



Pesticide newsletter

N°6 - December 2021

Jurisdictional news



European Union: ClientEarth takes the European Commission to court to put an end to the secrecy of pesticide approval

Faced with the European Commission's refusal to disclose the positions defended by Member States regarding decisions on pesticide authorizations, and in particular the renewal of the authorization of cypermethrin, our partner [ClientEarth](#) decided [to sue the Commission](#) before the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

ClientEarth denounces the opacity of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCoPAFF), in which the 27 Ministers of Agriculture of the European Union decide behind closed doors to approve dangerous pesticides. The committee is currently evaluating the renewal of the authorization of cypermethrin, an insecticide active substance used for agricultural purposes, which is known to be toxic to bees, fish and aquatic insects.

In its [press release](#) announcing the legal action, ClientEarth points out that the minutes of the committee meetings reveal that some ministers have radically changed their minds in favor of cypermethrin during the year 2020, without the public being able to know why. The published reports of these meetings are brief and omit crucial information, such as the positions of individual Member States and their final votes.

This lack of transparency does not allow the public to understand why and how these decisions, which have an impact on public health and the environment, are taken. Moreover, it prevents citizens from holding their governments accountable for the positions they defend at the European level. As a result, Member States continue to hide behind Brussels to avoid being held accountable for decisions which they are primarily responsible for. A reform related to comitology processes, launched in 2017 to address the lack of transparency in SCoPAFF and other similar committees, is currently underway. ClientEarth believes that EU transparency rules legally require the Commission to make this information available to all.

This legal action is a reminder that Member States are collectively responsible for approving or rejecting the European Commission's proposals to authorize the use of pesticides in the European Union. In particular, they are the ones who approved the renewal of the authorization to use glyphosate until December 2022. It also shed lights on the problematic operation of these committees, which can take important decisions that harm human health and the environment without giving the public any explanation.

[Back to Justice Pesticides website](#)