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Press release | 24.10.2023

ENVI Committee fails to protect citizens health by not supporting a ban on glyphosates

Today, the European Parliament Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) failed to support a resolution calling for the complete ban of the use of glyphosates. The Greens/EFA Group, together with the S&D and the Left advocated for the resolution to call on Member States to ban the herbicide. However, part of the Renew Group joined forces with the right and the far right in its support for the agrochemical and agroindustrial lobbies and the reauthorisation of the use of glyphosate. Less than two weeks ago, Member States failed to agree on a 10 year renewal of the use of glyphosate.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA Vice Chair of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee, comments:

"The ENVI committee today failed to take the only responsible decision and call for a complete ban of the use of glyphosate. Big agri's lobby has won at the expense of farmers' health and the health of our ecosystems. Allowing glyphosate to be reauthorised would be like giving big agri a blank check to earn billions by selling a pesticide for which there are still big gaps in knowledge about the long term effects on our health, and at the same time poses large risks for European biodiversity.

"The Greens/EFA will continue to stand with the hundreds of thousands of citizens who are raising their voices in support for a ban on the use of glyphosate. We are committed and will not be giving up this easily."

Tilly Metz MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee, comments:

"The stubbornness with which some emphatically refuse to listen to independent scientific studies clearly proving the need to change the harmful status quo, is shocking. Glyphosate is not safe to use, it causes harm to the environment and to people's health and needs to be banned. Six years ago, we were very close to banning glyphosate in the EU, with millions of European citizens calling for it. Over the last few years, independent scientific studies have continued to pile up, which all show the dangers this toxic substance poses to nature and human health. The time has come to listen to science and to finally apply the precautionary principle. We urge the Member States to do so in their upcoming vote."

More:

Glyphosate is the active ingredient in broad-spectrum herbicides like Roundup, produced by Bayer-Monsanto; it is a herbicide not only used in farming, but also in urban areas.

The ENVI committee rejected the resolution to ban the use of herbicides with 38 votes in favour, 40 against and 6 abstaining.

Following the vote from two weeks ago in the SCOPAFF committee, the Commission proposal will now be submitted to the Appeal Committee on the 16th of November.

In the previous renewal decision in 2018, glyphosate was renewed for only 5 years due to massive citizen concern and doubts about its safety. The authorisation should have ended at the end of 2022, but an extension was granted to gather evidence of ecotoxicological impacts, due to the increasing amounts of scientific literature showing negative impacts on species in different parts of the wider ecosystem.

Glyphosate is not needed for productive farming, nor for weed control. On the contrary, by contributing to ecosystem collapse, decreasing food for pollinators, and impacting the soil biome, the use of glyphosate puts our long-term food security at risk and should therefore be banned.

Read the Greens/EFA Group study on glyphosates impact on water

Read the Greens/EFA Group study on alternatives used to glyphosates

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Responsible MEPs

Tilly Metz

Member

Contact person

Helena Hellstrom

Harassment Prevention and Response Officer

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