



Brussels, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017

**ScoPAFF discussion on glyphosate 25th October: reject the European Commission proposal for the 10-year re-approval**

Dear Minister,

The [Health and Environment Alliance \(HEAL\)](#) – a membership network of over 70 public interest organisations aiming to promote and protect people’s health through environmental action - and the [Association of European Cancer Leagues](#) – a pan-European umbrella organisation of national and regional cancer leagues including countries from Iceland to Turkey - welcome that representatives of EU Member States will discuss the **European Commission proposal for re-authorisation of glyphosate on the EU market** this week in the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed.

On Wednesday 25th October, we urge your representative to prioritise citizens’ health and cancer prevention by rejecting the European Commission proposal to re-authorise glyphosate in Europe for another ten years.

Your rejection of this proposal is essential for the following reasons:

- **Glyphosate is the active substance in the world’s currently most used herbicide and human exposure to the substance has continuously increased over the last 30 years.** Traces of glyphosate have not only been found in the bodies of all individuals tested for its presence (1), but also in numerous food items consumed by the majority of the European population on a daily basis (2). Numerous scientific studies assessed its potential harm (3).
- **In March 2015, the World Health Organisation (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified glyphosate as “probably carcinogenic to humans”.** It is worth repeating that IARC is considered to be the gold standard when it comes to identifying carcinogens. Its research was carried out by a working group of 17 scientists free of conflicts of interests on the basis of the systematic assembly and review of all publicly available evidence relevant to the carcinogenicity of glyphosate (5). The European agencies EFSA and ECHA found that glyphosate is not carcinogenic, mostly based on studies provided by the industry and not available in the public domain. Meanwhile, serious questions about the influence of Monsanto – which has strong commercial interests in keeping glyphosate on the European market, because of its use in the mixture of his best seller herbicide Roundup – on the

European carcinogenicity assessment of glyphosate have emerged and remain unanswered to date. ***These questions should be fully addressed before a sound discussion on the re-authorisation of the substance can take place*** (6).

- **The current proposal of the European Commission does not take into account the requirements set out in the resolution voted by the European Parliament in April 2016** (7). This resolution called for a renewed approval for a period of only seven years, and demanded that glyphosate would not be used for non-professional uses in or close to public parks, public playgrounds and public gardens. These demands are an absolute minimum in order to reduce citizens' exposure to toxic chemicals and promote a transition towards a more sustainable agriculture.
- **Finally, the European Commission proposal ignores the significant legal and societal concerns about the current European evaluation process of pesticides.**
  - On the one hand, the European Court of Justice was recently asked to assess whether the current risk assessment process respects the precautionary principle in order to properly protect human health and the environment (8). Such process calls for caution in the current re-authorisation discussions of glyphosate, as its outcome could have significant implications for the future approval process of pesticides.
  - On the other hand, 1.3 million citizens have signed the European Citizens Initiative demanding the ban of glyphosate and a reform of the European pesticides authorisation system (9) and cancer organisations – including in France, Belgium, Malta, Portugal and the UK – are increasingly calling for the promotion of health protection by reducing or eliminating glyphosate use (10).

**For all the reasons above and keeping in mind that regulating chemical use remains the best buy in cancer prevention, we urge you to reject the European Commission proposal on 25th October.**

In the meantime, we remain available for any question that you might have.

Yours sincerely,



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Notes:

1. <http://www.env-health.org/resources/press-releases/article/to-what-extent-are-the-french>
2. <http://www.env-health.org/resources/press-releases/article/generations-futures-investigation>
3. See consensus scientific statement:  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4756530/>
4. <http://www.iarc.fr/fr/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/MonographVolume112.pdf>
5. [http://env-health.org/IMG/pdf/2017.05.09\\_heal-ecl-letter-to-mac.pdf](http://env-health.org/IMG/pdf/2017.05.09_heal-ecl-letter-to-mac.pdf)
6. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2016-0119+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> ; <http://www.env-health.org/resources/letters/article/heal-s-opinion-on-glyphosate-vote>
7. <http://www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2017/10/european-court-justice-has-chance-revolutionize-european-pesticide-policy>
8. <https://stopglyphosate.org/en/>
10. <http://www.env-health.org/resources/press-releases/article/chemical-regulation-is-best-buy-in>

*The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is a leading European not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects health in the European Union (EU). With the support of more than 70 member organisations, HEAL brings independent expertise and evidence from the health community to different decision-making processes. Our broad alliance represents health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, doctors, nurses, cancer and asthma groups, citizens, women's groups, youth groups, environmental NGOs, scientists and public health research institutes. Members include international and Europe-wide organisations as well as national and local groups. Website: [www.env-health.org](http://www.env-health.org). Follow HEAL on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@HealthandEnv](#)*

*The Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) is a pan-European umbrella organisation of national and regional cancer leagues including countries from Iceland to Turkey. It provides the secretariat for the MEPs against Cancer group, which has 43 members.*