**Petition for the Safe and Chemical Free Maintenance of Public Spaces in our Communities**

**Costa Rica, San Jose, Perez Zeledon, November 2016**

We, the members of the communities of the Canton of Perez Zeledon and the Brunca Region, for health and environmental reasons, request that the Municipality of Perez Zeledon prohibit the use of agrochemicals in our public spaces; including roadsides and storm drains, schools, soccer fields, community salons, health centers, cemeteries, sodas, pulperias and restaurants.

**Whereas,** in the lawful and practical maintenance of public spaces, machine trimmers, machetes, grazing animals, and low-growing ground covers, have been used and are generally recognized as safe methods,

**Whereas,**  chemical herbicides, most of them containing the active ingredient glyphosate,  have been used in the same maintenance, are generally not biodegradable and **cannot**be regarded as safe for humans, animals, and the environment,

**Whereas,** glyphosate has been classified by the United Nations World Health Organization as a probable carcinogen,

**Whereas,** the application of chemical herbicides containing glyphosate is linked to serious illnesses, including birth defects, spontaneous abortion, renal insufficiency, spina bifida and cancer of various types in our communities as well as in many other communities throughout the world,

**Whereas,** Costa Rica has the highest per capita consumption of agrochemicals in the world, and 13 persons die per day due to cancer and more than 23 new cases of cancer are diagnosed daily in Costa Rica,

**Whereas,** chemical herbicide application in our communities has rarely been applied in a safe manner to avoid any exposure through breathing or direct skin contact, as mandated by the label instructions to use protective clothing and masks, and to avoid spraying near homes, schools, playgrounds, orchards, gardens and animal pastures,

**Whereas,** the spraying of chemical herbicides into our waterways specifically violates the instructions to spray only in controlled areas that can be kept dry for at least four days,

**Whereas,** all residents are potentially exposed to toxic residues from water-based and air-based contamination from chemical herbicides containing glyphosate,

**Whereas,** all sentient beings have a right to clean air, uncontaminated waterways and a healthy environment in which to live,

**Whereas,** the unsprayed green, intrinsic, natural beauty of the land enhances our well-being as well as the natural, ecological and touristic value of our canton,

**Whereas,** in accordance with Articles 38, 39, 262, 263, 275, 276, 293 y 294 of the General Law of Health, Article 32 of the Law of Vegetative Health, as well as Articles 134, 143, 167 of the Regulations for Registration, Use and Control of Agrochemicals, all of which defend the rights to health of humans and the environment.

**Whereas,** in accordance with Article 50 or our Constitution which states that “*all persons have a right to a healthy and ecologically sound environment”,*

**Whereas,** internationally, Roundup with its active ingredient Glifosate, has been banned from public spaces in eight countries including Italy, France, The Netherlands as well as parts of England and the United States,

**Therefore**, we, the individuals and the communities herein, request that the municipality of Perez Zeledon:

**Recognizes the detrimental repercussions that the application of agrochemicals has had on the health and well-being of our communities and environment,**

**Prohibits, the use of agrochemicals in our public spaces; including roadsides and storm drains, schools, soccer fields, community salons, health centers, cemeteries, sodas, pulperias and restaurants located in our communities**,

**Prioritizes and incentivizes the use of safe methods of maintenance for our health and environment such as machine trimmers, machetes, grazing animals, and low-growing ground covers that help recuperate the soil.**

Following are the signatures of community members of the Canton of Perez Zeledon that support this petition and ask that you consider **that** **the most valuable asset of every human is their health, as well as the preservation of our environmental and ecological wealth**.

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