

International Society of Doctors for the Environment - ISDE

Linking Human Health and the Environment

Arezzo, 14th May 2015



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To: Martin Schulz,
President of the European Parliament
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cc To: Ladislav Miko,
Director-General of DG Health and Food
Safety (SANTE)

cc To: Karl Friedrich Falkenberg,
Director-General of DG Environment
(ENV)

cc To: Phil Hogan,
European Commissioner of DG for
Agriculture and Rural Development

cc To: Daniel Calleja Crespo,
Director General of DG Enterprise and
Industry

cc To: Carlo Pettinelli,
Director for Sustainable Growth and
EU 2020, DG Enterprise and Industry

Cc To: Karmenu Vella
Commissioner for Environment,
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

130, Rue de la Loi
B - 1049 Brussels
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Reference:

Appeal to the EU Parliament, to the EU Commission, to the DG Health and Food Safety, DG Environment, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Internal Market

A growing body of scientific evidence has been cumulated so far as regards the toxicity of herbicides and insecticides currently used in agriculture. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), belonging to the World Health Organization (WHO), has recently published an assessment of carcinogenicity of the following organophosphate agrochemicals: glyphosate, tetraclorvinphos, parathion, malathion, diazinon. Detailed findings based on

comprehensive reviews of the scientific literature will be published on Volume 112 of the IARC Monographs.

Already in 1991 the IARC warned about the toxicity of non-arsenical pesticides, by labelling them as “possibly carcinogenic to humans”. Since then, more than 20 of these compounds were added, being identified as seriously dangerous for health.

Converging sources of evidence show that chronic exposure to insecticides and herbicides has to be considered a major source of environmental deterioration and health hazard at population level. In humans, significant risks associated to pesticide exposure have been identified mostly for nervous, immunological, endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, reproductive, hemolymphopoietic and renal systems.

Glyphosate in particular — the most common herbicide worldwide — is now considered as “probably carcinogenic to humans” and listed in the IARC class 2A. The herbicide has been associated with health problems such as birth defects, infertility, damage to the nervous system, Parkinson’s disease and several forms of cancer. More than 10% of all samples of foods recently controlled in Europe have been found to contain this active principle. Moreover, glyphosate-resistant weeds are quickly becoming serious challenges in many agroecosystems.

The insecticides malathion (banned in the EU) and diazinon are now considered as “probably carcinogenic to humans” and listed in the IARC class 2A.

The insecticides tetraclorvinphos (banned in the EU) and parathion are now considered as “possibly carcinogenic to humans” and listed in the IARC class 2B.3

Therefore, for safeguarding the health of European populations, ISDE states that the rational basis is already strong enough to submit to the EU the following compelling

APPEAL

To immediately and permanently ban, with no exceptions, the production, trade and use in all the EU territory of glyphosate-based herbicides and the four insecticides assessed by IARC.

ISDE members trust that the EU will take the needed measures as other non-EU Countries have already done.

Please receive my best regards,

Roberto Romizi, MD
ISDE President

