

EU Agreement on pesticide data collection: one more stab from Member States in the EU Green Deal pesticide reduction targets!

The European Parliament and the Council reached yesterday a provisional agreement on a regulation on Statistics on Agricultural Input and Output (SAIO). Member States managed to postpone the publication of quality data on pesticide use to 2028, preventing the EU Commission from properly monitoring the 2030 pesticide reduction objectives from the Green Deal.

Natalija Svrtan, a campaigner at PAN Europe said: *"In its regulation proposal¹, the Commission proposed that Member States start communicating their pesticide use data in 2023. Many Member States² oppose fundamental changes that would lead to making our agriculture more sustainable. They here give us one more example of their bad will for more transparency on pesticide use".*

Mandatory annual data collection in a harmonized electronic format at a meaningful level of detail are essential to know what pesticides are used where, when, on which crops and in what quantities. This would enable public authorities to focus in priority on the crops that consume the highest share of pesticides. Without it, it is not possible to track the progress in achieving the F2F goal of a 50% reduction in pesticide use.

In November 2021, PAN Europe revealed that the alliance of 10 Member states³ tried to water down the Commission's initial proposal but NGOs strongly reacted^{4,5,6} to keep the objectives of the Commission proposal in SAIO regulation.

Natalija Svrtan added: *"The current situation is not in line with EU law that allows citizens to know what is sprayed in their vicinity. When they ask: public authorities do not have the data. This is unacceptable! Member States prefer to preserve the lack of transparency for 6 more years, hence preventing the European Commission from properly monitoring their efforts to cut pesticide use, as demanded by EU citizens⁷ and as laid down in the Farm to Fork and the Biodiversity Strategies".*

Svrtan to conclude: *"In its initial position, the Council simply opposed any mandatory and systematic pesticide data collection. Fortunately, the European Parliament, led by MEP Kokkalis, defended the interests of citizens and managed to have a first publication in 2028."*

Contact PAN Europe, Natalija Svrtan, e-mail: natalija@pan-europe.info, +32 499 32 88 92

¹ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5865-2021-INIT/en/pdf>

² Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and Austria.

³ https://www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/press-releases/PR%20with%20LIFE%20logo/GLOBAL2000-PANEurope_TAKING-AIM-WITH-A-BLINDFOLD-ON.pdf

⁴ <https://www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2022/02/revealed-how-european-council-torpedoes-transparency-pesticide-use>

⁵ <https://www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/Letters/Open%20letter%2079%20organisations%20on%20the%20EU%20reform%20of%20pesticides%20statistics%2025.02.2022.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/Letters/JOINT%20STATEMENT%20SAIO%20Trilogue.pdf>

⁷ www.savebeesandfarmers.eu

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 over 45 consumer, public health and environmental organisations and women's groups from across Europe.