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Letter | 15.11.2023

Letter to Commission President von der Leyen on glyphosate

Dear President von der Leyen,

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament are deeply concerned regarding the Commission's proposal to renew the market licence of the active substance glyphosate for a period of 10 years, in light of new evidence that glyphosate-based herbicides can cause leukaemia in rodents.

The Global Glyphosate Study, a multi-institutional international toxicological study, recently released its first carcinogenicity data, which shows that low doses of glyphosate-based herbicides caused leukaemia in rats. These findings are extremely alarming, as the first leukaemia deaths in these animals were observed at an early age and at doses which correspond to the supposedly EU's No Observed Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL) for all adverse health effects of glyphosate. Back in 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) of the World Health Organisation (WHO) had already classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans (Group 2A). In 2021, the French institute INSERM concluded that there is a moderate presumed link of glyphosate exposure and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Besides the carcinogenic properties of glyphosate-based herbicides, the recent conclusion of the EFSA identified numerous data gaps encompassing the risks to biodiversity of glyphosate exposure, its potential to cause neurotoxicity and its impact on the microbiome of humans and other species.

This new evidence casts a legitimate doubt as to the safety of the substance for human health. The reauthorization of a pesticide with significant health and environmental impact would be in stark contradiction with the aims of the European Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the European Biodiversity Strategy. We call on the Commission to prioritise the human health of European citizens by withdrawing its current proposal for a renewal of the glyphosate licence and, instead, propose its non-renewal.

Yours sincerely,

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Stakeholder Engagement Officer

Attached documents

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