculture ...and beyond

*Expansion, diversification and building alliances on regional and global issues*



Even though PAN was successful in bringing the pesticide debate into the public sphere and in getting regulations restricting the use of pesticides in its first decade, this was not enough. Pesticides make for profitable business and there is political support for its continued use. Understanding that the pesticide problem is both a technical as well as a political issue, PAN needed to tackle the larger problems.

So, from the early 90s, even as it continued to confront the pesticide threat, PAN began to move towards a stronger advocacy of alternatives -- that is, sustainable agriculture. It also started to broaden its focus to include issues of access to resources such as land and seeds, structural adjustment and national policies that affected agriculture, global food trade and economy, and new developments such as biotechnology in agriculture. This move was reflected in the Asia-Pacific Regional Centre's work. The advocacy of sustainable agriculture, as the centre point, anchored on a range of diverse but related issues.

The establishment of PAN Asia and the Pacific (PAN AP) as an independent unit in late 1991 (independent of IOCU, and with a Steering Council of 10 members drawn from different countries in the region) helped it expand its activities and also strengthen and broaden its links with partners and grassroots organisations, especially peasants' and agricultural workers' movements, in the region. Close links with these groups and exposure to their struggles also gave PAN AP a better grasp of the ground realities in the rural areas, and helped develop its analysis and perspectives on agricultural policies and development frameworks. This was to be the beginning of a long new learning curve, which helped to define its regional priorities.

## **From Pesticide Problems to Women's Empowerment**

The newly-independent unit had started life, in 1992, focusing on problems of women's exposure to pesticides, both as farmers and agricultural workers. With a large number of women working on farms and plantations, this was a major problem in the region. Yet, this was not an issue with policy-makers, the male-dominated communities and even with the mainstream women's movements. These health problems and women's important roles in and contributions to food production and family food security were in fact 'invisible', inherent in their 'lower social





status' and lack of economic and political power. To make a dent, these problems needed to be mainstreamed and rural women empowered – by raising awareness and building up their capacity to analyse, articulate and lead, through discussions, training and collective action.

What perhaps can be claimed as an initial, though small, success in this direction was in bringing these issues of women in agriculture into the agenda of the Asia-Pacific NGOs. PAN AP's active involvement, in 1993, in the Asia-Pacific NGO Symposium on Women and Development and the series of subsequent meetings in preparation for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 was instrumental in this.

### **The Road to Beijing – Mainstreaming Rural Women's Problems**

PAN AP actively participated in the Fourth UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 and the long processes leading up to the Conference, making some important contributions in mainstreaming rural women's problems.

PAN AP's involvement in the Beijing process and its advocacy work to put rural women's issues on a global platform began here. Our involvement created awareness at the policy level and strengthened our partnerships with women's groups with peasants, agricultural workers and indigenous women's groups. While the Beijing Platform of Action called for women's participation in development, it failed to identify the flaws and the impact of the current "development" agenda. That was a challenge for PAN AP to work on exposing the impacts of the current model of agriculture on women and jointly collaborate to strengthen capacity of women's leadership and empowerment through research, campaigns, advocacy and struggle.





Realising that women agricultural workers problems cannot be looked at in terms of pesticide exposure alone, the emphasis in approach shifted, in 1994, from 'women and pesticides' to 'women in agriculture'. This shift to 'women in agriculture' focused on women's empowerment and leadership and achieving equity and gender justice. The new approach encompassed a much broader range of issues. These included:



- ◆ Monitoring the health impacts of pesticides and campaigning and advocacy for the reduction with the aim of elimination of highly hazardous pesticides;
- ◆ Documenting women's knowledge in sustainable agriculture and integrating it into farming systems to build food security;
- ◆ Developing women-oriented food security and agricultural policies including women asserting the right to land and other productive resources such as seeds;
- ◆ Documenting and publicising rural women's struggles against exploitation and oppression;
- ◆ Fighting globalisation and its impact on women farmers and workers;
- ◆ Building up women's leadership in all these issues.

## **The World Trade Organisation (WTO) and after ...**

# **Facing Global Issues**

By the mid-90s, global developments prompted PAN AP to further expand its activities on several fronts. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) was set up in early 1995, intensifying globalisation. Unlike the earlier General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), WTO's ambit extended to agriculture, with the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) liberalising trade in farm products. Soon subsidised cheap food from developed countries started flooding the developing countries, pushing small farmers out of the market and agricultural workers out of jobs. Corporations were gaining

greater control of land and resources, displacing small farmers, fisher folk, forest-dwellers and indigenous peoples. In addition, the WTO extended its scope of patents with the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) which permitted the patenting of plants and animal forms as well as seeds. It promoted the private rights of corporations over local communities and their genetic heritage and traditional medicines.



The expansion of genetic engineering in agriculture further undermined the predominantly small-farming systems in the region and also the traditional knowledge systems, particularly of women farmers. All these threatened food security and livelihood of the vast number of poor farming communities and the landless. Women were particularly vulnerable.

