

European NGOs' position on the Omnibus deregulation package

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Who we are: Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe

- Science-based NGO with scientists, legal experts & policy officers
- Network of 50+ member organisations across Europe
- Mission: reduce dependence on toxic pesticides and promote ecologically sound alternatives





Pesticide legislation needs to become stricter

- History shows pesticide regulation is not strict enough. A pesticide that is deemed safe today will be banned tomorrow...or in 30 years.
- Banning a pesticide is still too slow. E.g neonicotinoids: 23 years to ban them.
- Chronic exposure to pesticides favours chronic diseases (cancers, infertility, lower IQ...) – no risk assessment of exposure to cocktails.
- Collapse of biodiversity (60% less farmland birds over 40 years, 75% less insects over 30 years).
- Water highly contaminated with pesticide metabolites: a non-relevant metabolite today becomes a relevant metabolite tomorrow (e.g. TFA).

Introduction: The EU law on Pesticides



Pesticide Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 :

- To ensure a high level of **protection of human and animal health, and the environment**
- Pay attention to the **protection of vulnerable groups** (children) & impact on **biodiversity, water resources and ecosystems**
- Carry out **objective, independent & transparent assessment** based on **most recent scientific knowledge**
- Apply the **precautionary principle**



Introduction: The EU law on Pesticides



Several toxic pesticides have been banned/withdrawn under Reg 1107/2009, including:

- Mancozeb: toxic to reproduction & endocrine disruptor
- Chlorpyrifos: brain harming & impacts foetus development
- Neonicotinoids: bee-harming & neurotoxic affecting brain development

New scientific information and academic literature have played key role



Introduction: The EU law on Pesticides



Commission's Evaluation 2020 (REFIT)

The Regulation is “*fit for purpose*”:

- It has been largely effective in protecting human health and the environment, and has improved protection thanks to the stringency of its approval criteria and the mandatory regular reviews of all active substances.
- Delays are mainly due to lack of resources in Member States

54 toxic pesticides have been banned because of the renewal procedure



Omnibus Food & Feed “simplification”: Main points of concern



Biocontrol:
A trojan
horse?

- Grants unlimited approval for most active substances.
- Restricts Member States from using the latest scientific evidence in the assessment of pesticide products.
- Broadens derogation criteria, making it easier to (re)approve pesticides that do not meet safety standards (e.g. endocrine disruptors).
- Extends grace periods for sales, storage and use of banned pesticides, including carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, reprotoxicants.



Unlimited approval for active substances

Current: First approval ≤ 10 years, renewal ≤ 15 years

Proposed: Unlimited approval for most active substances as the norm, with a few exceptions on the long run. The Commission will carry out targeted reassessment.

PAN Europe's assessment: Criteria and timeline for targeted reassessment are not defined, leaving a large margin of appreciation for the Commission, making the process highly political.

At least 49 substances will receive unlimited approvals including acetamiprid (neurotoxic), 2,4-D (endocrine disruptor), glyphosate (carcinogenic), captan & folpet.



Use of latest scientific evidence for authorisations on products

Current: Member States must conduct independent, objective assessments using the latest scientific and technical knowledge when authorising pesticide products (confirmed by a recent Case-Law)

Proposed: For national authorisations, Member States to rely on the available academic science during the **latest EU-level assessment** of active substances and not the most recent one.

PAN Europe's assessment: Huge step backwards as there will be a gap of several years, where new scientific evidence will be disregarded. Taking us to Middle-Ages.



Grace periods (selling out the stocks)

Current: Total: **≤18 months** for substances “*where the reasons for not renewing the approval do not concern the protection of health or the environment*”

Proposed: **≤3 years**

- In case there are no other available reasonable means to plant protection products containing the active substance concerned,
 - Member States may allow sale/distribution: up to 1 year
 - Disposal, storage, use: +2 years
- Immediate withdrawal only if “*immediate and serious concerns*” for health or environment. No definition of “*immediate and serious concerns*”.

PAN Europe assessment: This runs against the high level of protection of health and the environment. No more level-playing field between EU farmers.



