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EU Safety Authority decides not to appeal landmark transparency judgement, cementing GreensEFA victory in favour of the environment, public health and the right to know

It's official. After years of legal battles with the EU Food Safety Authority against their decision to keep essential documents hidden from the public, victory is ours. By 'ours', we are referring to the public's health, the people's right to know, and the human right to live in a safe and thriving environment.

Thanks to this legal victory, the EU Food Safety Authority will now have to publish all the studies that it used to decide that glyphosate - the world's most commonly used herbicide - did not cause cancer. These studies were carried out by the very same companies that want to sell glyphosate on the EU market and they have never been published or made available in any peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Yet, unlike the UN's specialised agency for cancer (known as IARC), which does not accept any unpublished studies and [which decided in March 2015 that glyphosate was "probably carcinogenic to humans"](#), EFSA used these studies anyway. And then EFSA decided that glyphosate was not carcinogenic at all.

When we asked them why there was a difference in the assessment, EFSA pointed to unpublished industry-sponsored studies to explain why their results had differed from IARC's results.

Obviously we wanted these reports to be made public, so that scientists, NGOs and the public at large could double check the studies. After all, if other scientists cannot double check the methodology or replicate the results, then it's not science at all.



Secret Science is not Science

But it wasn't so simple. Despite the EU law on access to documents which gives any person the right to request information from the EU institutions, [EFSA refused to publish the studies](#). They argued that they could not publish the studies because it would harm the commercial interests of the companies that had produced them.

They even went as far as to say that the studies on the carcinogenicity of glyphosate had nothing to do with emissions into the environment because even though glyphosate is sprayed onto plants and into the air, water and soil, the studies were done on rats in labs at high doses, so they were not “realistic” emissions.

But the judges were on our side. They agreed with use that glyphosate is, by its very nature, supposed to be sprayed into the environment and that therefore the studies should be considered as information about emissions into the environment. This definition is legally important, as it means that **commercial interests**

can never be used to deny information about emissions into the environment, thanks to an international convention known as the '[Aarhus Convention](#)' which protects every person's right to live in a healthy environment.

Since [we won the court case](#) on the 7 March 2019, the EU Food Safety Authority had until today, 17 May to appeal against the [judge's ruling](#). But they decided not to. **So now they have to deliver the documents, at the latest by the 24th May**. Once we receive them we will share them with scientists and NGOs, and anyone who wants access to them can simply ask for them from EFSA - for example [via AsktheEU.org](#) - and they will definitely get access to them too.

Monsanto/Bayer (or “BaySanto”) under fire

In the meantime, Monsanto had been taken to court by thousands farmers in the USA, who accused their glyphosate-based products of causing them a horrible type of cancer called non-hodgkin's lymphoma. There are over 13,000 court cases open against the company.

So far there have been three court rulings against Monsanto, who has had to pay millions in damages to the victims that were using their products without knowing they were toxic and unsafe. The latest ruling was just this week in California, and Monsanto was ordered to pay 2 billion in damages to a couple that had developed cancer as a result of using RoundUp.

For some reason, Bayer - another huge chemical company - decided in June last year to buy Monsanto for 63 billion dollars. But it's been a rough ride for the shareholders - last week's court judgement led to a 4% drop in their shares. In fact, since Bayer bought Monsanto, it [has lost over 40% of its value](#).

Monsanto's desperate attempts to manipulate science and politics

And now Monsanto is embroiled in a new scandal. As if their manipulation of science - revealed in the famous '[Monsanto Papers' scandal](#) wasn't enough (see our documentary on 'Monsanto's Toxic Tricks' below), last week [Le Monde revealed](#) that they had hired a lobbying consultancy firm to relentlessly push for the approval of glyphosate on the European market.

This firm created [a list of over 200 opinion-leaders](#), including their names, contact details and sometimes even their hobbies and interests, all in a bid to get influential people to act in their favour. Several GreensEFA politicians feature on that list as being opposed to the renewal of glyphosate, including Philippe Lamberts, Michèle Rivasi and Yannick Jadot. Perhaps that can explain with pesticide industry lobbyists recently [came knocking on Philippe's door](#), obviously to no avail.

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