As people began to resist these new developments, PAN AP felt the need to support them, working on various platforms and building new alliances. Together with other groups, PAN AP, for instance, called for the Right to Safe Food for All, which in the long run would require major changes in the food production and distribution systems, including the right to land (to produce food locally) and other productive resources. Resisting globalisation of food trade and transnational agrochemical corporations took on a new edge. To get 'WTO out of Food and Agriculture' was a new campaign, carried through various regional and global platforms.

In this wider context, the Conference on Food, Culture, Trade and Environment in Seoul, South Korea, in 1995, the Safe Food Campaign initiated in 1996, and the Asia-Pacific People's Assembly in 1998 stood out as milestone events.

The Seoul Conference, organised together with several partners, tried to tackle issues in sustainable agriculture and free trade in a holistic way, bringing together farmers, fisher folk, consumers, women's groups, economists and environmentalists from 21 countries on a common platform. The conference discussed the impact of free trade on agriculture, particularly sustainable agriculture and small farmers' and farm workers' livelihood, environment, food safety and food security, land rights, etc.

“Today, we are faced with the end of ideological pluralism and a neo-liberal mindset that favours more or less unconditional deference to market forces and even a rollback of social benefits that were the consequence of earlier struggles for economic justice”, said a statement at the end of the Conference.

Shaping these market forces were the large transnational corporations (TNCs) and financial institutions which remained mainly off stage and avoided being subjected to scrutiny and regulation. “In this context, globally we have the WTO and regionally, in the Asia-Pacific, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to deal with. Liberalising trade in agricultural products was a central aspect of WTO and it would probably also feature prominently in the APEC programme of trade liberalisation.”

The conference called for the transformation of these unaccountable global institutions, and international conventions and national policies to

secure equitable and sustained access to food for all. It stressed the need for sustainable food production and consumption, fair and just trade, and women's empowerment and equity. People's struggles towards these ends should be strengthened and new alliances built for regional and global action.

The Seoul Conference thus provided impetus to PAN AP's thrust into sustainable agriculture and food security, and directions to further work on issues of globalisation and the rising power of TNCs and their impact on the poor, particularly women.

The conference had also suggested carrying out an annual campaign, involving partner groups across the Asia-Pacific, to create greater awareness and popular support for these core issues. So when, in 1996, the FAO organised the World Food Summit, PAN AP and partners used the opportunity to launch the first of such annual campaigns, called the Safe Food Campaign. The theme for the year was "Eat Smart, Healthy and Local – Safe and Secure Food for Tomorrow". It talked about the safety risks of chemically produced and processed food and the ever-lengthening global food supply chain. It challenged corporations' claim to provide food security through chemical-intensive agriculture and global food trade. And it offered sustainable agriculture and "localisation of food trade" as ecologically sound and economically viable alternatives to the prevailing food production and food trade systems.

Basically a media and public outreach campaign, it cut across several of PAN AP's core concerns and also brought grassroots organisations' concerns to wider public attention. It caught partners' and people's imagination; the unified theme provided partners across the region a platform for mobilising people for varied actions. Farmer, consumer, and women's and youth groups got involved in spreading the message. The campaign continued in the subsequent years with themes such as the rapid changes in the land use pattern in the region (following globalisation and liberalisation of agriculture), displacing small farmers, fisher folk and indigenous people; the harmful implications of genetic engineering for small farmers; the hazards of pesticide use. While PAN AP provided the basic thematic material, partners in different countries decided on their own actions, often running through the year. This process highlighted the strength of alliances and associations and the advantages of pooling

together resources and efforts on a focused theme. It was later successfully repeated in several other regional campaigns.

These policies and the Asian financial crisis were creating greater unemployment, landlessness, loss of social services and inequality, and women bore the brunt. As part of the Assembly, which had participants from 316 organisations in 30 countries, PAN AP, in collaboration with a partner, Education and Research for Consumers (ERA Consumer), Malaysia hosted a two-day Forum on Land, Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture, focusing on globalisation and its effects on land and resources of the poor, the growing dominance of trans national corporations, and grassroots resistance and alternatives.

Asia-Pacific People's Assembly (APPA) brought home the need to build alliances and the need to integrate issues and sectors as globalisation's impacts all peoples, from workers, to indigenous peoples, women to consumers; and issues, from health to human rights, education to militarisation. The level of shared political analysis was simply inspiring and the same level of purpose between factional interests was also unique. PAN AP situated itself in these larger, more political agendas as it continued to support farmers' security of land tenure and resources as well as workers' groups campaigning against pesticides and for rights.



The Asia-Pacific People's Assembly (APPA) was held in Kuala Lumpur prior to the APEC Leaders' meeting there in 1998, to protest against APEC's liberalisation policies.



# EAT SMART • HEALTHY • LOCAL



*Safe & Secure Food for Tomorrow*



Partners for Action Now (PAN) is a global coalition of civil society organizations working to ensure that the world's food systems are safe, secure, and sustainable. PAN is a coalition of civil society organizations working to ensure that the world's food systems are safe, secure, and sustainable. PAN is a coalition of civil society organizations working to ensure that the world's food systems are safe, secure, and sustainable. PAN is a coalition of civil society organizations working to ensure that the world's food systems are safe, secure, and sustainable.

