

Open letter to the European Commission on agri-business mergers

We, the undersigned organisations, call on the European Commission to reject the impending mergers of the world's biggest agrochemical and seed companies.

In an already concentrated market, the world's largest agri-business companies are proposing mergers – of Dow Chemical with DuPont, Monsanto with Bayer AG, and Syngenta with ChemChina. These mergers would exacerbate the problems caused by industrial farming – with negative consequences for the public, farmers and farm workers, consumers, the environment, and food security.

These mergers risk major monopoly outcomes that would further:

- **Increase corporate control of agriculture**
The three resulting companies could control around 70% of the world's agro-chemicals and more than 60% of commercial seeds. Through dominant market share and sheer political power, they would unduly influence our agriculture and food system.
- **Restrict farmers' choices**
Reduced competition and increased market dominance would further restrict the diversity of seeds, harm farmers' freedom of choice and their rights to save their seeds, and increase their reliance on chemical inputs. These companies are moving to promote technology packages and management systems that increase farmer dependence. The three resulting giants would be able to strengthen their intellectual property control, squeeze out the remaining small seed companies, and raise prices for farmers – hurting rural economies and food businesses.
- **Curb consumer choice**
More market control would reduce Europeans' food choices; and reduce the ability for farmers to meet consumer demand for diverse, healthy, cost-effective, quality food produced in an ecologically sound manner. Any costs passed on to the public could hit the most vulnerable hardest.
- **Increase chemical use and harm the environment**
Reduced diversity of farming, and greater dominance of monoculture farming highly reliant on chemical inputs including hazardous pesticides, would further harm the environment, biodiversity, and human health – including that of farmers and workers. We urgently need to increase crop and landscape diversity, also making our food system more resilient to climate change.
- **Damage Europe's food sovereignty**
A growing movement of farmers, consumers and businesses are building new vibrant, fairer and greener food and farming systems. Corporate giants increasing their control over farming would endanger the future of these businesses and initiatives, and with it the diversified and multi-functional farms which are a cornerstone of the European style of farming.
- **Harm countries in the Global South and the right to food**
The impact on farmers, rural communities and consumers of concentrating power would impede the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly goal 2, to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”. These impacts would be especially severe in the Global South, where the right to food is already under threat.

We urge the European Commission to reject the mergers, prevent the damage caused by these corporations, and urgently take steps to support just and sustainable food systems less dependent on agri-business, by:

- Considering the impact of all three proposed mergers together;
- Addressing the existing concentration in the food and farming sector and setting clear limits to the market share a corporation can control;
- Shifting support and subsidies away from agri-business towards rewarding and incentivising small-scale and sustainable agroecological farming;
- Increasing environmental and social safeguards to ensure agri-business reduces its impact on citizens, farmers, workers, and the environment.

Yours sincerely,



Magda Stoczkiewicz
Director, Friends of the Earth Europe
Tel: +32 2893 1001, magda.stoczkiewicz@foeeurope.org

On behalf of the undersigned :

International & EU

ACT Alliance EU

ActionAid

Avaaz

Bee Life European Beekeeping Coordination

BirdLife Europe

CIDSE

Compassion in World Farming

CONCORD

Dachverband Kulturpflanzen- und Nutztiervielfalt e.V.

ECOAR)))

EFFAT (European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions)

European Coordination Via Campesina

European Environmental Bureau

European Secretariat of the World March of Women

Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO)

Food & Water Europe

Friends of the Earth Europe

GRAIN

Greenpeace

IFOAM EU

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe

SAVE Foundation

Slow Food

SumOfUs

Transnational Institute (TNI)

WeMove.EU

Austria

Get Active - for a Sustainable Planet

GLOBAL 20000

Welthaus Diözese Graz-Seckau

ZIMD

Belgium

Aardewerk

Africa Europe Faith & Justice Network (AEFJN)

CADTM Belgique

Climaxi

CNCD-11.11.11

Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires (CSA)
FUGEA (Fédération Unie de Groupements d'Éleveurs et d'Agriculteurs)
Inter-Environnement Wallonie
Les Amis de la Terre Belgique
Mouvement d'Action Paysanne (MAP)
Mouvement politique des objecteurs de croissance (mpOC)
Netwerk Zelf Zaden Telen
Quinoa
SOS Faim Belgique
Woningen123Logements
"Cense équi'voc" asbl

Bosnia & Herzegovina

Center for Environment

Bulgaria

Balkan Institute for Labour and Social Policy
Za Zemiata

Croatia

Brod Ecological Society-BED
Centar za mirovne studije
Centar za zdravo odrastanje Mali Losinj
Code for Croatia
EKO Ekološko društvo Oroslavje
Eko-Eko
GONG
Udruga za samozastupanje
UOKOLO udruga za građanstvo okoliša
Zelena akcija/FoE Croatia
Zeleni dan
Zeleni Osijek
Ženska mreža Hrvatske

Cyprus

Friends of the Earth Cyprus

Czech Republic

AREA vi va, z.s. - spolek pro ekologii a zemědělství
Asociace Místních Potravinových Inicativ, o.p.s.
Ekumenická akademie, z. s.
Hnutí DUHA
PRO-BIO LIGA, pobočný spolek
Záhony Pro Školky (Gardens for Schools)

