Press release | 08.06.2016

Toxic substances

Commission given strong rebuke over failure to act on endocrine disruptors

The European Parliament today adopted a resolution criticising the European Commission for failing to propose scientific criteria to address the problem of chemical substances that interfere with the endocrine system, as it was required to do under EU law and under a Court ruling last year (1). Welcoming the vote, Green environment and health spokesperson **Bas Eickhout** said:

"The European Parliament has today issued a strong rebuke to the European Commission over its continued failure to act on chemical substances that interfere with the endocrine system. It is a scandal that the Commission has still not fulfilled its obligation under EU law to propose a list of scientific criteria on endocrine disruptors and is flouting last year's court ruling, in violation of the EU treaties. We are now two and half years on from the original deadline and half a year since the Court ruled the Commission is breaching EU law by failing to adopt the criteria. Parliament has today made clear that this is totally unacceptable. This lost time is, first and foremost, a blow to all those who suffer health problems as a result of these substances.

"Defining clear criteria on what constitutes an endocrine disruptor is a crucial step for properly regulating these chemicals and, ultimately, phasing them out. It is cynical of the Commission to continue to delay the criteria while it carries out an unnecessary 'socio-economic impact assessment' to placate industry. Impact assessments are completely inappropriate to determine a scientific matter, as the court ruling made clear. The only guiding priority under EU law should be to address the major public health problems caused by these chemicals. However, the Commission is continuing to put the bottom line of a few agro-chemical companies ahead of public health."

(1) Under EU law, the Commission was obliged to adopt criteria on endocrine disruptors by the end of 2013 but, despite being ready in time, these criteria have been blocked due to lobbying and political interference. In spite of a ruling by the General Court of the European Union that the Commission breached EU law by failing to act, and clear declarations by the court that a socio-economic impact assessment for a scientific matter is neither required nor appropriate, it has still not presented the criteria, which are necessary as part of measures to regulate these substances and the health damage they cause. More information: http://www.greens-efa.eu/public-health-endocrine-disrupters-15113.html

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