



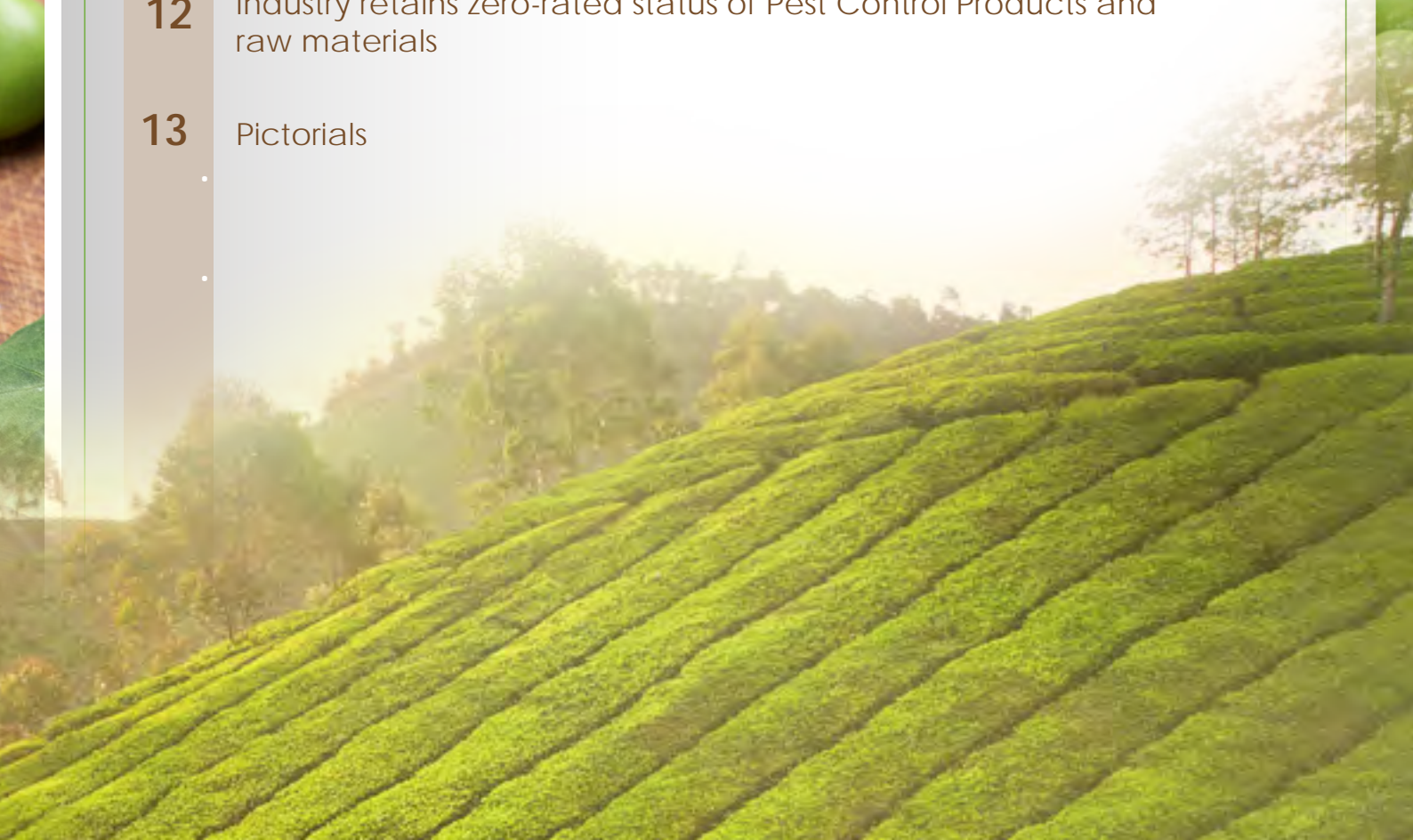
# ACTIVITY REPORT

April - June 2023



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## aak-GROW TEAM BUILDING SESSION

aak-GROW on 14th-16th June 2023, held a board retreat and team building session for its Board members, sub-committee heads and secretariat in Ukunda. The team not only bonded over fun activities but also relooked the organization's strategy and impact in the first half of the year, after which strategic re-alignments were made to ensure even greater footprint by the end of the year.

