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### **Open letter in support of Prof. Dr. Larissa Bombardi**

The European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSER), the undersigned, would like to publicly express its support to Professor Dr. Larissa Bombardi who is experiencing a series of threats and attacks as a result of her research, to such an extent that she had to leave her home and working country, Brazil.

Prof. Larissa Bombardi is a geographer by training, a Professor of the University of São Paulo (USP) and world-renowned researcher in the field of pesticides, their uses in agriculture and their impacts on society and the environment. Prof. Bombardi's latest work, the 'pesticide atlas' called "The Use of agrottoxins in Brazil and Connections with the European Union", was presented at the workshop "Pesticides, poisoning and the politics of agrichemicals between Europe and Brazil" held by ENSER in Berlin in 2019<sup>1</sup>. The atlas describes the systematically interconnected phenomena of: soil and water poisoning; food contamination; and the relationship between pesticides and diseases which are directly connected to the large-scale adoption of agricultural commodity monocultures and applications of technological packages of genetically modified plants and pesticides, in the so-called agri-food and agri-chemical sector in South America. Larissa's work, involving thousands of academic publications highlighting the health hazards of pesticides, obviously contradicts the claims of safety of pesticides and their uses repeatedly made by the industry.

The agri-food and agri-chemical sector in South America comprises multinational companies holding a billion-dollar market and interests with immense political and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://enser.org/events/2019/pesticides-poisoning-and-the-politics-of-agrichemicals-between-europe-and-brazil/>

economic connections. Many researchers in the fields of environment and health have long been subject to work harassment, career-threats and personal attacks. Attacks on science and scientists seem to be a growing *modus operandi* from different sectors of society, companies and even governments and are often very difficult to track as they consist also of intimidation from anonymous sources<sup>2</sup>. The case of the eminent researcher Prof. Larissa Bombardi is, alas, one case among many others. ENSSER is concerned because of the importance of her work and its relevance to urgent health and environment issues. This is not only an issue for her own country Brazil, but also for the EU which exports these agro-toxins to Brazil, and imports food products contaminated with them.

ENSSER supports investigative and independent science and scientists, such as Prof. Bombardi, who develop and freely share public-good knowledge for the critical assessment of existing and emerging technologies. It is essential that the relevant institutions – their employers, policy, political, educational and scientific – enable them to pursue their work in the interest of the public good, free science and humankind, freely and without pressure.

In view of the above, ENSSER wishes to make public its support to Prof. Larissa Bombardi and to call for her scientific work, as for all legitimate public interest science, to be conducted freely and without interference.

The Board of the European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER)

**Prof. Dr. Polyxeni Nicolopoulou-Stamati, chair**



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View the statement online: <https://ensser.org/publications/2021-publications/open-letter-in-support-of-prof-dr-larissa-bombardi>

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<sup>2</sup> See e.g. [http://permanentpeopletribunal.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/TPP\\_Bangalore3Dec2011.pdf](http://permanentpeopletribunal.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/TPP_Bangalore3Dec2011.pdf), second paragraph on page 5 and second bullet point in section 3.6 (page 10).