Derogations

Current: Approval up to 5 years of harmful substances if needed to control a serious danger to plant health, not controllable by other means (including non-chemical) [Article 4.7]

Proposed:

- Apply if necessary to control a serious danger to plant health or **plant production**
- Cannot apply to substances classified as Mutagenic (1A/1B), carcinogenic (1A/1B without threshold), toxic for reproduction (1A), PBT, vPvB, or POP → However, endocrine disruptors, toxic to reproduction (1B) and carcinogenic (with threshold) excluded!

PAN Europe assessment: not needed as non-chemical alternatives exist. Opposed to a high level of protection.

Industry's requests



Bayer's views on

Food and Feed Safety Simplification Omnibus

- **Replace obligatory periodic full-dossier reviews** with a system where renewals of active substance are triggered only by indications of potential new environmental or human health concerns ... authorisations could already be extended to 20 years or **become unlimited** with periodic literature reviews or safety update reports where needed. ✓
- Effectively implementing the “**No Ban Without Alternative**” principle under Article 4(7) of Regulation 1107/2009, integrating agro-economic assessment (i.e. yield production) ✓
- **Modernize Endocrine Disruptor (ED) Assessment** using a science-based, risk-proportionate approach - rather than automatic exclusion ✓

Scientific Statement on Pesticides in the Omnibus

- **Ensure pre-market risk assessment** of active substances and marketed pesticide products, including biocontrol, is based on the **latest independent scientific and technical knowledge** and robust, realistic assessment (i.e. mixtures).
- **Maintain mandatory periodic and ad-hoc reviews** of active substances and pesticide products, including biocontrol, **to quickly respond to emerging risks that only emerge when pesticides are in wide use or new science becomes available**

<https://sites.google.com/view/scientificstatementpesticides/home>

More experts and scientists' warnings

- [Independent legal opinion](#): the proposal **violates EU primary law** both in substance and procedure
- [Scientific assessment](#) commissioned by the Dutch Parliament: the proposal **weakens the level of protection**, slows down innovation in safer alternatives, and increases administrative complexity
- [Science article](#) by 35 renowned scientists: EU Omnibus proposal increases pesticide risks
- [Brief](#) by German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina
- [Pre-print](#), K. Teppe and T. Backhaus

[EFSA's statement](#): an additional 50 experts, combined with stricter rejection of incomplete industry dossiers, could clear the backlog within approximately three years

Position from the Council (Member States)

- 30th September 2026
- Council endorses the Commission proposal
- Unlimited approval restricted to low-risk substances
- BUT approval period extended to 15 years (instead of 10) for first approval & 25 years (instead of 15) for renewal; (Biocides: first 20 years; renewal: 30 years)
- Endorsement of the Commission proposal on grace periods, derogations and restricted use of the latest science

Discussions in the European Parliament

- Draft report from the MEPs rapporteurs Dorfmann (EPP) and Picaro (ECR)
- Unlimited authorisation for products at the national level
- Tacit authorisations of products granted after 120 days (if no decision is taken by the competent authority)
- Weaker Commission's obligation to trigger EU reassessment
- Derogation: more explicit inclusion of socio-economic criteria
- 1500 amendments tables, many of them very extreme (re-introduction of neonicotinoids, re-approving carcinogenic pesticides, etc.)
- **Timeline:**
- Nov-Dec: AGRI-ENVI vote then plenary vote (tbc)



Conclusions

The European Commission proposal:

- Goes against the [demands](#) of a majority of EU citizens and scientists who want a phase out of toxic synthetic pesticides
- Favours the interests of major companies and their high profits
- Its initial objective to improve market accessibility to biocontrol products is hampered by lowering regulation of synthetic pesticides: no incentive to transition towards biocontrol.
- Is taking us backwards -before the 90s- when reviews and uptake of independent science were not obligatory
- Fails to deal with the **real bottlenecks** of the implementation of the Regulation: incomplete application dossiers, poor data quality, shortage of staff in Member States, lack of use of independent scientific literature and real-life assessment data (e.g. mixtures exposure) in the decision making
- By reducing costs for the industry it will significantly reduce the level of protection against pesticides
- The proposal is largely supported by Member States and MEPs

Thank you!

Useful links

[Commission proposal for a food and feed safety omnibus](#)

[PAN Europe position paper on Feed and Food omnibus](#)

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