Poster for Safe Food Campaign from the Pacific (1996)

## New Strategies and Concepts – People's Caravan on Food Sovereignty

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Through all these activities and constant interactions with the increasing number of allies, new strategies and concepts emerged. By 2000, for example, the Safe Food Campaign evolved into a People's Caravan for mass mobilisation of grassroots people and urban consumers in the



People's Caravan 2000 in the Philippines

region. The theme for the year was challenging the agrochemical industry, in line with PAN AP's long history of campaigns and advocacy on this issue. The Caravan was largely a collaborative action across countries under the popular banner, "Citizens on the Move for Land and Food without Poisons". Walking through towns and 250 villages on an 18-day, 2500-km journey from South India to Bangladesh, it carried a loud and clear message to over 50,000 people: reject pesticides, resist agrochemical corporations and globalisation of agriculture which continued to marginalise them, practise sustainable farming, and celebrate the diverse crops (instead of mono-crops which corporations

promoted) and food cultures in the region. People acted in solidarity and marched in the Philippines, Indonesia, Korea and Japan.

With strong and enthusiastic participation from people and wide media coverage, the Caravan turned out to be a powerful tool in popularising these issues. It spurred varied grassroots action and articulation of people's livelihood aspirations and frustrations in a fast liberalising world. People joined rallies, public meetings, seminars, film and food festivals, cultural shows and talks with local officials. All this led to many



new linkages and networks, and consolidation of grassroots organisations at the national and regional levels, sharing common concerns and looking for common concerted action on the threats facing them. New leaders emerged, particularly among women whom the issues had touched strongly. Most participants expressed the need for more such activities in future.

The People's Caravan in 2000 put PAN AP on the global map and gave it greater visibility and credibility. Above all, for PAN AP, it stressed the significance of building alliances and solidarity with people's movements.



Meanwhile, the concept of People's Food Sovereignty was catching on globally as a people's alternative to corporate control over agriculture. Developed by Via Campesina, the largest global peasants movement, it recognises "the rights of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced by ecologically sound and sustainable methods, as well as their right to define their own food and agricultural systems". With corporate chemical agriculture failing to feed the world's hungry as promised, peasant movements began to adapt this concept and press for its acceptance by governments. PAN AP fully embraced the concept, and started working towards advancing its demand among peasants' and women's movements in the region, forming further alliances. The approach to sustainable agriculture evolved from food safety in the early years to food security in the mid-90s and to food sovereignty towards the end of the decade. Two years later, in 2002, IBON Foundation of the Philippines and PAN AP worked together to advance the concept (dealing also with agricultural trade issues) at the regional and international levels, including at the FAO. The same year, the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty, held in Rome as a parallel forum to the FAO's World Food Summit -Five Years Later and in which PAN AP and its partners had played an active role, enshrined the Food Sovereignty principle in its political statement and demanded that it be the principal policy framework for addressing world food and agricultural issues.



NGO/CSO Forum on food sovereignty, 2002 in Rome, a parallel forum for the World Food Summit five years later



Asian participants hand over 100,000 post cards to the Director General of FAO calling for food sovereignty and support for rural women's rights.

The second decade thus saw some changes in terms of approaches, strategies and concepts, and in alliance building.

## Post-WTO, Integrating Gender and Globalisation issues...

Following the setting up of the WTO and liberalisation of trade in agriculture in 1995, participants in the Women and Agriculture programme repeatedly expressed the need to integrate gender issues not only in the advocacy of sustainable agriculture but in all PAN AP programmes and alternative social movements, and also in national and global actions. Thus the programme started taking on a broader agenda to include issues such as trade liberalisation and globalisation and their impact on rural poor women. The group identified a set of core issues and also evolved strategies to act on them.

The issues were: *Trade institutions and instruments* like GATT/WTO and APEC, whose policies have negative impacts on land use, leading to displacement.







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*PAN AP Congress was a concrete expression of what the organisation has achieved in qualitative terms, that is, leaps in networking and partnership.*

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*Rafael Mariano, Chairperson of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), the largest peasants movement in the Philippines and a close ally.*

## Advancing food sovereignty together with allies

### *Mass mobilisations on focused themes and global issues*

The third decade literally opened with the First PAN AP Congress in Manila in the Philippines in 2003. It was a culmination of a decade of building partnerships with people's movements, broadening the network and a commitment to work together. Over 140 participants from 17 countries attended the Congress. Assessing PAN AP's growth over the years, Rafael Mariano, Chairperson of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), the largest peasants movement in the Philippines and a close ally, noted that “the PAN AP Congress was a concrete expression of what the organisation has achieved in qualitative terms, that is, leaps in networking and partnership”.

With globalisation and corporate dominance increasing in Asia, the Congress voiced the need to consolidate and further strengthen people's movements in the region for resistance, including resistance to militarisation. Particularly, it called for the assertion of people's food sovereignty, *genuine agrarian reforms*, protection of farm workers' rights, and women's liberation. Rural women's issues were high on the Congress' agenda.

