



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food and feed safety, innovation  
**Pesticides and Biocides**

Brussels,  
 SANTE/E4/VW/np

Dear Petitioner,

**Subject: Your petition on glyphosate – Ares(2017)779881**

Thank you for your petition to Commissioner Andriukaitis in which you express your concerns about the renewal of approval of glyphosate. Your message was passed to me as my unit is responsible for the glyphosate file. Commissioner Andriukaitis asked me to reply on his behalf.

First of all, let me reassure you that I am aware that glyphosate is an important tool for growers in the EU and that the loss of the substance would create challenges for both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

Substances can only be approved by the Commission if it has been demonstrated that, under realistic conditions of use, they have no harmful effects on human and animal health or the environment. The Commission has, and will continue to remove substances from the market whereby it cannot be demonstrated that the strict approval criteria enshrined in the legislation (Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market<sup>1</sup>), are satisfied.

In the case of the evaluation of possible renewal of approval of glyphosate, a comprehensive and transparent assessment of all available data and information was carried out by the Rapporteur Member State (RMS), Germany, and peer reviewed by all other EU Member States and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). A public consultation was carried out on the assessment by the RMS which provided a platform for citizens and other stakeholders to voice their concerns. Furthermore, during the peer review the RMS carried out an assessment of the monograph published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)<sup>2</sup>; the European Commission requested EFSA to incorporate this review into the peer review process to ensure that all relevant information was available for its Conclusion<sup>3</sup>. The peer review process also

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC. OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1–50.

<sup>2</sup> IARC (2015). Carcinogenicity of tetrachlorvinphos, parathion, malathion, diazinon, and glyphosate.

<sup>3</sup> EFSA (European Food Safety Authority), 2015. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment of the active substance glyphosate. EFSA Journal 2015;13(11):4302, 107 pp. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2015.4302

included detailed expert discussion on the genotoxic and carcinogenic potential of glyphosate, and took epidemiological data into account. All of the assessments and peer review documentation, including background documents, have been made available via the EFSA Website.

The Commission services carefully considered the findings presented in the EFSA Conclusion and discussed these in depth with Member States, taking into consideration the legal framework laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. The Commission services made a proposal to renew the approval of glyphosate to Member States, but there was no qualified majority in support of this proposal.

Subsequently, based on extensive discussions with Member States, the Commission made a proposal to extend the expiry date of glyphosate until 31 December 2017 (at the latest) to enable the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to deliver its opinion on the hazard properties of glyphosate. This measure was adopted<sup>4</sup>, although without the support of a qualified majority of Member States.

Thereafter, a qualified majority of Member States in the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed voted in favour of a proposal by the Commission to amend the approval conditions of glyphosate. These conditions include a ban of the co-formulant POE-tallowamine from glyphosate-based products and obligations to reinforce scrutiny of pre-harvest uses of glyphosate as well as to minimise the use in specific areas (public parks and playgrounds). This measure was also adopted by the Commission<sup>5</sup>.

These were not easy decisions for the Commission but I consider it essential that the Commission adopts sound science-based decisions, to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Flüh

Head of Unit

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<sup>4</sup> Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/1056 of 29 June 2016 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 as regards the extension of the approval period of the active substance glyphosate. OJ L 173, 30.6.2016, p. 52–54.

<sup>5</sup> Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/1313 of 1 August 2016 amending Implementation Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 as regards the conditions of approval of the active substance glyphosate. OJ L 208, 2.8.2016, p. 1–3.