

# Paraquat: National Regulations and Voluntary Standards

PIC COP 6 – Side-Event

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François Meienberg, Berne Declaration



# Global actions & restrictions on paraquat





## Early Regulatory Actions

- Paraquat entered into the Market in 1961
- First ban: 1983 in Sweden «Banned for use as a pesticide. No remaining uses allowed. The substance is suspended because of its high acute toxicity, irreversible toxic effects and imminent risk of accidents»
- In 1985, the Pesticide Action Network established the "dirty dozen" list of pesticides that are highly hazardous and a common cause of farmer poisoning, or a threat to the environment. – Paraquat is part of this List
- Other national bans followed: Kuwait (1985), Finland (1986), Switzerland (1989) Austria (1993), Denmark (1995). Cambodia (2003), Ivory Coast (2004)



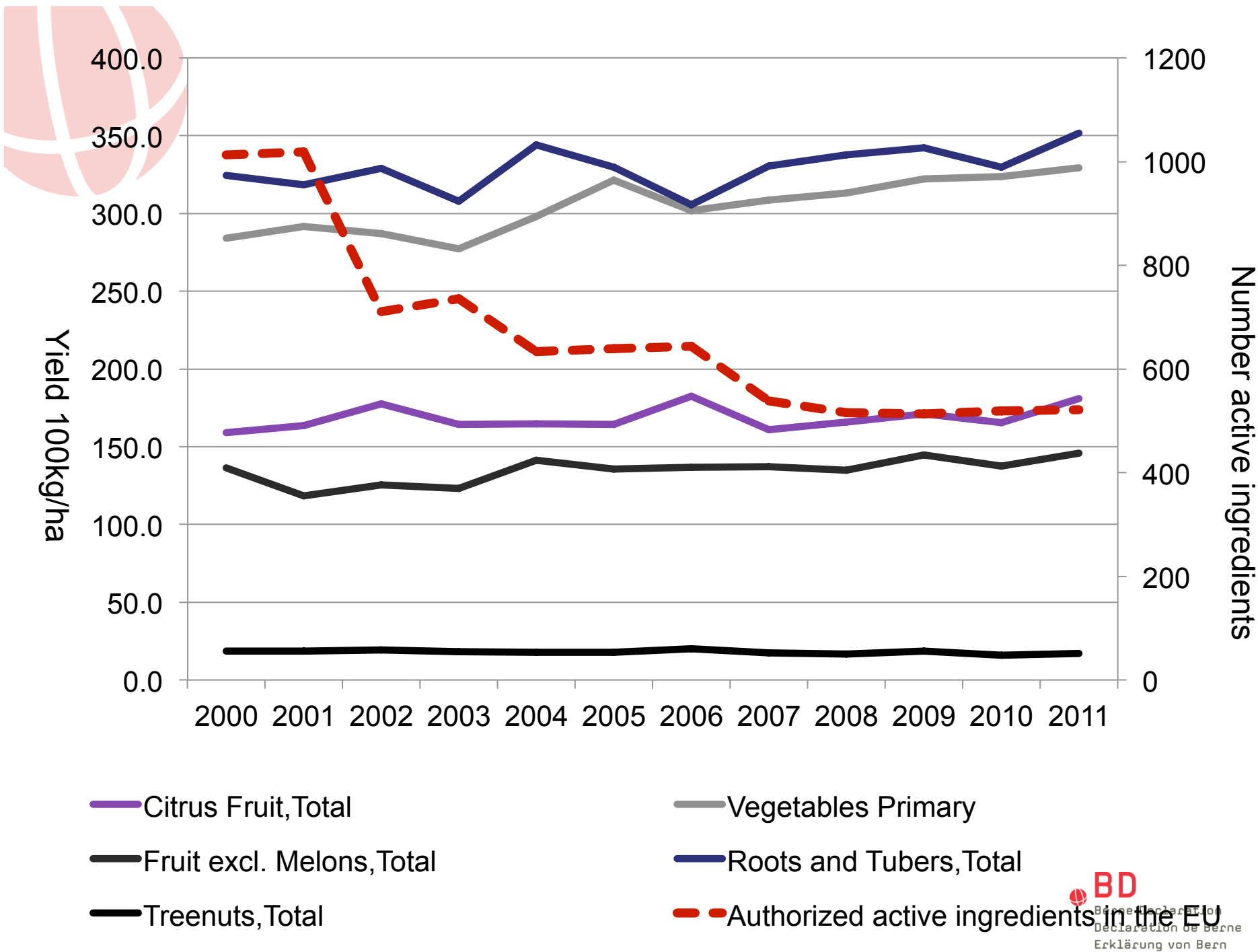
## Paraquat in the EU

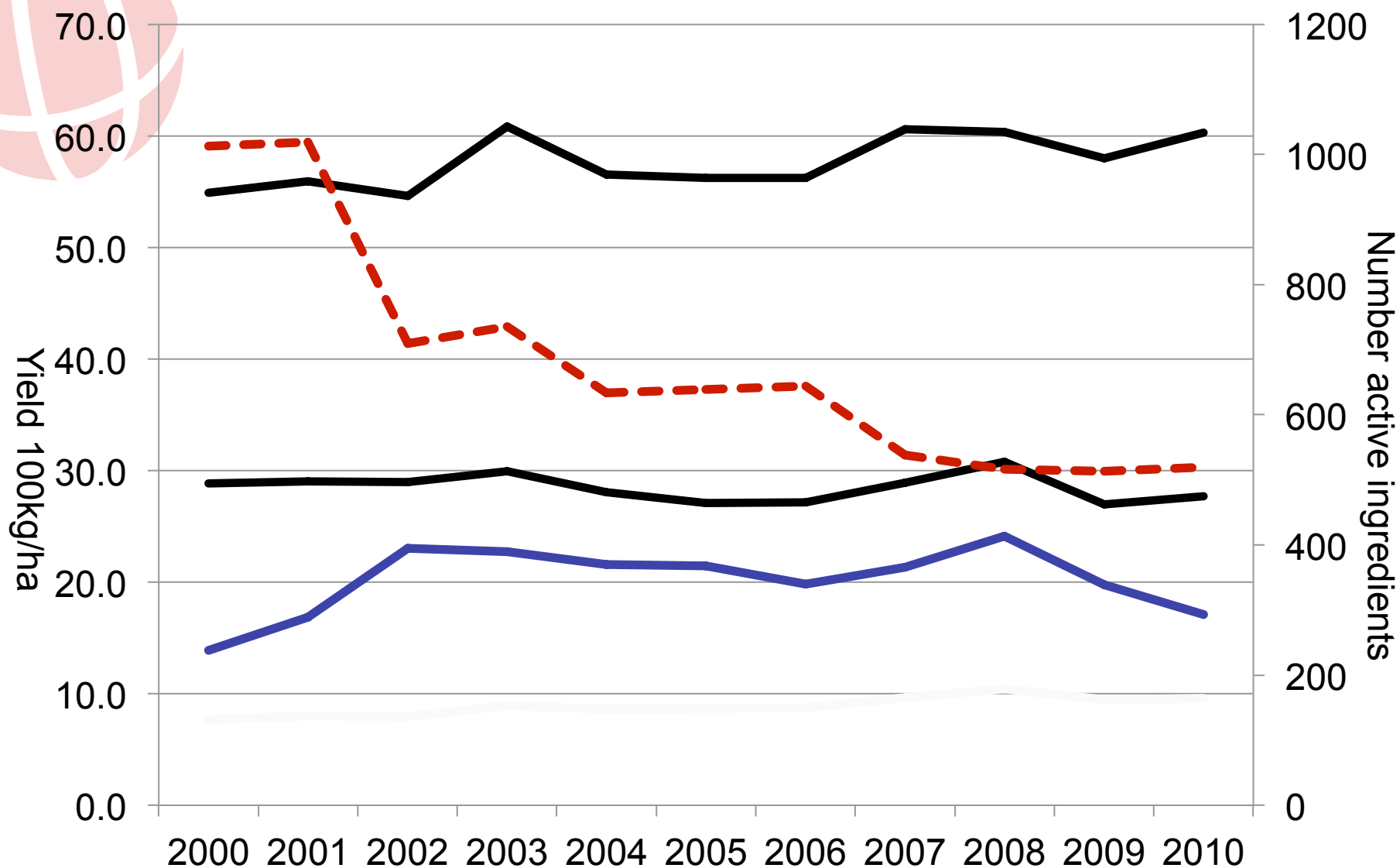
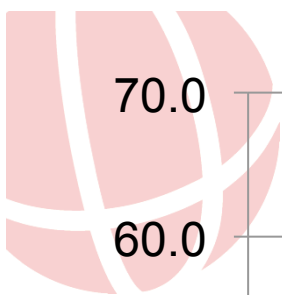
- Re-Registration in 2003
- Subsequently Sweden, supported by Denmark, Austria and Finland, brought an action for annulment of Directive 2003/112 before the Court of First Instance.
- In a ground-breaking decision the EU's Court of First Instance revoked the EU-approval for the Syngenta herbicide paraquat in 2007.



