

Brazil's "Poison Package" Laws Set to Facilitate Greater Pesticide Use

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After little debate or public consultation, Brazil's [House of Representatives passed the draft law "Pacote do Veneno" \("Poison Package"\) Pesticides Act \(PL 6299/2002\)](#). The Act would make the use of pesticides in Brazil even more flexible. [In violation of the rights to food and to a healthy environment](#) enshrined in Brazil's Constitution, the Act would allow the release of carcinogenic pesticides, according greater power to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAPA) to [open an "industry" of temporary registrations of pesticides](#), while distancing health and environmental authorities.

Brazil's Senate has not yet approved the Bill and Brazilian civil society are [mobilised](#) to make sure this does not happen.

The Poison Package moves forward in the context of record increases in the use of pesticides, some of them extremely toxic and many banned in the EU. More than 1,500 new pesticides have been released since the beginning of Bolsonaro's administration - 641 in 2021 alone.

The House of Representatives' position disregards the dozens of public scientific institutions, technical bodies, entities representing the Public Health System and civil society organisations that have spoken out against the Poison Package over the past two years.

In parallel to this new development, **Jair Bolsonaro** [declared](#) in the wake of the War in Ukraine that sanctions against Russia could affect Brazil's import of potassium, which is a key ingredient for making pesticides. He reaffirmed his call to pass Bill 191/2020, which would allow the exploitation of mineral and water resources in Indigenous lands.

The EU is playing a game of [double standards](#) on pesticides: it prohibits some of them within

its borders but it exports on a grand scale. In 2018 – 19, the EU exported [7,000 tonnes of deadly pesticides, banned in the EU](#), to Mercosur countries (mainly Brazil). These dangerous substances later [come back to the EU in food imports](#).

According to a [2020 IATP study](#), the EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement in its current form would expand both the cultivation of crops reliant on pesticide use and the trade in pesticide products, locking in a commercial cycle of dependency. A [2020 UN Report](#) states that “the overuse of pesticides is resulting in grave impacts on human rights in Brazil [...]. Victims rightly allege deaths, health problems, as well as cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment resulting from pesticide exposure.”

EU Member States and the European Parliament are still to ratify the agreement, and are unlikely to do so before Brazil’s general election in October 2022. Following Brazilian Representatives’ approval of the law, European Commission officials have [declared](#) to Brazilian media that the Poison Package “will not facilitate” the bloc’s work to convince European leaders to accept the Mercosur agreement.

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