

Pesticides and their impact on health

20 July 2021

New report by Inserm

Pesticides are at the centre of a number of controversies owing to their presumed link to certain diseases. On 30 June 2021, Inserm presented a report which reinforces this presumption [[Pesticides et santé – Nouvelles données \(2021\)](#)]. A multi-disciplinary group of experts conducted a critical analysis of the literature on pesticides, examining over 5,300 documents. Their conclusions regarding the impact of pesticides on health, and also on the environment, are extremely concerning.

The available data reveals a high level of risk for people who come into direct contact with pesticides, as well as for those living in agricultural areas, including children. The report indicates a probable link between exposure to pesticides in a professional setting (people who regularly handle or come into contact with pesticides) and six pathologies: certain types of lymphoma, prostate cancer, Parkinson's disease, cognitive impairment and respiratory disease. Inserm has demonstrated a strong presumed link between certain types of cancer in

children, including leukaemia and central nervous system tumours, and the mother's exposure to pesticides during pregnancy.

On the environmental front, the experts highlight how long pesticides remain present in natural settings. The study shows that in 2017, for example, 80% of subterranean bodies of water contained pesticides; 25% of these had pesticide levels in excess of the regulatory threshold. Moreover, 40% of the substances detected are currently banned, which is a good indication of how long they remain in the environment.

The reports closes by calling on all public authorities to take stronger action to protect the population against the dangers of pesticides.

Our policy

At Anaxis, we are strongly committed to protecting public health, the environment and water resources. In practice, this means that we exclude pesticide manufacturers from our portfolios. The new Inserm report confirms (and fleshes out) previous studies that have already demonstrated the inadequacy of measures taken by public authorities to reduce pesticide use and eliminate the most dangerous products. We believe that a different agricultural model is possible and that we must stop financing the production of substances whose harmful effects have now been well-documented. The fact that many of them are still authorised for use only strengthens our determination to act.

Details of our sector exclusion approach are available online at www.anaxis-esg.com. The same website also features a [press release](#) dated 12 February 2020 with the title "Why we exclude the pesticide sector from our portfolios".

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