Assertion of food sovereignty, the right to land and food, control over seeds, and building women's leadership towards these ends in fact formed the major plank of all programmes and campaigns, carried through an ever-widening network and alliances, during the third decade.

### **People's Caravan and Save our Rice Campaigns**

Responding to people's calls, the People's Caravan hit the road again in 2004 on an even bigger scale, with the focal theme "People's Food Sovereignty: Asserting our Rights to Land and Food". Now involving 500 partner groups, the Caravan mobilised over a million people in 16 countries, including three in Europe, in a month-long journey.



Peoples Caravan Culmination Nepal, 2004



Peoples Caravan 2004 Nepal

## **People's Caravan 2004 and People's Camp 2005**

Four years after the People's Caravan in 2000 and one year after the derailment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) talks in Cancun, PAN AP together with other groups and grassroots organization came together for the second People's Caravan 2004 (PC 2004) from 1-30 September. With the theme People's Caravan for Food Sovereignty: Assert Our Rights to Land and Food, PC 2004 started off in Malaysia to put forward this important message and bring it to various organisations and communities. It travelled to Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh; south, north, west and central India, China, Mongolia, South Korea, Thailand, The Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia as well as France, Germany and Belgium. The whole event culminated in Nepal with a Statement of the People's Caravan for Food Sovereignty 2004 entitled Assert Our Rights to Land and Food!

People's Caravan for Food Sovereignty 2004 was the biggest and the most successful event on Food Sovereignty in Asia that involved about 700 groups. Travelling nearly 20,000 kilometres and mobilising about 600,000 people in 16 countries and outreaching to more than one million people, the month-long Caravan helped advance Food Sovereignty in response to widespread poverty and hunger. It helped define the aspirations of the small food producers in Asia as reflected in the demand for Food Sovereignty: for the inalienable right of people, communities, and countries to define, decide and implement their own agricultural, labour, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. Groups collected approximately 100,000 signatures during the Signature Campaign for the Convention on Food Sovereignty.

Dialogues on policy issues were also held with government officials. These dialogues sought to influence policy changes relating to the above issues and towards Food Sovereignty. In Nepal, for example, mass protests, lobbying and strong advocacy by local organisations led to the inclusion of Food Sovereignty in the draft of the Nepalese Constitution. To consolidate these massive efforts, the People's Food Sovereignty Network Asia-Pacific was broadened to form People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS).



The coordinated efforts that hundreds of organisations put together in the People's Caravan on Food Sovereignty proved to be an effective strategy in mobilising people, raising awareness, and putting forward people's agenda on the limelight. The success of the People's Caravan provided the basis of further unity and inspiration for the organisations involved to collaborate to organise activities in Hong Kong.

The People's Camp on Food Sovereignty, a parallel event to the WTO's Sixth Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong organized by 24 grassroots groups including PCFS and PAN AP. A week-long events were organized and facilitated a collective action by grassroots groups in protest against the WTO. Speak-outs, workshops, tribunals on the WTO, cultural shows and a popular Save our Rice Festival with seed exchanges among participants from different countries marked the exuberant actions. People's resistance to and concrete proposals on the WTO were then presented to the negotiators at the Ministerial meeting.

In the end, like at the People's Caravan, a new alliance – Coalition of Agricultural Workers International – was launched for global cooperation on future actions against the WTO. The coalition would also take up farm workers' demand for land, fair wages, security of work, safe working conditions and the right to unionise.



Peoples Camp 2005 – Sinagbayan Dancers





Peoples Caravan 2004 Malaysia



Peoples Caravan 2004 Sri Lanka



Following up on the Caravan, through the decade, PAN AP collaborated with various groups on different issues related to food sovereignty. And at the international level, it was involved in various processes to bring the voices of the marginalised to UN bodies, and especially involved in critical engagement with the FAO on food security.

The Save our Rice (SOR) campaign was another effort in mass mobilisation of farmers in advancing food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture, particularly rice farming. The predominantly small-scale rice farming in the region had been under threat from corporate take-over of land and seeds. Many countries, self-sufficient in rice earlier, now faced a severe shortage of their staple food, leading to hunger. The SOR campaign sought to counter these threats by raising awareness about the region's rice-farming culture among farmers and consumers; the threat from high-chemical-input and genetically engineered (GE) rice; and the advantages of chemical-free bio-diverse ecological agriculture for community self-reliance. Over the past few years, mass actions like Week of Rice Action, Year of Rice Action and Collective Rice Action involved 160,000 direct participants in over 15 countries in the campaign. Apart from raising awareness, the campaign influenced legislative action in some countries to promote organic farming, protect traditional seeds, improve the local rice economy and oppose GE crops.

“

*Who will enjoy electricity in our villages when we will be begging on the streets in big cities?*

”

*Sheshamma , an elderly local woman in Sompeta on the displacement of the farming community*



## Supporting Struggles for Land

As part of its continued support of small-scale food producers in their struggle for land and livelihood, PAN AP in collaboration with local people's movements and regional groups worked with communities to build their capacity to resist land grabbing by corporations and governments. These were done through fact-finding missions (FFMs), training on documenting land grabbing, actual documentation of cases, online campaigns, etc.