During the retreat, the team also engaged in the following activities:



*aak-GROW Board Members, Sub-Committee Heads and Secretariat during the board retreat at Diani Reef Resort, Ukunda*

### a) Advancing Our Corporate Commitment to the National Tree-cover Campaign

The organization's Board members, Sub-Committee heads and staff took advantage of the Diani Reef Beach Resort conservation scheme, which encourages guests to leave a mark at the hotel by planting trees.



*The aak-GROW team planting a tree*

### b) Team Building Session

To wrap up the session, the group took to the beach to engage in team building activities.



## JOURNEY TO RESTORING MOTHER NATURE



In support of the 30% national tree cover by 2032, aak-GROW alongside other organisations participated in this year's Forest Challenge Tree Planting event held at Kinale Forest, Kiambu County where 5000 trees were planted. The event is an extension of the annual 'Forest Challenge' organized by Kenya Forest Service, East African Wildlife Society and Kijabe Environment Volunteers that brings together sponsors of the previous year's event to a tree planting exercise.



*aak-GROW staff among other event participants plant a ceremonial tree*



*aak-GROW staff members participating in the tree planting event*

The annual Forest Challenge convenes corporate organizations and individuals to raise funds for conservation through adventure sports. Funds raised through this initiative are channelled towards rehabilitation of the degraded forest areas in Mau and Aberdare forest ecosystems.

Environmental conservation, forest rehabilitation and combating biodiversity loss are at the centre of aak-GROW's mandate in climate change mitigation.



# SUSTAINABLE PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

## SPMF CONFERENCE IN KENYA

The Sustainable Pesticide Management Framework (SPMF) is a dedicated program driven by the industry to achieve a step-change in responsible pesticide management. The SPMF program combines best practices in regulatory and stewardship to create an enabling environment for innovation and infrastructure that supports responsible use of pesticides



*Mr. Benson Ngigi giving a presentation on the impact of SPMF in Kenya during the meeting*



*Dr. Christoph Neumann from CropLife International*

SPMF funded by CropLife International is a proactive, long-term engagement that supports low- and middle-income countries to develop and advance local capacity in line with the FAO-WHO Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. In Africa, it has been rolled out in Kenya and Morocco and will soon be launched in a third country in the region.

During their visit to Kenya, members of CropLife international led by Dr. Christoph Neumann, the International Regulatory Affairs Director for Crop Protection, reviewed the impact and progress of SPMF in Kenya since its launch in 2021. Some of the main impacts of SPMF in the country include: .

Review of the PCP bill & respective regulations – The PCP Bill is currently 95% to promulgation. It has moved from Ministry of Agriculture to the Attorney General for legal drafting. 50% of regulations have been reviewed without issues.



Introduction of Drone technology. The law that consents to the use of drone technology came into place in 2020. SPMF facilitated Drone training by institutions like Kenya Airways and ASTRA. The drone technology was unlocked by SPMF during management of locust infestation in Kenya, herbicide application and citrus pesticide control in Makueni

Sustainable pesticide waste management through increased efficiency in waste collection and compliance with Extended Producer Responsibility regulations- SPMF has facilitated formation of an industry Kenya Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Organization (KEHAPRO).5 hazard waste streams have been identified by NEMA for formation of a hazardous waste PRO. Recruitment of members ongoing. 21 members out of 81 have been recruited for the PRO.



## SPMF TOWNHALL

The town hall brought all members, regulators and key industry players up to speed with the concept of SPMF, its goals and importance to the industry. From this, the stakeholders would understand the significant role they play in the success of the program.



