PESTICIDES MUST BE INCLUDED IN SCOPING PLAN AND CLIMATE LANDS STRATEGY
January 5, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Via email: gavin.newsom@gov.ca.gov, governor@governor.ca.gov,

Re: PESTICIDES MUST BE INCLUDED IN SCOPING PLAN AND CLIMATE LANDS STRATEGY

Dear Governor Newsom,

The fifty-nine (59) organizations below submit this letter to call for the explicit inclusion of agricultural pesticides, and actions to support reductions of synthetic pesticide use, in both the 2022 Scoping Plan and the Climate Lands Strategy under Executive Order N-82-20. We also call for the Department of Pesticide Regulation to take a lead role in these efforts.
The 2022 Scoping Plan is intended not only to address actions to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration but also to prioritize actions that result in multiple benefits to public health and the environment. Pesticides pose a severe threat to human and environmental health:

- They pollute air and water and impact community health, putting the health of Latinx and farmworker communities at disproportionate risk.
- They inhibit the ability of soil to sequester carbon, build soil organic matter, and conserve water.
- They contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, with studies showing just three fumigant pesticides leading to as much as a 100-fold increase in nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas considered 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide. One study showed a 7-fold increase in nitrous oxide emissions following a single fumigation.
- They decrease ecological biodiversity and leave farmers less resilient in the face of climate change.

For these reasons it is imperative that pesticides - 200 million+ pounds of which are applied in California every year - are incorporated into the Scoping Plan in a serious and significant way, along with real solutions that decrease our overreliance on these hazardous chemicals.

The California Natural Resources Agency and CDFA are currently tasked with developing the Climate Lands Strategy, whose purpose in part is to protect and restore biodiversity. Pesticides have been identified the world over as one of the greatest contributors to biodiversity loss. To address this issue head on, we believe the Department of Pesticide Regulation needs to play a leadership role as an equal partner with CNRA and CDFA in development of the Climate Lands Strategy. Pesticides must be recognized for their disproportionate and deleterious effect on biodiversity, and solutions must be offered that focus on reducing their use.

For too long pesticides have been left out of conversations and state plans where they are wholly relevant, including those related to healthy soils, climate, water quality, air quality, and resiliency under climate change. Communities of color, who bear the brunt of environmental injustice with regard to pesticide exposure, have had enough.

We appreciate the fresh leadership you have shown on this issue, with your commitment to the phasing out of chlorpyrifos, $5.7 million in funding to support research and farmers’ transition away from chlorpyrifos, and the establishment of multi-stakeholder workgroups to identify and promote alternatives to pesticides.

We now call on you to put an end to the siloization and exclusion of pesticides from relevant state efforts, to bring the Department of Pesticide Regulation to the table on an equal footing with other departments and agencies working on issues where pesticides play a key role, and to
ensure that solutions that focus on reducing pesticide use and supporting farmers’ transition away from these harmful chemicals be fully incorporated into these broader processes.

Sincerely,

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