

## **Glyphosate EU re-authorisation vote stalled again: decision to be taken to Appeal Committee**

Brussels, November 9<sup>th</sup> 2017

This morning, EU Member States' representatives of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCoPAFF) met in Brussels to vote on Commission's proposal to re-authorise glyphosate, the active substance of the world's most used herbicide, for 5-years. As the EU license for glyphosate is due to expire on December 15<sup>th</sup>, the Commission and Member States are under pressure from all fronts to decide whether to re-authorise this chemical, which has of late sparked wide controversy among scientists, regulators, civil society and the pesticide industry. The meeting however did not lead to a final outcome, as no qualified majority vote was reached either in favour or against the Commission's proposal. Although the proposal did garner the approval of half EU Member States (14 MS voted in favour), 9 MS rejected the proposal and 5 abstained altogether, leaving the matter once again unresolved. In order for a decision to be taken, a qualified majority vote (QMV) must be achieved (that is, when 16 Member States whose population represents more than 65% of the total European vote in favour).

Just a couple of weeks ago, on October 24<sup>th</sup>, the European Parliament voted in a non-binding resolution for the Commission to ban glyphosate by 2022, with immediate restrictions on its use for private use and in public areas and for a gradual phase-out in agriculture. The Parliament's vote can be seen as a response to the [European Citizens' Initiative \(ECI\) to ban glyphosate](#) (and reform the EU pesticides approval process and protect citizens and the environment from hazardous pesticides) which is the fastest ever to fulfil validity requirements having gathered over 1,3 million signatures in under six months. Consumer concern reflected in the ECI has been compounded by recent findings, some more concerning such as studies showing [residues of glyphosate and its metabolite AMPA in over 40% of European topsoil](#), and the [negative effects of glyphosate having been unscientifically dismissed](#) during the pesticide safety evaluation procedure, while other studies are more hopeful showing [alternative methods to glyphosate in weed management](#), but most importantly that these already exist.

On the previous SCoPAFF meeting between Member States and the Commission on October 25<sup>th</sup>, no vote was held on a 10-year glyphosate renewal proposal as it became evident, that no qualified majority could be reached, which is the reason behind why the Commission now presented a proposal with a period renewal of 5 years.

Just yesterday, during a commissioners' meeting, EU Commission President Juncker warned Member States that, should they fail to reach an agreement during today's vote, he would be left with no choice but to implement Parliament's motion to begin a phase-out and have the substance banned by 2022. The Commission has communicated that the decision will be relayed to the Appeal Committee which is to vote on the proposal by the end of November. If the appeal committee fails to reach a qualified majority, the Commission will have to take a decision and avoid any legal prosecution that may result if it fails to deliver an opinion before the glyphosate authorisation expires.

PAN Europe highlights *"There is an urgent need to phase out the use of pesticides in agriculture and adopt environmentally friendly practices that do not put human health or the environment at risk. Government should demand clear targets for a phase out of glyphosate and immediate restrictions on its use. Our future generations and our ecosystems will be grateful"*.

Contact:

Angeliki Lysimachou, Environmental Toxicologist, PAN Europe

[angeliki@pan-europe.info](mailto:angeliki@pan-europe.info) ; +32 2 318 62 55