



PRESS RELEASE

MEPs Against Cancer consider relicensing glyphosate for 10 years "inappropriate" and "unacceptable"

Brussels, 27 April 2016 – The European Parliament's MEPs Against Cancer group is today hosting a briefing on "Cancer and Glyphosate", a chemical substance most used in herbicides in the EU. (1)

Concerns about the carcinogenic properties of glyphosate-based herbicides have increased after the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) re-classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans" last year. (2) The European Commission's Pesticides Committee is due to take a decision on re-licensing in May, and is expected to vote on an adjusted Commission proposal to extend the licence for a decade.

President of MEPs Against Cancer Alojz Peterle MEP, who is concerned about the re-licensing of glyphosate, says: *"Given the wide use of herbicides containing glyphosate in Europe, this forthcoming decision is an important issue for cancer prevention, not only for farmers but also for every consumer. The Commission should respect the Parliament's resolution on glyphosate. I find it inappropriate for the Pesticides Committee to decide on this before further information is available."*

Pavel Poc MEP Vice-President of MEPs Against Cancer says: *"The new Commission proposal to re-authorise glyphosate for ten years without any specific restrictions is completely unacceptable, for agricultural uses which contribute most to people's exposures but especially when it comes to its use in public areas and its non-professional uses."*

"The contradictory assessments by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the WHO agency (IARC) on the safety of glyphosate show the need to revise the whole authorisation process for pesticides in the EU in favour of more transparency, efficiency and democratic control."

Dr. Dana Loomis, from the monographs section of IARC producing the report, will be speaking at the meeting on the scientific evaluation of glyphosate carcinogenicity.

Wendy Tse Yared, Director of the Association of European Cancer Leagues, which brings together national cancer leagues in different European countries, says: *"IARC's findings suggest that banning glyphosate should be part of Europe's cancer prevention policy. We have posted information on our website and will contact our members about concerns on glyphosate and cancer in coming weeks."*

Glyphosate-based herbicides are implicated in heightened risk of developing Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma (NHL) among populations occupationally exposed to glyphosate, or who reside in an area routinely treated with glyphosate-based herbicides, according to a recent study. A causal link between glyphosate exposures and NHL may exist, but has not been rigorously studied in human populations. (3)

Many different cancer societies and medical groups in Portugal, France, Belgium, UK and Malta are calling for greater health protection by reducing or eliminating glyphosate use. For example, le Ligue contre le cancer in France, with a membership of 700,000, has launched a petition against renewal of the licence for glyphosate by the European Union authorities. It recently welcomed the French government's stance against the renewal of glyphosate's authorisation. (4)

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) has called on Europe's influential national cancer societies to urge EU member governments to put an immediate ban on glyphosate-containing herbicides at national level, and to oppose glyphosate renewal at EU level. Lisette van Vliet, HEAL's Senior Policy Adviser is also very concerned about the inadequacy of the EFSA assessment. She says: "The WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has shown that EFSA is not infallible, and if EFSA had done as good a job as IARC, glyphosate could not legally be renewed in the EU because the EU law forbids cancerous substances from being authorised". (5)

Notes

1. MEPs Against Cancer (MAC) Briefing: Glyphosate and Cancer, 16.30-18.30 (Registration 16.00, security required, register here <http://bit.ly/1Q3w5C7>), 27 April 2016, Room ASP A5E---3, European Parliament, Brussels, <http://www.europeancancerleagues.org/mac/mac-events/425-mac-meeting-glyphosate-and-cancer-27-april-2016.html>
2. See Lancet Oncology, Carcinogenicity of tetrachlorvinphos, parathion, malathion, diazinon, and glyphosate, 20 March 2015, [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045\(15\)70134-8/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045(15)70134-8/abstract)
3. Myers JP et al, Concerns over use of glyphosate-based herbicides and risks associated with exposures: a consensus statement <http://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12940-016-0117-0>
4. <http://www.generations-futures.fr/glyphosate/la-france-dit-non/>
5. HEAL letter to cancer groups <http://www.env-health.org/resources/letters/article/heal-s-opinion-on-glyphosate-vote>

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MEPs against Cancer (MAC) is an all-party informal group of Members of the European Parliament committed to promoting action on cancer as an EU priority and harnessing European health policy to that end. Through quarterly discussions between MEPs, other policy makers and invited guests, the group aims to strengthen the political will needed to fight cancer in Europe. The MAC Secretariat is provided by ECL. Website: <http://www.europeancancerleagues.org/mac.html> Twitter @MAC_MEPs

The Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) is a pan-European umbrella organisation of national and regional cancer leagues. For the past 30 years, it has been providing a unique and important platform for cancer societies from Iceland to Turkey to "Make a difference in cancer prevention and control". Website: <http://www.europeancancerleagues.org/>

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is a leading European not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects health in the European Union (EU). With the support of 70 member organisations, HEAL brings independent expertise and evidence from the health community to different decision-making processes. Our broad alliance represents health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, doctors, nurses, cancer and asthma groups, citizens, women's groups, youth groups, environmental NGOs, scientists and public health research institutes.

Members include international and Europe-wide organisations as well as national and local groups. Website: www.env-health.org. Follow HEAL on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@HealthandEnv](#) [@EDCFree](#) and [@CHM_HEAL](#)