



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

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PRESS RELEASE: DG Sante is derailing the pesticides reduction objectives of the European Green Deal

During a meeting¹ on the impact assessment linked to the revision of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD), the consultant has disclosed the different options, as proposed by DG Sante. The obvious lack of ambition is in complete contradiction with the objectives of the Farm-to-Fork and the Biodiversity Strategies. The approach taken will prevent the objective of 50% cut in pesticides by 2030 from becoming a reality.

Henriette Christensen, agricultural policy officer at PAN Europe says: “The options exposed during this meeting are evidently weak and insufficient to hope for any significant pesticides use reduction in the coming 7 years. The solutions proposed by DG Sante seem to be driven by the sole interests of agribusiness!”

Among the options presented by the consultant, precision farming and the use of drones have replaced cost-effective techniques such as longer crop rotations, using non-GM resistant varieties and attracting beneficial insects with landscape elements.

Natalija Svrtan, a campaigner at PAN Europe adds: “The proposed industrial high-tech solutions would further maintain European farmers in their dependency towards the agrochemical industry. This is the exact opposite to the very spirit of the directive, one of its main objectives being to reduce farmers’ dependency on pesticides by implementing preventative practices. Non-chemical alternatives exist and are cost-effective, while practices including pesticides are all but sustainable!”

The Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive has been published in 2009 and aims at giving priority to non-chemical alternatives to pesticides. In several reports from the European Commission, it acknowledges that the directive is poorly implemented and fails to meet its goal especially in relation to IPM^{2,3}!

Henriette Christensen concludes: “No later than last Friday, a European Citizens Initiative has collected over 1 million signatures, demanding the EU to establish a plan to phase out synthetic pesticides by 2035 and do more to restore biodiversity in rural areas. Instead, the European Commission proposes industry-driven options. After this second successful anti-pesticides ECI, it is high time that the EU sets a date for the end of synthetic pesticides and designs a clear path to support the implementation of agroecological practices. It is the only way to reconcile farmers, citizens and nature.”

For more details, contact Henriette Christensen, henriette@pan-europe.info, +32 2 318 62 55

Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN Europe) was founded in 1987 and brings together consumer, public health, environmental organisations, and women's groups from across Europe. PAN Europe is part of the global network PAN International working to minimise the negative effects and replace the use of harmful pesticides with ecologically sound alternatives.

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¹ 3d stakeholder meeting on the impact assessment on the revision of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive 128/2009/EC

² https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2017-10/pesticides_sup_report-overview_en.pdf

³ https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2020-05/pesticides_sud_report-act_2020_en.pdf