

Six-point plan for G7 Action on Global Lead Poisoning November 9, 2022

Efforts by the G7 countries can support and promote lead poisoning prevention in low and middle-income countries (LMICs), including preventing childhood lead exposure. The organizations listed below call on all G7 member countries to strengthen domestic regulatory frameworks and support lead poisoning prevention efforts through the following actions:

- 1) Eliminate all uses of lead in paints and plastics in all G7 countries
- 2) Submit notifications that nominate lead chromates for listing in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention;
- 3) Strengthen regulations to further reduce lead emission limits and ambient air standards to meet the most stringent in effect within G7 countries;
- 4) Update and effectively enforce occupational health protections for workers exposed to lead in G7 countries;
- 5) Regulate G7 exports of used lead batteries and lead scrap to ensure that these materials are only sent to facilities in other countries that effectively enforce the most stringent lead emission limits and ambient air standards in effect within G7 countries;
- 6) Provide increased financial support for lead poisoning prevention in LMICs and support international policies that promote these efforts in all countries.

Justification:

- 1) Although G7 countries have restricted the use of lead in specific applications and/or have regulated specific lead compounds allowed in paint products, none have eliminated all uses of lead paint as called for in 2009 under the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM). The term “paint” includes all varnishes, lacquers, stains, enamels, glazes, primers or coatings used for any purpose. Lead paints are still commonly allowed for “industrial” coatings that are not intended for residential applications. Such coatings contribute to environmental contamination and occupational lead exposures. Lead from both of these sources are often brought into the home environment and contribute to childhood lead poisoning. One common excuse that LMIC governments provide for not regulating lead in paints, and companies use for refusing to reformulate lead-containing paint products, is that such products are not regulated in G7 countries. Eliminating all lead paint in domestic applications will provide a model for all countries and stop companies based in G7 countries from selling these products abroad.

In addition, no G7 country has eliminated the use of lead in plastics. A significant portion of hazardous lead pigments including lead chromate and lead oxides are used in plastic production. These materials will release lead into the environment when this material is burned, processed for reuse/“recycling” or through eventual degradation.

- 2) Furthermore, even LMICs that have banned use of lead in paint face difficulties in enforcing those regulations. Listing lead chromates in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention would introduce requirements of Prior Informed Consent, meaning that LMICs would have much better control over what comes in through their borders. As the EU has already banned lead chromate, G7 countries should therefore immediately submit notifications, as per their obligation under the Convention, to the Rotterdam Secretariat and further support its listing in 2025 throughout the review process.
- 3) Industrial emissions are a significant source of airborne lead and contribute to soil and dust contamination in G7 countries. Most regulations on stack emissions and ambient air standards for lead are outdated and do not account for the serious health consequences of low-level lead exposures which are responsible for almost 1,000,000 deaths a year. Even among G7 countries, there are significant gaps in these regulatory limits that should be revised on a regular basis to provide an even playing field by updating national standards to align with the most stringent.
- 4) In G7 countries occupational lead standards governing airborne lead in the workplace, medical removal protections and other responses to employee blood lead levels that date back to the 1970s (or earlier) and are not health protective. None of the existing occupational standards in G7 countries protect workers from the known cardiovascular risk or reproductive hazards from lead exposure.
- 5) All G7 countries allow for the export of lead scrap for recycling abroad often in countries with weaker or no industry-specific lead emission standards and few resources for regulatory enforcement. In addition, the U.S. and Canada export millions of metric tons of used lead batteries to Mexico and other countries for recycling. Lead battery recycling plants in all countries are significant sources of airborne lead emissions, employee exposure and environmental contamination. G7 countries should commit to either banning such exports or develop a system for ensuring conformity with all environmental laws, regulations and practices at facilities accepting their exports of used lead batteries and lead scrap.
- 6) Given the ubiquity of lead in products and in the environment, and the well-documented global health impacts and economic costs of lead exposures, investments in lead poisoning prevention including the surveillance, control, and regulation of lead in LMICs are severely underfunded by G7 aid and environmental agencies. G7 countries should commit to increasing funding for lead poisoning prevention in LMICs to a minimum of \$100,000,000 USD per year which is a small fraction of the more than \$4.6 Billion dollars that G7 countries allocate annually to global health programs.

List of Organizations that have Endosed the Above Plan:

IPEN	Sweden
Occupational Knowledge International	USA
A Community Voice	USA
AIDA- Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente	Regional
Ako Foundation	Ghana
APEDDUB	Tunisia
Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment	Armenia
Arulagam	India
Asociación Colnodo	Colombia
Association Jeunesse pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable	Burkina Faso
Bio Vision Africa (BiVA)	Uganda
CADME (Coastal Area Disaster Mitigation Efforts)	India
CARPIN	Jamaica
Casa Cem- Vias verdes AC.	México
Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED)	Nepal
Centre De Recherche Et D'education Pour Le Developement (CREPD)	Cameroon
Centre for Environmental Justice (Guarantee) Ltd. (CEJ)	Sri Lanka
CGFED	Vietnam
ChemSec	Sweden
Children's Environmental Health Foundation (CEHF)	Zambia
Collegium Ramazzini	Italy
Community Action Against Plastic Waste (CAPws)	Nigeria
Earthjustice	USA
ECOCITY	Greece
Ecological Alert and Recovery - Thailand (EARTH)	Thailand
EcoWaste Coalition	Philippines
Environment and Social Development Organization	Bangladesh
Foundation to support civil organization (FSCI, Dastgiri-Center)	Tajikistan
GAPROFFA	Benin
Hamraah Foundation	India
Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability, Inc.	Philippines
Irrigation Training and Economic Empowerment Organization – IRTECO	Tanzania
Land and Human to Advocate Progress (LHAP)	Jordan
Lead Exposure and Poisoning Prevention Alliance	UK
LockUpLead	USA
Lok kalyan seva kendra	India
Mundo Químico	Mexico
National Center for Healthy Housing	USA
NEER Foundation	India
NeighborWorks Community Partners	USA

Networking for Society development Organization (NESODO)	Tanzania
Nexus3 Foundation	Indonesia
NGO "Gamarjoba"	Georgia
NGO Shipbreaking Platform	Belgium
Niagara County Department of Health	USA
One Source Environmental, LLC	USA
Orissa State Volunteers and Social Workers Association	India
ONG La Grande Puissance De Dieu	Benin
Program for Global Public Health and the Common Good at Boston College	USA
Reacción Climática	Bolivia
Scottish Hazards	Scotland
Silver Valley Community Resource Center	USA
Society for Sustainable Development	India
Sustainable Environment Development Initiative	Nigeria
Sustainable Research and Action for Environmental Development	Nigeria
Taller Ecologista	Argentina
Taiwan Watch Institute	Taiwan
Toxics Link	India
ToxicsWatch	Italy
TOXISPHERA Environmental Health Association	Brazil