One of the successful interventions was the international FFM to Sompeta in Andhra Pradesh, India, in September 2010. Local farming communities in Sompeta were resisting a planned coal-based power plant to be built on 779 hectares of lush farmland that the state government had declared 'wasteland'.



The FFM documented the plight of the farming communities and the problems of displacement and loss of livelihood for about 20,000 small farmers. The likely impact of the project and the paradox of unsustainable development could be best summed up in the words of Sheshamma, an

elderly local woman: “Who will enjoy electricity in our villages when we will be begging on the streets in big cities?”

Based on the FFM report, PAN AP mounted an international online campaign and also sought interventions from UN Special Rapporteurs. With strong local protests and international pressure, India's National Environmental Appellate Authority denied environmental clearance to the project, which was then scrapped in June 2011, saving the land and livelihood of the communities.

Earlier, in 2008, PAN AP had similarly supported communities fighting displacement from land acquisition for mining for oil exploration in the Philippines. The destructive oil and gas exploration projects in Tañon Strait on the island of Cebu was led by Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. with support from the local government. Tañon Strait's rich marine biodiversity sustained thousands of families around; it is also a protected seascape. The project prevented the local communities' access to the sea, violating their rights to decent livelihood. As a result of the FFM and the people's campaigns that followed, the company withdrew from the project and the explorations stopped.



# Asian Rural Women's Coalition - Building Women's Leadership

With increasing land and resource grabbing and the consequent food insecurity creating greater deprivation for women, it was crucial to develop deeper analyses of these issues and also strengthen strategies to combat them through the rural women's movement. The formation of the Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC) in 2008, facilitated by PAN AP functioning as the secretariat, spurred broader regional and global initiatives in women's empowerment. These ranged from local leadership training and campaigns to support local struggles for land to regional campaigns on food sovereignty and lobbying for strong women-oriented policies on food security at the international level.

Of particular importance was the training of women for strong leadership roles in community development and the women's movement. Collaborating with local partners, PAN AP organised two sub-regional training programmes – one in 2012 for South Asian rural women (with 24 participants), and another in 2013 for Southeast Asia (again, with 24 participants). These programmes helped to sharpen their understanding of social structures, gender, land, food and agricultural issues in terms of local situations and national and international policies. It stressed the need for women to have access to and control over land, seeds and other productive resources. The training helped improved their analytical,



The Asian Rural Women's Coalition's call -- Rights, Empowerment, Liberation! Tamil Nadu, India, 2008.



advocacy and campaigning skills, and enhanced their self-confidence. “This was an opportunity to develop my leadership qualities and asserting my rights,” said a participant from Sri Lanka. “Earlier, we did not have a deeper understanding of these issues, but now we can work in the fields with this knowledge, and share these with my community.”

Two of the rural women participants went on to engage in international policy formulations with the FAO Committee on World Food Security and also with the Rio+20 World Environment meeting. The training sessions are now being replicated in communities with the earlier participants acting as facilitators. The sessions generally deal with land and resources, sustainable agriculture and leadership. Through all these processes, ARWC gained much visibility, influencing actions from the local to the global levels.



Women at the public assembly assert their rights.  
Tamil Nadu, India, March 2008.

# Ecological Agriculture as a Sustainable Livelihood Alternative



Women during the BEA-SRI training workshop in Kampung Ensika, Sarawak (2011)

PAN AP has been a strong advocate of small-farm biodiversity-based ecological agriculture (BEA) as a sustainable alternative to the toxic model of modern agriculture. BEA is also a fundamental component of food sovereignty. It provides sustainable livelihoods for small farming communities and strengthens community resilience in coping with climate change. With the global food, financial and climate crises that emerged in 2008, the importance of BEA in sustaining the food security and food sovereignty of small, vulnerable rice communities all over Asia took on greater urgency.

Consequently, capacity-building in BEA has featured largely among recent activities. Training programmes were organised in the System of Rice Intensification (SRI), seed breeding, climate change adaptation, etc which are important components of BEA; SRI, for instance, has proven to reduce production costs while increasing yields and incomes significantly in several Asian countries.

Two regional workshops in SRI for network partners and farmers from eight Asian countries were organised in 2008 in Cambodia and India, with partner organizations *Centre d'Etude et de Développement Agricole Cambodgien* (CEDAC) and Kudumbam respectively acting as trainers. Another regional training programme on farmer empowerment, seed breeding and climate change adaptation using integrated farming systems was organised in 2010 for partners and farmers from 11 countries. This training was conducted by MASIPAG, a farmer-scientist partnership for development in the Philippines. PAN AP also responded to local needs for capacity-building in BEA and SRI where local communities – for example, in East Malaysia and Uttarakhand in India -- were found to be struggling with low yields and incomes.

Participants in the training programmes reported that they had gained a lot from the training. The organic pesticides that they had learned to make and use had minimised pest attacks, improving yields and incomes and offering a more diversified diet (for example, from kitchen gardens); they had also increased their adaptive capacity to climate change. Several communities had scaled up the seed-breeding techniques they had learnt. One farmer said of the MASIPAG seed-breeding training: "It widened my vision and knowledge in terms of the role of local rice seeds for farmers." Network partners said that upscaling BEA initiatives at the local level had helped them improve their livelihood and empower local communities.