*Dr. Christoph Neumann from CropLife International*



*Members during the SPMF townhall*



*Dr. Samira Amellal from CropLife Africa, Middle East*

CropLife International presented a global overview of SPMF and its integration efforts with the FAO /WHO code of conduct together with its roadmap and guiding principles which include:

- ✔ Deliver partnerships with governments, NGOs, IGOs and other stakeholders in the industry to elevate action.
- ✔ Promote the international code of conduct on pesticides management by following its guidelines in the industry's activities.
- ✔ Work to credibly defend the definition of HHPs, according to FAO/WHO guidelines and promote science based, evidence-led solutions.
- ✔ Increase the number of certified SSPs.
- ✔ Achieve well established Incident reporting centers.
- ✔ Enforce risk mitigation measures through stewardship and regulatory approaches.
- ✔ Create and enabling environment for innovation.

## CROPLIFE INTERNATIONAL IN KIRINYAGA COUNTY



*Members of CropLife International, aak-GROW, Mutira Society Manager and local Spray Service Providers pose for a photo during the visit*

While in Kenya, members of CropLife International visited Mutira and Mwerua Coffee Cooperative Societies in Kirinyaga County to witness some of the impact of the Sustainable Pesticide Management Framework (SPMF) in Kenya over a span of two years.



*Discussion ongoing outside Mutira Factory Empty Pesticide Collection Center*

Through the SPMF led trainings on responsible use, the quality of coffee produced has increased earning the societies wider markets and more premiums. The premiums have been used for factory development such as replacing wooden coffee drying beds with metallic ones, an initiative that contributes to environmental conservation.



*Wooden coffee drying beds*



*Metallic coffee drying beds*

### aak-GROW HOSTS 2<sup>ND</sup> WORLD FOOD SAFETY DAY

Established by the UN General Assembly in 2018, the World Food Safety Day aims at emphasizing the importance of safe food production, handling, storage, and preparation to prevent foodborne diseases.

In Kenya, aak-GROW/CropLife Kenya in partnership with its member organizations and other industry stakeholders organize annual celebrations to mark this day by interacting with farmers and equipping them with the knowledge on responsible use of pest control products to achieve food safety.

The event focuses on the farmer as the most important stakeholder on the safe food supply chain.



aak-GROW hosted this year's World Food Safety Day at Kaguru ATC, Meru County where Pest Control Industry stakeholders ranging from regulators, manufacturers, distributors and most importantly over 2,500 farmers gathered to mark this day.

This year's event themed "Food Standards Save Lives" provided an opportunity for farmers to undergo practical training sessions on responsible use of pest control solutions to ensure food safety.

Integrated Pest Management, Identification of Counterfeit products, Empty Container Management and Maximum Residue Limits were among the main topics of discussion.

The guest of honour, Mr. Douglas Kangi, Director Crop Resource Management State Department of Agriculture commended the crop protection industry for its effort in promoting food safety. He urged the county governments and development partners to support safe and sustainable food production for the safety of the consumer's health.





## POISON INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SERVICE

The Poison Information Center offers emergency services to pest control product exposure incidences. The center is accessible through toll-free numbers placed on all registered product container labels.

The number of calls improved by 478 due to increased public awareness on the Poison Information Centre which resulted in higher utilization of the service hence the surge in the number of calls in the second quarter as compared to the first.



Toll free numbers

0800720021

0800730030

## POISON INFORMATION CENTER RECEIVES AFRITOX SOFTWARE SYSTEM

aak-GROW/CropLife Kenya in partnership with Kenyatta National Hospital held a seminar which brought onboard key stakeholders from the Ministry of Environment, Veterinary Medicines Directorate, CLAME, University of Nairobi and PCPB among other stakeholders to align the operation modalities for data collection, monitoring and reporting on PIC operations.

An offline Afritox system was availed for the Poison Information Center. This implementation will assist the center's health professionals with various components of diagnosis, management and treatment guidelines. Members present were able to interact with the system using several case studies.



