International Civil Society Call for Action on Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) – For a Future without Hormone-Disrupting Chemicals

We, the undersigned organizations, urge governments and stakeholders to fully implement all Issues of Concern under the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) through robust implementation mechanisms, ambitious workplans, and adequate financial resources, as these priorities are mutually reinforcing across the lifecycle of chemicals and products.

In particular, we call for endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) to remain an Issue of Concern under the GFC, as this global challenge remains unresolved and requires continued, coordinated international action.

We are deeply concerned about the alarming and increasing threats posed by endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). Despite overwhelming scientific evidence of their harmful impacts on human health, wildlife and the environment, political action remains far behind what is needed at national, regional and international levels.

EDCs are harmful substances that interfere with hormone systems in humans and wildlife, increasing the risk of serious and potentially life-threatening diseases and disorders, as recognized by experts from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Endocrine Society and many other scientific bodies. Exposure to EDCs is associated with reproductive disorders, developmental dysfunction, behavioral disorders, thyroid disease, low birth weight, diabetes and obesity, cardiovascular diseases, impaired immune function, asthma, and hormone-related cancers such as breast and prostate cancer. The incidence of many of these diseases is increasing worldwide.

The burden of EDC exposure is not shared equally. (Farm-)Workers, children, pregnant women, Indigenous Peoples, and communities facing environmental injustice are disproportionately exposed and often have fewer opportunities to avoid harmful chemicals. Exposure during vulnerable life stages—including fetal development, infancy, childhood and pregnancy—can have particularly severe and lifelong consequences. The situation is even more challenging in low- and middle-income countries, where health systems often lack the capacity to address these additional burdens. Protection from harmful chemicals is a human right.

EDC exposure continues to increase due to growing global chemical production, insufficient transparency regarding chemicals in products, weak disclosure requirements, and the widespread use of EDCs in materials, consumer products, in pesticides and industrial processes. A significant share of endocrine disrupting chemicals is associated with plastics and plastic products throughout their lifecycle—from production to use, recycling and disposal. Effective action on EDCs therefore also contributes to reducing the health impacts of plastic pollution.

Without coordinated international action under the Global Framework on Chemicals, prevention will continue to lag behind rising health costs, biodiversity loss and irreversible damage to ecosystems.

We therefore urge governments and all stakeholder under the GFC to support our call for:

- **Maintaining EDCs as an Issue of Concern under the GFC at the IC1**, and an adoption of an ambitious workplan with adequate resources for its implementation. We support the proposal submitted by the three lead organizations, which reflects the recommendations of the international scientific community and civil society.
- A workplan on EDCs, which includes clear deliverables, timelines and indicators, including capacity building, guidance for identification, support for regulatory action, international cooperation, and a global information and awareness campaign.

To comprehensively address the issue of endocrine disruptors, we also call for the following:

- **Comprehensive identification of EDCs**, based on internationally recognized definitions and harmonized assessment criteria.
- **Strong national, regional and international regulation** to reduce human and environmental exposure to EDCs.
- **Prevention of regrettable substitution** through mandatory alternatives assessment and the promotion of safer, non-hazardous alternatives.
- **Development of model legislation** supporting the reduction of the production, use and release of endocrine disrupting chemicals.
- **Adoption and implementation of new hazard classes under the GHS** for endocrine disruption affecting both human health and the environment.
- **Greater transparency and public access to information** on endocrine disrupting chemicals in products and materials throughout supply chains.
- **An international awareness and knowledge campaign** to improve understanding of EDC risks and prevention.
- **Support for scientific research**, including filling knowledge gaps, developing test methods, and generating sex-disaggregated and gender-responsive data.

Addressing endocrine disrupting chemicals is essential for achieving the objectives of the Global Framework on Chemicals, protecting biodiversity, advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, and fulfilling the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

We invite civil society organizations, scientists and other stakeholders to endorse this Call to Action and commit to keeping EDCs as an Issue of Concern under the GFC, ensuring effective implementation and accelerating the transition towards a healthier, safer and toxics-free future.

Background:

An important milestone was reached in 2012, when the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) recognized EDCs as an emerging policy issue (EPI) under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). More than 100 governments, together with other stakeholders, have identified Emerging Policy Issues and other Issues of Concern as problems that need to be addressed urgently at national and global levels in a concerted and coordinated manner. However, due to lack of funding and clear procedure on how to proceed with EPI and other Issues of Concern, the nomination was a milestone, but coordinated international action was missing. More than 10 years later, the problems remain unsolved.