Besides farmers, capacity-building has helped to strengthen BEA skills among NGOs and extension workers, and spurred local action and network building. Collectively, the initiatives have significantly contributed to sustainable development of small rice-farming communities in various countries in Asia.



## Community based Pesticide Action Monitoring – Galvanising communities into action



CPAM Training in LAOS

PAN AP's strong pesticides programme challenges the power of the agrochemical companies and small farmers' dependency on pesticides. Community-based Pesticide Action Monitoring (CPAM), an innovative self-surveillance monitoring and recording methodology developed by PAN AP and its partners, enables communities to document the adverse effects of pesticides on their health and the environment. This prompts them to adopt ecologically sound agriculture and pressure governments for stronger pesticide regulations. In the past 10 years, learning exchanges and capacity-building workshops have been

organised and CPAM surveys carried out in several countries including Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The results were compiled and discussed at national and international meetings, stressing the need for national and global action.

The year 2010 saw the release of the landmark *Communities in Peril: Asian Regional Report* (produced by 12 organisations from eight Asian countries), followed by the *Communities in Peril: Global Report on Health Impacts of Pesticide Use in Agriculture*. As a result, United Plantations, a Danish plantation company operating in Malaysia and Indonesia, phased out the use of two highly hazardous pesticides, paraquat and monocrotophos, from their plantations. In India, Thanal, a partner, and the local community in Kasargod (in Kerala state) successfully stopped the health and environmental devastation caused by endosulfan.

# Endosulfan and Paraquat Campaigns

PAN AP also continues to play a major role in international bodies that regulate the production and sale of highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs). The biggest success here was the listing of endosulfan in both the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions. It provided extensive documentation on the severe health and environmental impairments caused by endosulfan, widely used in Asian and other developing countries, to the Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (PoPs). Following strong worldwide campaigns by PAN and various groups, in 2011, CoP recognised

endosulfan as a PoP, leading to a ban on its manufacture and the phasing out of its use worldwide. At the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention in May 2013, Parties agreed unanimously to give priority to ecosystem-based approaches to pest control to replace the insecticide endosulfan listed under the Convention for global phase out. The ecosystem-based approach to pest management, including agroecology, is now well established at the UN level.