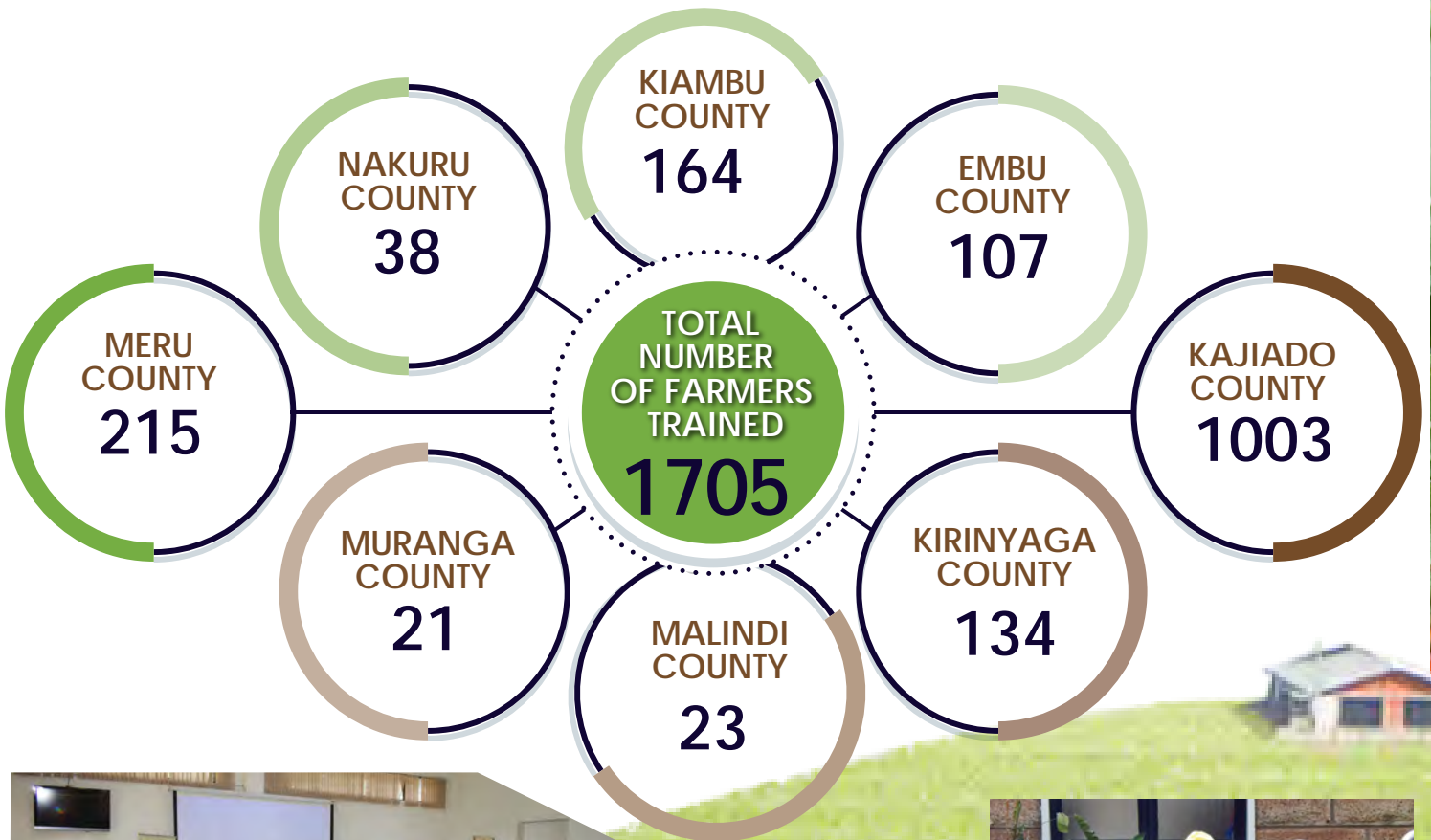
# STEWARDSHIP OUTREACH ACTIVITIES



Baragwi Cooperative Society



Kabare Cooperative Society One



NKG Coffee Mills



Kibugu



NKG Coffee Mills

### AWARENESS CREATION OF HIGHLY HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES (HHPs) IN KENYA

The international and regional discourse around Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) and criteria of identification has led to stakeholders in most countries coming together to build consensus on their country position. Key projects in some African countries supported by partners recommend phasing out and or banning of these pesticides under the theme of risk reduction leading to various country lists being released.



