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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Atanor Argentina.: An Example Of Corporate Irresponsibility; Greenpeace Returns US Company Waste Water and Demands Zero Toxic Discharges**

BUENOS AIRES - December 3 - Greenpeace activists today prevented toxic effluents from the ATANOR pesticides manufacturer from contaminating Del Rey river, in the district of Lomas de Zamora, Argentina.

In addition to prevent toxic discharges from polluting the nearby river, Greenpeace collected waste water from the company discharge pipe and returned the toxic effluent to the company. "We are returning a major source of the river contamination to the sender. Atanor has to take responsibility for the pollution it is causing and stop its toxic discharges immediately", said Veronica Odriozola from Greenpeace Argentina.

Greenpeace decided to intervene after the environmental group carefully analyzed soil and water samples from the company. The laboratory results were alarming, indicating the presence of heavy metals and organic contaminants such as the pesticide DDT and other deadly chemicals, like HCH (the chemical from which the pesticide Lindane is obtained), chlorobenzene, and the pesticide 2,4-dichlorophenol.

The environmental and health impacts of these chemicals are very well documented and they include death of plants and fish, low fertility rate, reproductive system disorders, immune system changes and cancer. These harmful pollutants could last a long time in the environment, they accumulate in the fat tissue of animals, contaminate food and are passed from mother to child in

the womb and through mothers' milk. These persistent poisons are known as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

The Atanor plant manufactures chlorinated pesticides and is based in the river complex Matanza-Riachuelo, a severely contaminated waterway and well known polluted "hot-spot" in Argentina. Atanor is a member of the chemical industry program of "Responsible Care", a famous corporate code of responsibility often used as pure greenwash.

The company was privatized in the 1980s. In March 1997, Albaugh Inc. of Akeny Iowa bought 51 % of Atanor for \$58.5 million. Dennis Albaugh, president of the company, was quoted as saying "This will enable us to bring a lot of new products into the United States." Over 6.5 million pounds of the pesticide 2,4-D were shipped to the U.S. in the last 12 months.

"Atanor is just another example of a global polluter. Their toxic discharges poison people here and around the planet as these contaminants travel around the globe. This irresponsible practice must come to an end", said Marcelo Furtado of Greenpeace International.

The MV Greenpeace vessel is currently in Argentina launching a global tour to expose the damage caused by highly polluting and persistent poisons. The expedition will head to Brazil in January and later on to the Mediterranean, Europe and Asia.

Over 100 nations in conjunction with the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) are currently negotiating a plan to reduce and eliminate these POPs from the world. They are dealing with an initial priority group of 12 chemicals that include DDT, PCBs and Dioxins. The next meeting will take place in Nairobi in January of 1999. Greenpeace is calling countries around the world to take responsibility and immediately clean-up the existing hot spots, ban all toxic chemicals and promote clean alternatives world wide.

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