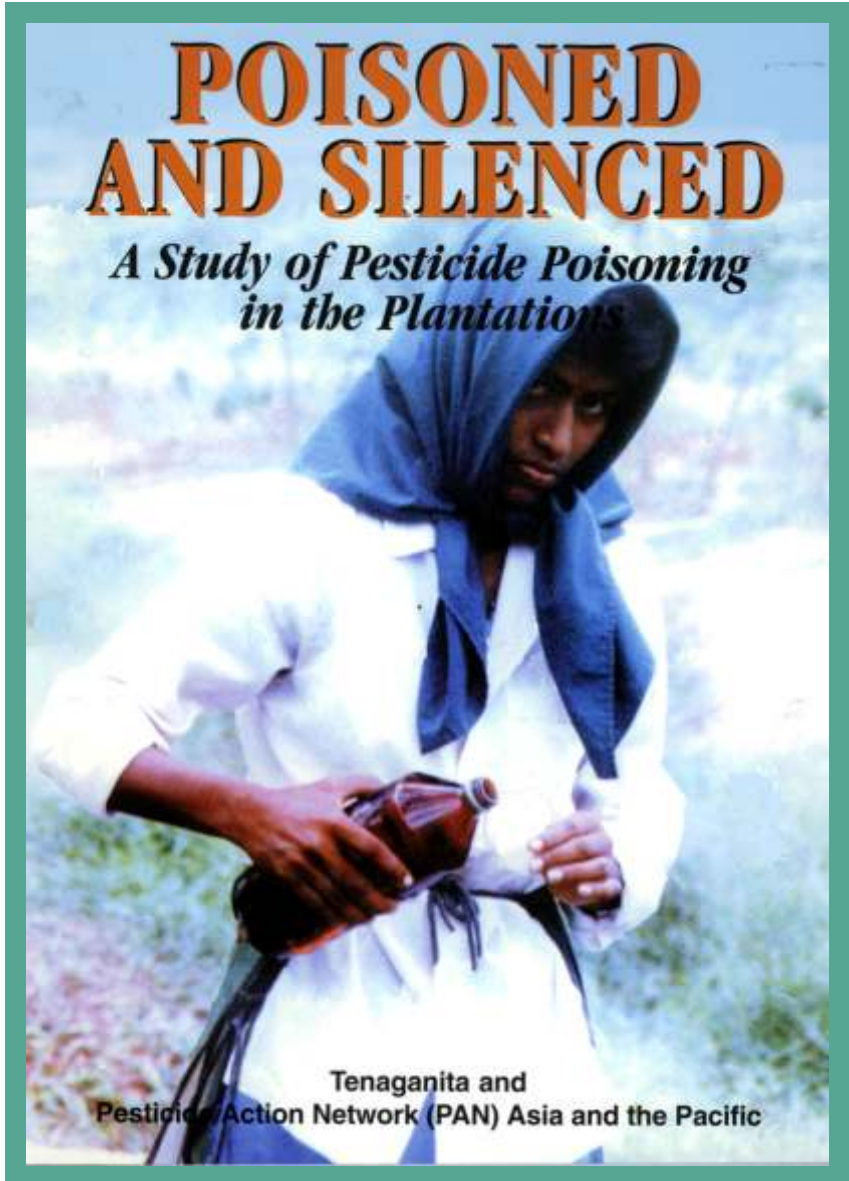


PAN AP staff at the Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm, Basel, and Rotterdam Conventions, Geneva April 28-May 10, 2013.

Further, in 2011, paraquat, another HHP used mainly as weed-killer in plantations in the South, was recommended for inclusion in the Rotterdam Convention, which requires prior informed consent (from importing states) for trade in certain hazardous chemicals. The proposal to list the paraquat formulation was made by Burkina Faso due to the large number of human poisonings related to the use of the Syngenta product, Gramoxone Super (Paraquat 20%). The Convention's Chemical Review Committee (CRC) analyzed the proposal by Burkina Faso and unanimously supported the listing of the paraquat formulation as a severely hazardous pesticide. More than 120



government parties to the Rotterdam Convention supported the listing of paraquat (20%) as a severely hazardous pesticide formulation in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention. However, at the 6th Conference of Parties in May 2013, Guatemala together with India blocked the listing of paraquat.





## **Demanding Corporate Accountability**

The Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) on Agrochemical Corporations that PAN AP helped to organise, on behalf of PAN International, in 2011 in Bangalore, India, highlighted the need for a global system of corporate accountability and justice for victims of human rights violations by agrochem TNCs. Based on extensive documentation of TNCs' wrongful acts and transgressions, PAN International had pressed charges of gross human rights violations against six agrochemical corporations -- Monsanto, Syngenta, Bayer, Du Pont, Dow and BASF who, in 2009, controlled 72 percent of the global pesticide market -- before an eminent international panel of jury. The companies' actions had over the years caused enormous harm to human health and ecosystems around the world, particularly among rural communities; besides violating their right to health and life, the companies had violated the communities' economic, social and cultural rights. Also complicit were the governments of the corporations' home states (US, Germany and Switzerland) for not regulating the production and sale of the companies' hazardous pesticides, and the WTO, IMF and the World Bank for facilitating their growth and wrongful acts.

The complainants were victims and survivors -- farmers, agricultural workers, indigenous people, fisher folk, women, children and youth, and also scientists, consumers and social activists. They had no recourse to justice in national or international law as the corporations were only 'legal persons' and not natural persons. There were other legal loopholes too which allowed TNCs to get away with their misdeeds. Hence, they had come to this 'people's court'. Thirty-five cases were presented and 15 survivors and four 'technical witnesses' testified.



While the aerial spraying of endosulfan in Kasargod, Kerala was discontinued in 2002, villagers continue to suffer from long term illnesses. Many survivors of endosulfan in Kerala, India are children born with congenital diseases and deformities, some are even at the forefront of the struggle to achieve justice

The jury indicted the six companies for widespread human rights violations; their home states had failed to regulate them, and states using the companies' products had not adequately protected the victims from harm and the social activists and scientists from harassment. The jury therefore recommended the (i) setting up of an international mechanism to investigate human rights violations by TNCs; (ii) extension of the 'Rome statute' to cover legal persons and serious violations of the environment; (iii) review of international property regime in terms of the adverse impacts of such properties on human rights, community welfare, biodiversity and ecosystems. It also urged governments not to ratify any new trade or investment agreement without considering its implications for human rights.

Following up on the PPT, PAN AP started assessing and documenting health and environmental impacts of pesticides, particularly paraquat poisonings in Asia, from the human rights violation perspective; it plans to use human rights instruments to highlight these problems and call for greater corporate accountability.

*Celebrating*  
**30 years**



**PAN**  
*Pesticide Action Network International*

**Pesticide Action Network**

*Cultivating the roots of health & justice*

## PAN International:

The work on corporate accountability as well as international advocacy for the progressive ban of highly hazardous pesticides and for alternatives particularly ecological agriculture would not have been successful without the collaboration of all the PAN Regional Centres. PAN Regional Centres collaborate with each other to strengthen the work and achieve greater impact on addressing the field level pesticide problems that adversely affect health, environment and livelihoods of the poor, and to increase the pressure on the international development and regulatory institutions to promote safer and more sustainable solutions.

The PAN Regional Centres are:

- Pesticide Action Network Africa (PAN Africa), Dakar, Senegal
- Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PANAP), Penang, Malaysia
- Pesticide Action Network Latin America (RAPAL), Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA), San Francisco, USA

In Europe, international activities are led by:

- Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK), London, UK
- Pesticide Action Network Germany (PAN Germany), Hamburg, Germany







## **Making a difference ...towards Social Change**

PAN AP has thus been working with organisations and groups of small farmers, agricultural workers, rural women, indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups to take up the challenge to ensure a healthy environment, food security and food sovereignty and women's empowerment, within the framework of human rights and environmental sustainability.

