



Newsletter about Pesticides

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Legislative and regulatory News



France: Citizens' trust in the glyphosate reauthorization process not guaranteed

In an [opinion](#) made public on January 10, 2022 the national Commission on ethics and alerts in public health and the environment (cnDAspe) considered that the trust of citizens in the evaluation process for the renewal of the authorization of glyphosate in Europe was not guaranteed.

Created in 2013, the cnDAspe is responsible for ensuring the ethics of expertise in the health and environmental fields. To this end, it regularly issues advisory opinions (non-binding) aimed at making procedures more transparent and unbiased, in order to increase citizens' confidence in the expertise carried out within the European Union on public health and the environment.

In its opinion, the cnDAspe first recalls the commitment of the French government to put in place a process to [exit from glyphosate](#) and the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on June 9, 2021 expressing its strong concern about the decline of biodiversity. It also mentions the Inserm collective expertise report "[Pesticides and health effects. New data](#)", of June 2021, which indicates the presumption of a link between glyphosate and the risk of cancer of the lymphatic system (non-Hodgkin's lymphoma). These various data should have been indications in favor of maintaining the ban on glyphosate.

However, the pre-report by the four rapporteurs States (France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Sweden) [in charge of the re-evaluation of glyphosate](#), made public in June 2021, concludes that the herbicide does not meet any criteria for a ban (carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic for reproduction or endocrine disruptor), paving the way for its re-authorization. This is not only contrary to the conclusions of the above-mentioned reports, but also more broadly to most scientific work on the subject. The cnDAspe notes that a very strong selection of scientific articles and files was made by the reporting States to produce this pre-report. 90% of the articles published in the international scientific literature have been eliminated because they were considered "irrelevant", so that the data used came mainly from the dossiers submitted by the companies applying for the renewal of the authorization. This work does not comply with the methodology prescribed by the OECD guidelines. In addition, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) refused to publish the names of the experts from the Member States involved in this scientific evaluation, as well as their declarations of links of interest.

The cnDAspe, which notes that these elements are "likely to induce in the public mind a serious doubt on the impartiality of the experts who gave their opinion on this file", makes two recommendations. On the one hand, it recommends that the French government propose to its partners and the European Commission the establishment of an independent international panel to "examine the links of interest of each of the expert members of the committees that participated in the pre-report of the evaluation of the rapporteur states on glyphosate, which will be made public in June 2021". On the other hand, it invites the Commission to ask the European Commission "that before any examination by EFSA [...] of the pre-report submitted by the four reporting states, a critical analysis be conducted by an international panel of independent personalities" to verify that the choice made in the data has respected the necessary processes. For each of the recommendations, cnDAspe recommends that the reports resulting from this work be made public.

These measures to control the impartiality and methodological rigor of the expert assessments are essential to restore the confidence of European citizens in the ongoing process of assessing the risks associated with the use of glyphosate.

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