## Reasoning of the Court of First Instance

- Although there are studies on the link between paraquat and Parkinson's disease, the Commission's reports did not contain any assessment of the literature relating to possible links.
- The Community requirements, which prohibit any exposure higher than the acceptable operator exposure level, have not been satisfied. Consequently, the authorisation of Paraquat failed **to satisfy the requirement of protection of human health.**
- The conclusion of a French study which played an important role in the Commission's decision, advised against the use of paraquat with a knapsack sprayer.





- Cereals
- Fibre Crops Primary
- Oilcrops Primary
- Pulses, Total



## Actions by non-state Actors

- 1998: **The World Bank** (banned for use in Bank-financed projects)
- 2002: **Forest Stewardship Council** – covering more 50 million hectares in more than 60 countries.
- 2005: **The Common Code for the Coffee Community (CCCC)** - a joint initiative of coffee producers, trade and industry (including Nestlé, Kraft Foods, Sara Lee and others), trade unions and social or environmental NGOs
- **Rainforest Alliance** (including all Chiquita Plantations, Lipton Tea), **Fairtrade Labelling Organizations (FLO)**, **UTZ Certified** (Coffee, Tea, Cacao), **Pro Terra** (soy, sugar cane etc.)





# Companies

- Dole Pressrelease, 08.10.2007

*Dole announced today that it is discontinuing the use of paraquat in its agricultural operations worldwide, by implementing an immediate phase-out program [...].*

*"Dole's implementation of this phase-out program responds to developing marketplace conditions in Europe and elsewhere regarding the use of this herbicide, while also balancing needed compliance with the local regulatory requirements." stated David DeLorenzo, President and Chief Executive Officer of Dole Food Company, Inc.*



## Palm Oil, Banana and Tea Producers

- A survey by IUF and Berne Declaration (2009)
- 1. Major producers of bananas like Dole and Chiquita and smaller banana producers have stopped using Paraquat in their banana plantations.
- 2. Major packers of tea like Unilever and Nestlé (Nestea) along with smaller tea producers have moved away from reliance on Paraquat.
- 3. Producers of palm oil are about equally divided into Paraquat users and non-users, while palm oil buyers are interested in purchasing palm oil produced without Paraquat



## Retailers

- Marks & Spencer banned the use of Paraquat in November 2010
- Early 2011, the large UK retailer Co-op (The Co-operative Group) announced that use of paraquat will be phased out in their supply chain.
- As of 1 January 2013, Paraquat and other pesticides can no longer be used by Coop's (Switzerland) suppliers of fruit, vegetables and herbs.



# International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides

- **3.5** Pesticides whose handling and application require the use of personal protective equipment that is uncomfortable, expensive or not readily available should be avoided, especially in the case of small-scale users in tropical climates



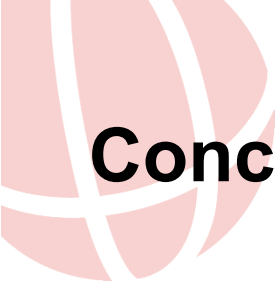
# Responsibility of Paraquat Producers: Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

- Legal opinion, carried out at the request of the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) and the Berne Declaration.
- Does Syngenta violate the human rights to health and life with the sale of Paraquat?
- Yes: Particularly in countries where regulations for the protection of pesticide handlers are not enforced, and where access to adequate protective clothing is unrealistic for the majority, Syngenta does not exercise its obligation to respect human rights.



## Recent Prohibitions

- Laos –June 2010
- CILSS: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal – August 2011
- South Korea – October 2012
- China: Production of Paraquat liquid solution will be stopped July 1, 2014; sale and use July 1, 2016.



# Conclusion

- The phase-out HHP is an interactive process between IGO, National Governments, Farmers and Agricultural Workers, Retailers, NGOs, Producers, Industry and other stakeholders. Everybody has his duties and obligations.