Denmark

NOAH

Estonia

Estonian Green Movement

France

ActionAid France - Peuples Solidaires

Amis de la Terre France
Attac France
CCFD-Terre Solidaire
Comité pour l'Abolition des Dettes illégitimes (CADTM)
Confédération paysanne

Germany

Agrar Koordination
AGRECOL (Verein zur Förderung standortgerechter Nutzung in Afrika, Asien, Lateinamerika und Osteuropa)
Aktion Agrar
Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (AbL) e.V.
BI lebenswertes Korbach e.V.
Biosicht Redaktionsbüro
Bluepingu e.V., Nürnberg
Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (BUND)
Bündnis für gentechnikfreie Landwirtschaft Niedersachsen, Bremen, Hamburg
FDCL - Forschungs- und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Lateinamerika e.V.
Förderverein Trostberger Rosengarten e.V.
Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung / NGO Forum on Environment and Development
Gen-ethisches Netzwerk e.V.
INKOTA-netzwerk e.V.
Interessengemeinschaft gegen Nachbaugebühren (IG-Nachbau)
Kampagne Meine Landwirtschaft / Wir haben es satt!
Klimagarten Tübingen
Naturschutzbund Deutschland (NABU) e.V.
Obst- und Gartenbauverein Bengel e.V.
Pestizid Aktions-Netzwerk e.V. (PAN Germany)
Querbeet Leipzig
Rebsortenarchiv Südpfalzweinstein
Rettet den Regenwald e. V.
Rosa Rose Gemeinschaftsgarten
Save Our Seeds
Slow Food Deutschland e. V.
Ton, Steine, Gärten e.V.
Umweltinstitut München e. V.
Verein zur Erhaltung der Nutzpflanzenvielfalt e.V.
Zukunftsstiftung Landwirtschaft

Hungary

Beklen a Nagykunsági Civil Társadalomért Alapítvány
Beretzk Péter Természetvédelmi Klub
Bodrog Association
Bors Foundation
Börzsöny - Ipoly-mente Polgári Természetőrség
Cserhát Értékeiért Alapítvány
EcoOne Hungary
E-misszió Természet- és Környezetvédelmi Egyesület
Energia és Környezet Alapítvány
Fauna Foundation for Animal Welfare and Nature Protection
Forrásvíz Természetbarát Egyesület
Giligán Egyesület

Göcsej Természetvédelmi Alapítvány
Green Island Circle Nature Examining Public Association
Herman Ottó Természetvédő Kör
Holocén Természetvédelmi Egyesület
Hungarian Climate Alliance
Kalocsakörnyéki Környezetvédelmi Egyesület
Magosfa Foundation for Environmental Education and Eco-tourism
Magyar Természetvédők Szövetsége (MTVSZ) / National Society of Conservationists
Ökorégió Alapítvány a Fenntartható Fejlődésért
Polyán Egyesület
Reflex Environmental Association
Small Communities Programme (Kisközösségi Program)
Tanácsadók a Fenntartható Fejlődésért -
Towards Sustainability Association
Zöld Akció Egyesület
Zöld Kapcsolat Egyesület
Zöld Kör
Green Women
Közép-magyarországi Zöld Kör

Ireland

Friends of the Earth Ireland

Italy

FOCSIV (Federazione Organismi Cristiani di Servizio Internazionale Volontario)
Legambiente
Mani Tese
Navdanya International

Latvia

Green Liberty (Zala brivība)

Malta

Friends of the Earth Malta

Netherlands

ASEED Europe
Both ENDS
Hivos
ICCO Cooperation
Milieudefensie
Slow Food Nederland
SOMO, Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations

Norway

Naturvernforbundet

Poland

Polski Klub Ekologiczny
Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczno-Kulturalne ZIARNO

Portugal

Campo Aberto - Associação de Defesa do Ambiente

Portuguese GM Free Coalition (Plataforma Transgénicos Fora)

Russia

The Russian Social-Ecological Union

Spain

AEA-Madrid asociación educación ambiental de Madrid

Aicar-Adicae, Organización de consumidores críticos, responsables y solidarios

Amigos de la Tierra

ASiA-Associació Salut i Agroecologia

Asociación Marisatsa

Asociación Vida Sana

ATTAC España

AUPA

BioAlai

Centro de Estudios Rurales y de Agricultura Internacional

Colectivo Asamblea del Bien Común

Ecologistas en Acción

Ekoactivo educación ambiental

EQUO

ESPEM

Garua S. Coop. Mad

Germinando Coc Coop Mad

La Garbancita Ecológica S. Coop. Mad. de Consumo Responsable Agroecológico

Plataforma contra la especulación de Candeleda

Plataforma Rural

Red de semillas de Aragon

ReHd Mad! Red huertos urbanos comunitarios de Madrid

Butroi Bizirik-en Transicion (BBT)

Lur Gozo

Sweden

Solidarity Sweden - Latin America (SAL)

Switzerland

Arbeitsgruppe Schweiz Kolumbien ask!

Brot für alle

MultiWatch

Public Eye

SAG Schweizer Allianz Gentechfrei

SOLIFONDS

SWISSAID

UK

Biofuelwatch

Ethical Consumer Research Association

Friends of the Earth England, Wales, Northern Ireland

Global Justice Now

GMWatch

Landworkers Alliance

Nuclear Consulting Group

Permaculture Association

Slow Food in the UK

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, UK

Sustainable Food Trust

The Ecological Land Co-operative

The Kindling Trust