In 2023 at ICCM5 it was decided that EDCs like the other seven Issues of Concern, would remain under the new Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) on an interim basis or as long as the problem resulting from the exposure to EDCs could be solved. This was another important step, as addressing the Issues of Concern under the GFC is a critical component in preventing harm from chemicals and waste. The OECD, UNEP and WHO recommend continuing work on EDCs as an Issue of Concern under the GFC, in light of evolving science and ongoing risks (see UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/5).

Signatures

Acciòn Ecológica México	México
African Transformation on Environmental and Health Action	Tanzania
African Transformation on Environmental and Health Action (ATEHA)	Tanzania
AGROLINK Association	Bulgaria
AO ECOTOX Society OF Ecotoxicologistes from Moldova ECOTOX	Republic of Moldova
Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE)	Armenia
Association For Promotion Sustainable development	India
Black Sea Women's Club	Ukraine
Bugday Association for Supporting Ecological Living	Türkiye
Bündnis für eine enkeltaugliche Landwirtschaft e.V.	Germany
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)	Switzerland
Centro Ecológico	Brazil
CHEM Trust	UK/Germany
Child Rights International Network (CRIN)	UK, EU, Global
Civil society	Mexico
ClientEarth	Belgium

Colnodo - RDS	Colombia
Community Action Against Plastic Waste (CAPws)	Nigeria
Corporate Eurpe Observatory	Belgium
Danish Consumer Council	Denmark
Eco-Accord	Russia
ECOCITY	GREECE
ECOCITY	Greece
Eco-Expertise (Независимая экологическая экспертиза)	Kirgistan
environmental activist, journalist	Russia
European Environmental Bureau	Belgium
European Network for Environmental Medicine	Germany
Expert on environmental issues	Tajikistan
Fenceline Watch	United States
Fundación Estudio e investigaCion de la mujer FEIM	Argentina
Gallifrey Foundation	Switzerland
Générations Futures	France
Georgian Environmetal and Biological Monitoring Association	Georgia
German NGO Forum on Environment and Development	Germany
Gita Pertiwi	Indonesia
groundWork - South Africa	South Africa
Health and Environment Alliance	Belgium
Health and Environment Justice Support (HEJSupport)	International
Human Environmental Association for Development-HEAD	Lebanon
IDEC - Brazilian Institute for Consumer Defense	Brazil
Independent Ecological Expertise PA	Kyrgyzstan
Institute for Culture and Ecology	Kenya
Journalists for Human Rights North-Macedonia	North Macedonia
Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN)	Kenya
NEWS NETWORK	BANGLADESH
Nexus3 Foundation	Indonesia
NGO "EkoPravo-Kharkiv"	Ukraine

Observatorio Universitario de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional del Estado de Guanajuato (OUSANEG)	Mexico
Pan African Vision for the Environment)(PAVE)	Nigeria
Participatory Land use Management Uganda	Uganda
Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network	USA
Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific	Malaysia
Pesticide Action Network Europe	Belgium
Pesticide Action Network Germany (PAN Germany)	Germany
Pesticide Action Network Netherlands	Netherlands
Pollution Control Association of Liberia	Liberia
RDS	Colombia
Reaccion Climatica	Bolivia
Reacción Climática	Bolivia
Rural Sustainable Development Agricultural Foundation	Armenia
Save the Great South Bay	United States
Scientific Simulation Society for Development and Consulting Services	Egypt
Solidarité pour la Protection des Droits de l'Enfant (SOPRODE)	Democratic Republic of the Congo
SRADeV Nigeria	Nigeria
Swedish Society for Nature Conservation	Sweden
Swedwatch	Sweden
Taller Ecologista	Argentina
Taller Ecologista	Argentina
ToxicFree Suisse	Switzerland
Toxics Link	India
UK Youth for Nature	UK
Union for Defence of the Aral Sea and Amudarya	Uzbekistan, Karakalpakstan
Unpoison	South African
Via Pontica Foundation	Bulgaria
Waterkeeper Alliance	USA
WEP Tunisie	Tunisia
Women Engage for a Common Future, WECF	Germany

Wonjin Institute for Occupational and Environmental Health	Republic of Korea
World Ecological Concepts	NIgeria
ZERO - Association for the Sustainability of the Earth System	Portugal