In this struggle, PAN AP's greatest strength and most powerful resource is the network of people's organisations, particularly of marginalised communities that represent diverse movements. It now has 108 network partners and has links with 400 other civil society and grassroots organisations at the regional and global levels. Besides, it has contributed to the formation of important grassroots alliances and networks in the region – for instance, the International Alliance against Agrochemical TNCs (2001), Asian Peasants Coalition (2004), People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (2004), Coalition of Agricultural Workers International (2005), and Asian Rural Women's Coalition (2008).

Even as it maintains its presence at the international meetings and carries out international campaigns and advocacy, PAN AP's focus continues to be at the community level and supporting people's movements. Community level actions such as pesticide monitoring and research on TNC and AoA impacts on communities are important tools in developing campaigns and advocacy. These in turn, along with large-scale mobilisation and development of community resource base, strengthen grassroots capacity, empowering communities to act at the local, regional and national levels.

Clearly, community empowerment, though a long and difficult process, is a necessary and urgent need, and is at the heart of social change. PAN AP will continue to work towards this goal with its allies.

# PAN International Principles

Adopted by participants of the PAN Meeting on 2nd December, 2007  
Penang, Malaysia

We will work towards:

- 1** Advancing sustainable agriculture as a holistic, scientific approach and a movement for social transformation that upholds local knowledge and respects indigenous cultures, integrates participatory research, empowerment of women, farmer control over land, water, seeds and forests, protection of workers' rights and of rural communities, appropriate technology, bio-diversity conservation, access to and equitable distribution of food, equitable sharing of benefits and food self-sufficiency respecting ecological integrity.
- 2** Contributing actively to the elimination of harmful pesticides and other agrochemicals and the generation, innovation and promotion of ecological alternatives to pesticide use, especially organic and ecological agriculture with biological, agricultural and cultural diversity as the basis for sustainable communities.
- 3** Eliminating the use of harmful pesticides in buildings, transportation, household, public health and other non-agricultural pest control areas.
- 4** Fighting for local, national and international agreements to restrict, reduce and eliminate pesticide dependence and to phase out and ban pesticides that cause acute and chronic effects, including endocrine disruption and cancer.
- 5** Ensuring food for all, including national policies that promote and ensure the right to food in order to achieve the improvement of human and environmental health. And establishing Food Sovereignty as the inalienable right of peoples, communities, and countries to define, decide and implement their own agricultural, labour, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances.
- 6** Creating awareness of the dangers of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and campaigning to stop the development and use of GMOs in food, agriculture, pharmaceutical crops and animals, forestry and prevent terminator seeds. We demand the implementation of the precautionary principle to prevent the spread of the use of GMOs.
- 7** Withdrawal of subsidies for environmentally-unsound agricultural technologies and end all aid by international development agencies for hazardous pesticides, GMOs and industrial agriculture promotion.

**8** Strengthening people's movements and empowering women, peasants, poor farmers, fisherfolk, dalits, landless farmworkers, Indigenous people, migrant workers and bonded laborers to participate fully in asserting and promoting their rights, decision making in their societies and access to land, resources and knowledge.

**9** Strengthening and integrating gender issues in all agriculture programmes from planning to implementation and evaluation.

**10** Empowering communities to monitor and resist the impact of trade policies, technologies, and industries that affect their health and livelihoods. Launching and supporting campaigns against corporate globalisation and the international institutions and instruments that are destroying people's production and promoting corporate and industrial agriculture.

**11** Achieving the public release of information by all companies, governments and institutions on production, use and trade of pesticides and GMOs. Demand full accountability and liability for injustices by corporations and governments and full compensation for damages for persons, communities and countries.

**12** PAN will achieve this by:

- Developing participatory research and monitoring, resource basebuilding, education, training, mobilisation and advocacy work in order to strengthen grassroots and national capacity.
- Developing nationwide, regional and international networks and alliances and strengthening grassroots peasants and women's movements as their foundation.
- Launching coordinated campaigns with farmers, waged agricultural workers, food industry workers and environmentalists; women's, human rights, youth and consumer movements and many others.
- Influencing, through coordinated actions and activities, the policies and practices of government, inter-governmental organisations and other institutions at national, regional and global levels.

**Collated from the Following:**

Pesticide Action Network Fifth International Conference, May 2000

The Dakar Declaration.

Unifying Principles agreed at the PAN International Meeting,

Santa Clara, Cuba, 17-21 May 1997.

The Ottawa Declaration, World Environment Day, June 5, 1986

Pan International - Calls For Halt To Global Pesticide Proliferation, May 25 – 28, 1982.



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It has been an exhilarating journey  
The successes along the way were momentous  
The disappointments were learning experiences to improve  
Working together in solidarity with so many groups and people,  
allies and friends, has made the journey well worth it  
We will continue the struggle for to resist is to win! ”

Sarojeni V. Rengam