

Consultant to do Baseline study on Pesticides in The South East Asia (Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia) for the 5-year period of 2018 -2023

Term of References

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1. Background

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS) is one of six major political foundations in the Federal Republic of Germany. Affiliated with the German Left party, Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung nurtures and promotes democratic socialism. We are striving to develop alternative approaches for transforming society toward a more united and just one. With this approach, we are facilitating political analysis, education, and dialogues, both in Germany and worldwide.

RLS currently has 26 offices worldwide. In over 80 countries, we are working with partners, including state agencies, academic institutions, and civil society organizations. From RLS Southeast Asia (RLS SEA) – Hanoi Office, we aim to contributing to ensure social, ecological and political rights for all as well as overcoming unequal power structures by promoting participatory decision making processes, political exchange and dialogue, leading to a fair distribution of wealth and resources and a healthy environment. To materialize this goal, we focus on **three components including Social Justice, Social and Ecological Transformation, and Raising progressive Mekong voices in the ASEAN region**. RLS SEA office in Hanoi is geographically working in five countries - Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand with a broader view into the Southeast Asia region.

2. Rational

Our food is a commodity, the ingredients of which we often have as little insight into as the social and ecological conditions under which it is produced. Biodiversity, productive soils, and water resources are growing scarce. Corporate power exerts increasing pressure on small-scale agricultural producers. In the Global South, they are deprived of their land and control over seeds. Farm workers are exploited in global supply chains and exposed to toxic pesticides on a daily basis.

The use of pesticides is not only extremely harmful to human health and the environment. Subsidies and tax reliefs for the pesticide companies as well as the consequential damages cost society a fortune. People in the Global South suffer the most from the impacts of the export of toxic pesticides from the EU. Moreover, contrary to all promises, pesticide use does not contribute to reducing hunger. The German government has announced it will implement an export ban on certain hazardous pesticides. The goal of the export ban is to contribute to eliminating the double standards in the pesticide trade that arise when active ingredients and pesticide products that are not approved or authorized in the EU due to their environmental and health hazards or risks are nevertheless exported from Germany to countries outside the EU. RLS, together with the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, INKOTA netzwerk and the Pesticide Action Network Germany (PAN Germany), has written a legal opinion and examines the potential scope of

such an export ban and if it could be compatible with EU law as well as the World Trade Organization's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The South East Asian countries are characterized by our rich biodiversity as well as cultural diversity. Agricultural expansion for livelihood security is leading to an increase in pesticide application in this region. The women and children are also exposed during weeding. Pesticides have become so easily available that a pesticide retailer can nowadays be found in nearly every village in Thailand and Vietnam. These two countries have recorded growth in agricultural pesticide use of 7-10% annually over more than 10 years. Levels of pesticide use are much lower in Cambodia and Laos, but these countries appear to be catching up quickly¹.

Three international conventions govern the manufacture and export-import and other aspects of hazardous chemicals that include many pesticides. Of these, the Stockholm Convention came into force on 17 May, 2004, with an objective to eliminate or reduce the release of twelve Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) that included nine pesticides. Through an amendment in May 2009, nine more POPs have been added to the list, of which five are pesticides. In 1989, a Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure from the UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was introduced resulting in a joint convention text in March 1998 known as the Rotterdam convention for certain hazardous chemicals in international trade. This entered into force in February 2004; since then, several amendments have been made, the latest in May 2015 resulted in a list of 16 additional POPs hazardous chemicals (including pesticides, PCBs, PCTs, and other organic pollutants). Although Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao ratified all the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention and the Basel Convention, many hazardous pesticides was still in use in this region and require to be phased out. Information was lacking on the use status of pesticides in smaller countries, thereby retaining a certain amount of ambiguity. Despite the grave nature of the pesticide use regulation issue in the Asia-Pacific, clear and uniform policy response is lacking in most countries of this region. These issues need to be addressed through dialogues and cooperation both at national as well as international levels.

The baseline studies on pesticides are planned to be conducted in Iraq, Palestine and South East Asia (Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia), contributing to the RLS global campaign for food sovereignty. RLS SEA – Hanoi Office is recruiting one consultant/ a group of consultants to conduct the baseline studies on pesticides in Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia with detail analysis for the 5-year period from 2018 - 2023.

3. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the Baseline study is to map out the main players, what kind of pesticides, levels of danger for health and environment and policies/regulations of the governments. These are several sub-objectives as follow:

- To provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of pesticide use. This includes information on the types of pesticides being used, the frequency and intensity of use, and the methods of application.
- To provide information on the current impact of pesticides on human health and the environment in the country, including the presence of pesticide residues in food and water sources, and the effects of exposure on wildlife and ecosystems.

¹ [Pesticide troubles in Southeast Asia - World Vegetable Center \(avrdc.org\)](http://avrdc.org)

- To identify potential risks and areas of concern.
 - This includes identifying vulnerable populations, such as children and pregnant women, who may be more susceptible to the harmful effects of pesticides and
 - To identify areas where pesticide use may be particularly problematic, such as near schools or residential areas.
 - To provide an assessment of the toxicity of different types of pesticides, as well as an analysis of the potential for exposure through food, water, and air.
- To map out all related stakeholders including government, regulatory agencies, manufacturers, corporations, pesticides importers, farmers, civil societies, mass movements and others. To analyze their role and responsibilities based on that evaluate the current pesticides management system.
- To list and analyze the current policies/regulations regarding local products as well as imports and trade of pesticide, international conventions signed/ratified and its implementation, especially focusing on double standard system.
- To provide an analysis both on national and regional development strategies in the area of pesticides.

