



22nd-26th November 2021

**International Civil Society Conference
on Chemicals Management**

Tomorrow without Toxics

Exposure to toxic chemicals and waste as a human rights issue

A four-day virtual conference involving participants from **civil society and social movements** around the world will be held in **the week of November 22, 2021**, to discuss challenges to international policies and regulations on chemicals. During the conference, there will be space for information sharing, debate, and learning. Moreover, there will be space for people and organizations to draft and discuss demands targeting different stakeholder groups.

The Global Chemicals Outlook II estimates the number of chemicals at 40,000 to 60,000 in commerce globally with more entering the market each year. Due to the quantity and hazardousness of chemicals, materials, and products they are part of, there are high risks for people and the environment. Given the weakness of global institutions in the sector, the world is facing a third planetary crisis. Governments, while recognizing the problem of unsound chemicals and waste management, are not doing enough to achieve actual progress. At the same time, industry is generating higher and higher profits while poisoning the planet. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals will remain elusive unless urgent action is taken to address the threat of toxic chemicals.

The four-day conference includes:

- One panel per day with high-level expertise to **develop strong interdisciplinary and intersectional perspectives**;
- **Open spaces** for self-organized sessions, meetings and presentations for you to share your insights and perspectives, for networking and exchange;
- Every day will focus on a **different topical theme**: social justice, chemicals in products, pesticide use and exposure, and the institutional framework for chemicals management.
- People, groups and organizations will have the chance to develop and discuss **demands**. Everyone will be given the opportunity to take part in these discussions, keeping in mind the conference will not and cannot claim to represent anyone beyond those participating.
- The **linkages between chemicals and waste and other policy areas** like trade, circular economy, biodiversity, and health care will be discussed. Other topics such as gender, postcolonialism, and class perspectives will be integrated into the discussions. And obviously, feel free to bring your issues into the discussion.

We will use a **digital conference platform**. The platform combines streaming tools with social media. We can discuss, interact, and connect. The platform will be available in different languages and simultaneous translation will be available for the main panels. We want to enable as much participation and interaction as possible. We are also open for ideas and contributions to help shape the conference agenda. A call for side-events will be issued in due time.

Day 1 – 22nd November

Addressing social injustice in international chemicals management

Key question: How should chemicals management be designed to address social inequalities and thus the varying degrees in which chemicals affect people?

From a global perspective, there are many different sources for an exposure to poisonous chemicals. Levels of exposure and toxicity correlate with factors like gender, ethnic background, and class. The global division of labor is intertwined with different mechanisms of oppression, exploitation, and exclusion. International chemicals regulation and management should be sensitive to this. This means there is a need for an intersectional regulation of chemicals that integrates gender, race, and class perspectives.

Day 2 – 23rd November

Chemicals in products and the Right to Know

Key questions: the Right to Know must encompass the entire life cycle of products. What hurdles do we face here? How do global production and supply chains affect this? How can chemicals policies be integrated into trade policy and circular economy approaches?

To regulate chemicals along their life cycle also means looking out at the entire supply chain and developing mechanisms for sharing knowledge about chemicals used and other components. However, this knowledge has to be accessible for all and not only for companies. This makes the Right to Know not only an issue for chemicals management, but also for trade policy, circular economy and education.

Day 3 – 24th November

Pesticides use and exposure

Key questions: What are options for banning highly hazardous pesticides globally and consistently? What capacities have to be built for the phasing out of hazardous pesticides?

There is no time to waste in banning highly hazardous pesticides. The next steps should include a phase out of further problematic pesticides. Alternatives to pesticide use, such as agroecology, are important steps towards a pesticide-free world.

Day 4 – 25th November

The ideal solution for international regulation of chemicals

Key question: What institutional arrangements do we need for sustainable production, use, and disposal of chemicals?

There is a tension between general principles and concrete regulations, particularly in the field of chemicals. This affects implementation, monitoring as well as finance. We need to find ways to introduce binding regulation, enforce the polluter pays principle, respect planetary boundaries, and at the same time secure reliable financial resources.



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CONTACT
Forum Environment and Development
Marienstr. 19–20 | 10117 Berlin

kurz@forumue.de
+49(0)30 678 17 75 916

The Forum Environment and Development coordinates activities of German NGOs in international policy processes on sustainable development.

The legal entity is the Deutscher Naturschutzring, the umbrella organization of German nature conservation, animal welfare and environmental protection associations. (DNR)

