



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Press >>>>>>> Release <<<<<<<<

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The pesticide merry-go-round keeps turning!

At a meeting on 23-24 October¹ 2018, European Commission Directorate General for Health will propose to EU Member States a ban on 11 pesticide active substances. Most of the active substances concerned have been available on the EU market for decades, finally the risks they pose to either human health or the environment have been deemed unacceptable by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

PAN Europe welcomes the position from the European Commission to phase out the use of 11 pesticide² active substances. While Member States will be invited to discuss DG Health's proposals at the meeting next week, PAN Europe wishes to recall that most of these substances have been on the market for decades and there is no more possible questioning on their toxicity either on human health or on the environment. They are the relics of an outdated model of farming and block the transition of our agriculture towards a proper Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach.

A very explicit example is Ethoprophos. This substance is used to kill all living insects and nematodes in soils. While scientific evidence shows that a living and healthy soil is the basis for growing healthy plants and to avoid the need of pesticides, this substance allows industrial farming systems to grow year after year the same crop without any crop rotation or other preventative measure. Currently, this pesticide is authorised for use in 10 Member States³.

Martin Dermine, PAN Europe's policy officer said: *"Sweden decided not to authorise soil pesticides in the 1980's because crop rotation is sufficient to avoid soil pests. Crop rotation is at the basis of Integrated Pest Management, a mandatory requirement from the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive and we observe that most Member States do not implement it properly. Maintaining soil pesticides is contrary to the Directive and countries like Sweden understood 30 years ago that maintaining healthy soil, without destroying it by the use of pesticides, is the most sustainable option"*.

PAN Europe recalls that Article 55 of the Pesticides Regulation (1107/2009/EC) establishes a direct link with the Sustainable Use of Pesticides directive by expliciting that pesticides shall be used within the *"general principles of IPM"*. Martin Dermine added *"On the one hand IPM is mandatory since 2014 while on the other, most of the pesticide uses are done because farmers do not implement a proper IPM on their farms."*

PAN Europe asks Member States to support the European Commission proposals to ban these substances. PAN Europe calls on Member States to effectively implement the Sustainable Use of Pesticides directive by making basic practices such as long term crop rotation mandatory and by providing free independent advice to their farmers on how to effectively reduce pesticide use. We further support the idea of linking IPM with the New Delivery Model of the Common Agricultural Policy.

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¹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/plant/docs/sc_phyto_20181023_ppl_agenda.pdf

² Flurtamone, propiconazole, chlorpropham, etoxazole, quinoxifen, desmedipham, phenmedipham, ethoprofos, chlorothalonil, indoxicarb and toclofos-methyl

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-database/public/?event=activesubstance.detail&language=EN&selectedID=1300>

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe is a network of NGOs working to reduce the use of hazardous pesticides and have them replaced with ecologically sound alternatives. We work to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides and to support safe sustainable pest control methods. Our network brings together 40 consumer, public health, and environmental organisations, and women's groups from across Europe.