

Brussels, 20/09/2018

## Parliamentary report: A milestone in the fight against the use of toxic pesticides in Europe

The urgent need to improve the European Pesticide Regulation and its implementation highlights the European Parliament in its draft report published today. The effectiveness of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 to protect human, animal and environmental health from pesticides requires changes in the whole pesticide approval procedure: from the industry's application to get a pesticide active substance authorised, to the sale and use of the product containing the substance in EU countries.

Today, the Special Committee of the European Parliament set up to investigate the European Union's authorisation procedure for pesticides ([PEST committee](#))<sup>1</sup>, published [its draft report](#), pointing out the shortfalls of the procedure and presenting recommendations. Following five months of discussions and parliamentary hearings, PAN Europe welcomes the report and **emphasises that the reform of the pesticide risk assessment procedure in Europe is urgent**. The collapse of biodiversity and wildlife<sup>2,3</sup> in proximity to agricultural zones and the abnormally high rate of development of diseases in farming families and residents in agricultural areas<sup>4</sup> demonstrate that humans and the environment are not sufficiently protected from pesticide exposure, as is required by EU law.

The report has captured several shortfalls out of which PAN Europe highlights the following:

- to implement post-marketing monitoring to know the levels of pesticides that farmers, residents of agricultural areas and the environment are really exposed to and evaluate the consequent adverse effects they may cause;
- to improve the quality, expertise, independence and transparency in safety assessment of pesticide active ingredients, co-formulants and pesticide products; focus on long-term toxicity and neurotoxicity from low doses; make all assessment studies publicly available
- to use all available scientific literature and incorporate academia in the evaluation procedure
- to approve an application dossier only when it is complete and all data requirements have been provided
- to enforce mitigation measures in Member States and monitor their effectiveness in real-time

PAN Europe regrets that no recommendation is given for safety testing of pesticides to be carried out by independent laboratories rather than the pesticide industry itself and all experts involved in risk assessment should be subject to a strict conflict of interest policy and rules. Any ties to commercial interests should exclude experts from the process, as well as from the designing of the testing methods and risk assessment guidelines.

Hans Muilerman, PAN Europe's Chemicals Officer says *"The report of the PEST committee rightly mentions many of the flaws of the current pesticide risk assessment, but fails to include independent safety testing, now done by industry itself, and fails to address the lack of independence at EFSA panels where half of the experts have industry links and should be replaced by top-level academic scientists"*

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**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.



**Pesticide  
Action  
Network**  
Europe

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<sup>1</sup>The Committee, was set up as a response to the concerns raised by the [European Citizens' Initiative to ban glyphosate](#), the Monsanto Papers (internal Monsanto documents disclosed in cancer litigation in the USA revealing how industry subverts science) and the discrepancy of the hazard classification assessment between the European institutions and the International Research centre on Cancer.

<sup>2</sup> Hallmann CA et al (2017). More than 75 percent decline over 27 years in total flying insect biomass in protected areas. [PLOS ONE 12\(10\): e0185809](#);

<sup>3</sup> Where Have all the Farmland Birds Gone? <https://news.cnrs.fr/articles/where-have-all-the-farmland-birds-gone>

<sup>4</sup> Bellanger et al (2015). Neurobehavioral Deficits, Diseases, and Associated Costs of Exposure to Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals in the European Union. <https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article/100/4/1256/2815066>

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