4. Target Groups of beneficiaries/ readers

- Political decision makers especially in Germany and in the “case countries” but also elsewhere
- NGOs and other civil society organisations, academics, and researchers in the global North and South to make use of the findings

5. Methodology, deliverables and guiding questions for the “case-study chapters”

5.1 Methodology

- Desk research/ Literature review – evaluating available data regarding pesticides in the respective country, analysis of available statistics in a quantitative approach (e.g. Government data, World Bank and others)
- Qualitative research: Semi-structure interviews and/ or group discussion with different actors such as government representatives, public servants, scientists, civil society organizations, corporations, farmer/peasant organizations and affected people on the ground (where appropriate)
- Cross-cutting issues:
 - The importance of considering gender aspects when designing, planning and implementing the baseline study. Gender-disaggregated data should be collected through the whole study.
 - The clear link between mismanagement of pesticides and violation of rights, such as right to health, right to life, right to a clean environment, access to justice and right to information should be highlighted and documented by the research.

5.2 Deliverables – Case countries

- A research report, maximum 13.000 words, in English
- Report summary (around 1000 words), in English
- A presentation in power point format, in English

- Scope: the research paper containing the following, but not limited to:
 - An abstract/ summary of the key findings (max 2 pages)
 - Precise answers to the questions and content requested below.
 - A summary of the interviews, highlighting strong quotes
 - An overview of existing data and analysis.
 - An analysis and answers to the guiding questions (see below)
 - A list of interviewees, including contact details and information whether we can quote a person by name or should treat them anonymously
 - Provide trustworthy references (APA format)

Where applicable: Photographs that illustrate the main findings of the research and a few information regarding the specific photographs such as: where was it taken, who or what is visible and name of the copyright holder

Please note: the final case studies for the publication will be written by Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung

Proposed guiding questions

Please note: it is crucial that the consultant provides answers to these questions/topics!

- Who are the key players of pesticides in the countries and their role and responsibilities?
- What kind of pesticides are being used and levels of danger for health and environment?
- What are the potential risks and areas of concern?
- How is the national governance of pesticides (current policies/regulations, prevention and control of pesticides, legislation and inspection by governments...)?
- Which international conventions are signed/ratified by the countries and how have they been being implemented?
- Does it has an effective pesticide management system that follows international standards?
- What are the main importers of pesticides in the country (local and international corporations)
- How are the rights of plantation workers, farmers, rural women and indigenous peoples violated to a safe and healthy working environment and the rights of communities to a healthy environment? Rights to information on the pesticides they use or to which they are exposed.
- Does the country prohibit the importation of pesticides that are banned in their home country?
- What should be on a more consistent approach to pesticide control and surveillance in ASEAN countries?

6. Requirements

The research task is designed for 15-20 working days

Necessary qualification:

- Proven experience in research on the topic of pesticides and/or in one of the following fields: agronomy, biology, biochemistry, chemistry, ecology, environmental science, food science and

technology, human medicine, life sciences, public health, toxicology, veterinary medicine or related areas.

- At least 5 years of experiences doing qualitative and/ or quantitative research in the field of Social Sciences, Economic Development and Political Sciences.
- Basic knowledge of the international regulatory framework in the area of food, feed or consumer safety, environmental protection or public health is an asset;
- A strong network in Agriculture sector and high-level of decision makers body in case-countries.
- Ability to write international- standards research report/ article in English (proven by a track of record of publications).
- Ability to communicate well in both verbal and written form of English.
- A flexible and can-do-it attitude towards challenges that might arise during the consultant/ research process.

7. Languages

The report will be written in English, and then it will be translated to German for publications.

8. Publishers: Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung

9. Rough Timeline

- By 25th of April 2023: Finalising ToR
- By 20th of May 2023: Case Country have been selected and country researchers identified
- By 26th of May 2023: Researchers awarded and contracts signed
- By end of July 2023: First version of research deliverables from the country case studies have been submitted
- By mid of August 2023: Feedback has been provided to country case studies
- By end of August 2023: Final research deliverables of the country case studies have been submitted
- By mid of September 2023: First draft of the study available
- By end of September 2023: Feedback provided
- By end of October 2023: Study finalized
- By end of November 2023: Layout design finalized
- By mid – December 2023: Translation available
- By end of December 2023 final study available in German, English and local languages.

10. Application

RLS SEA would like to invite interested consultant team/ organization to submit their application following international standards **in English** language including:

- Short research design/ proposal to propose how the consultant is planning to conduct the research (maximum 2 pages).
- CV of consultant/ team members with at least two references.
- Financial plan, including:
 - No of working days according to the timeline above



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- Estimated words of the study
- Proposed budget of the study (excluding PIT or VAT)
- Organizational profile (if any).

Application deadline: 15 May 2023

Please submit your application to Mrs. Nguyen Hong Nga, Project Manager RLS SEA via the email address:
nguyen.hongnga@rosalux.org

Inquiries are only accepted before the application deadline. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted.