



EU member states block Commission's criteria proposal for endocrine disruption

The draft legal act proposed last June by EU Commission on the criteria to identify endocrine disrupting pesticides/biocides has generated so far little support by EU Member States in the Commission's Standing Committee meetings. The Commission now has no choice but to radically change their draft in order to find a (qualified) majority among Member States in the next meeting.

A summary table provided by PAN Europe, shows that three key elements of the draft proposal are currently blocked by EU countries: (1) the proposed change to ban endocrine disruptors "known to cause adverse effects to humans" instead of the previous "may cause adverse effects" (2) the exclusion of "presumed" endocrines from the WHO definition (3) the change from a "hazard"- based approach back to traditional "risk" assessment.

EU member states feel that the level of evidence to ban only "known" human endocrine disruptor is too high (53% of the votes against COM proposal; 25% in favor, rest no opinion yet).. This may lead to very little endocrine disrupting pesticides/biocides, if any, being removed from the market. Member States find that this change is a violation of the precautionary principle and feel that the Commission has no mandate to change existing rules (Regulation 1107/2009).

Dismissing "presumed" endocrine disruptors is also not appreciated by many member states (45% against; 3% in favor, rest no position yet). In the Commission's Roadmap from 2013 presumed endocrines were included and several member states do not understand why this is changed. Chemicals with good indications for endocrine disruption (presumed endocrine disruptors) are dismissed and not tested any further.

The radical change by Commission from "hazard" assessment back to traditional "risk"assessment (the derogation "negligible exposure" is changed into "negligible risk") opposes the "hazard" approach (25% of votes opposing; 19% in favor) for endocrine disruptors that was agreed in co-decision of the pesticide regulation back in 2009 and - again- Many Member states feel that Commission has no mandate to change existing laws. Also EP legal services already came to the same conclusion.

Hans Muilerman of PAN Europe states: 'the EU Member States should hold their line and not accept the draft legal acts; now that the market driven-Commission services seem to have taken control of health and environmental EU Regulations, Member States have to show that concerns about citizens' health and our environment must come first'