*Dr. Esther Kimani, CEO, PCPB addressing members during the meeting*

The industry aligns its definition of HHPs to the International Code of Conduct (FAO-WHO, 2016) and recognizes its guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (an 8-point criteria). However, criteria 1-7 are intelligible while criteria 8, which points out to how the product is used lacks clarity and may be impractical to implement.



*Dr. Ken Orenge from Veterinary Medicines Directorate*



*Mrs. Stella Wafukho from CropLife Africa Middle East addressing participants during the meeting*

Consequently, there arose a need to dialogue around how the industry and its stakeholders will strive towards changing farmer behavior regarding adherence to the label recommendation as misuse of the products is considered one of the criteria used to classify a product as an HHP. In addition, understanding the impact of potential withdrawals on agricultural commodity production and exports is critical as stakeholders embrace the transition to reducing reliance on HHPs.

These were the outcomes:

1. Commitment by industry members to perform respective portfolio review - by August and engage with PCPB which will in turn provide a report by September 2023.
2. Conduct additional training and sensitization on HHPs criteria and approach to the analysis shared during the meeting – May & June 2023
3. Establish a mechanism to engage and agree on a country position (and regional engagement,) on HHPs ahead of ICCM5.

## INDUSTRY RETAINS ZERO-RATED STATUS OF PEST CONTROL PRODUCTS AND RAW MATERIALS

aak-GROW, on behalf of the crop protection industry presented its submission on the Finance Bill 2023 before the National Assembly's Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning on 24th May 2023 at Hilton Garden Inn Hotel in Nairobi. The industry was opposing an amendment on taxation of Pest Control Products from zero rated to exempt.



*aak-GROW CEO, Mr. Eric Kimunguyi addressing the committee during the submission*



*Hon. Kuria Kimani, chairman of the National Assembly's Departmental Committee during the submission*

The move from zero rated to exempt would have had the farmer bear the high cost of production hence food insecurity, reduced household income, increased unemployment and social vices among others. This notwithstanding the fact that farmers are already burdened by a high cost of production where up to 30% is attributed to pest management.



*Mr. Hezekiah Macharia, board member at aak-GROW during the Finance Bill Industry Submission*



*Mr. Joel Mutai, Regulatory Manager at aak-GROW presenting the industry submission*

All this would have had a negative impact on the country's economy, which is highly supported by the agriculture industry. Industry contributes approximately 33% of the national GDP and another 27% indirectly through linkages to other sectors. The high cost would have also increased the amount of illegal and counterfeit products in the market.

Following this submission through the Departmental Committee, the industry retained its former tax status as zero rated in the amended bill that was passed into a law.

# PICTORIALS



*aak-GROW CEO, Mr. Eric Kimunguyi during a meeting between the industry and the state department of Public Health and Professional Standards at the Radisson Blu Arboretum Hotel.*



*Mr. Francis Karanja, Chairman Stewardship Committee, aak-GROW, addressing farmers at the World Food Safety Day 2023*



*Mr. Mwangi Muthee, board member aak-GROW planting a tree during the Board retreat in Ukunda.*



*Dr. Esther Kimani of PCPB visiting the aak-GROW stand during this year's National Potato Council of Kenya expo*



*aak-GROW facilitating training to Spray Service Providers at Ol joro Orok in Nyandarua County*



*Mrs. Evelyn Luseneka of CropLife Africa Middle East during a presentation at the Board Retreat in Ukunda*



*Delisa Jiang, Program Manager, Sustainable Pesticide Management (CropLife International) during the SPMF townhall at the Tribe Hotel, Nairobi*



*Dr. Juma Mukhwana, PS, State Department for Industry, Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry visiting the aak-GROW stand during ISIPPE-1 forum at the Bomas of Kenya*



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