



To : Mr. Fernando Medina

Praça do Município, 1100-038 Lisboa

OPEN LETTER: European Green Capital 2020 and Glyphosate Use in the City of Lisbon

12th October 2018

Dear Mayor Mr. Fernando Medina,

Congratulations for being awarded with the prestigious European Green Capital Award. We, Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe and Quercus - Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza, warmly welcome this recognition of your actions towards making Lisbon a more sustainable city. In the line of this, we are writing you to bring the issue of glyphosate use in the city of Lisbon to your attention.

While Lisbon has been taking progressive steps in terms of sustainable mobility, energy and water consumption, it is worrying to see Lisbon city lagging behind in phasing-out pesticide use in its urban green areas and keeping synthetic pesticides use to manage its urban green areas.

An ever increasing number of European cities and towns are deciding to ban the use of chemical pesticides in public areas while some European cities (including EU Green Capital Laureates such as Copenhagen) have decades of experience of being pesticide-free¹. More progressive governments in France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands have developed national regulations for a zero use of pesticides in public areas while some Member States have introduced bans on non-professional uses for private gardens².

Going pesticide-free not only helps to protect the health of citizens and environment but is also fundamental in transition to a truly green city. In fact, non-pesticide use is one of the criteria for designation as European Green Capital³, and the evaluation of Lisbon's

¹ See <http://www.localidades-sem-pesticidas.info/pioneiras>

² See <http://www.localidades-sem-pesticidas.info/politicas-estrategias>

³ European Green Capital Rules of Contest, page 5,
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/EGCA_2020_Technical_Assessment_Synopsis_Report.pdf

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe is a Brussels-based network of NGOs working to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides and to support safe sustainable pest control methods. The network brings together 42 organisations from across Europe.

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application⁴ to become the EU Green Capital 2020 clearly states that there has not been any information provided on the use of synthetic herbicides to control vegetation.

“The continuous planting of trees and the conversion of irrigated lawns to rain-fed meadows and green corridors are important steps in trying to address some of the consequences of climate change. Another likely benefit of this form of ‘living landscape’ is reduction in the use of herbicides? Are herbicides still used to control vegetation in Lisbon? If so, are there measures, policies and/or plans to reduce the scale or frequency of its use. This information would be worthwhile including in any future submission.»

We would like to ask for this information about the use of synthetic pesticides, in particular glyphosate-based herbicides, in the city of Lisbon, and if there is an official action plan for a total phase-out.

We also would like to urge you as a mayor of Lisbon to take the necessary measures to stop synthetic (glyphosate-based) herbicides use in Lisbon and to keep up the good examples of EU Green Capitals being pesticide free. The parishes of Carnide, Estrela and S. Vicente, of your municipality have set very good examples of ending the use of herbicides and signing up to the Manifesto "Autarchy without Glyphosate / Herbicides". Moreover, the parish of Estrela has joined the European Pesticide Free Towns Network by signing the Commitment, the first Portuguese municipality to do so, in order to take more public measures to reduce pesticides in other areas / sectors.

We would be very happy to assist you in this transition towards a pesticide-free Lisbon.

Yours sincerely

Francois Veillerette
PAN Europe President

João Branco
Quercus - ANCN President

⁴ Technical Assessment Report, Page 40, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/EGCA_2020_Technical_Assessment_Synopsis_Report.pdf

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