

MINISTRY FOR ECOLOGIC AND
INCLUSIVE TRANSITION
(France)

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The Minister

FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR MIDDLE CLASSES,
SMEs, AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL
INCLUSION
(Belgium)

—
The Federal Minister

MINISTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT OF THE
ENVIRONMENT
(Luxemburg)

—
The Minister

MINISTRY FOR AGRICULTURE
(Slovenia)

—
The Minister

MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
(Malta)

—
The Minister

MINISTRY FOR THE AGRICULTURE
(Greece)

—
The Minister

December, 19th 2017

Mr Vice- president,

Mr Commissioner,

The renewal of the authorization of glyphosate for 5 years was voted during the appeal committee of November 27th. While taking note of this vote, we, Ministers of Environment or Agriculture of France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Malta and Greece underline our concerns about the risks associated with the use of products containing this substance.

As a matter of fact, a European citizen's initiative signed by more than one million people called for a ban of this substance. The European Parliament has expressed its support for the adoption of necessary measures to phase out the active substance glyphosate in the European Union by 15 December 2022 at the latest.

The European Parliament also asked for the extension of specific restrictions of use of glyphosate for weeding and pre-harvest desiccation. We wish to recall that our countries are in favor of the ban of these uses, which are the main sources of residues that can be found in food.

In this context, we invite the European Commission to accompany the decision of the renewal with measures intended to limit the risks and to prepare the exit plan for glyphosate by accompanying farmers.

This should result in:

- carrying out a study in order to identify and make available for all actors the possible alternatives (chemical, mechanical or biological) to the main agricultural uses of glyphosate, the necessary conditions and the methods of implementation, including the necessary adaptations and the induced evolution of practices at the level of farms and sectors ;

M. Frans TIMMERMANS
Vice- president of the European Commission

M. Vytenis ANDRIUKAITIS
Commissioner for health and food security

- carrying out a new study conducted by the European agencies in cooperation with the national agencies of voluntary Member States and IARC / WHO regarding the carcinogenic nature of the active substance glyphosate, as well as obtaining and examining additional data available;
- launching a reform of the European chemical assessment framework with the aim of enhancing its transparency, as announced by the European Commission on December 12th, and independence ;
- simplifying the frame governing the comparative evaluation to facilitate the substitution of substances during the examination of applications for authorization for placing on the market and the development of alternatives to chemicals ;
- strengthening research on the consequences of population exposure to chemical substances in order to work on a non-toxic European environment.

We as member states, maintain our commitment to encourage the development and implementation of integrated pesticides management and of alternative approaches or techniques in order to reduce dependency on the use of pesticides.

Finally, we reaffirm our willingness to develop alternatives to the use of this substance by accompanying farmers in this process, to ensure a short-term exit of glyphosate and invite Member States that wish to associate themselves to this initiative to join us in a working group that France will put in place.

Yours sincerely,

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