EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Helsinki, 25.05.2016

MISSION REPORT

Name: [redacted]	**Unit: D0**
Place and Date: **Brussels 24 May 2016**	**Mission Number:** 15063
Other participating ECHA staff: -	
Subject: European Parliament workshop on glyphosate	

Main aspects of the mission

The Committee on environment, public health and food safety (ENVI) of the EP organised a workshop on 'EU's pesticide risk assessment system: the case of glyphosate' on 24 May.

The purpose of the workshop was to provide background information and advice to the members of the ENVI Committee on the effects of pesticides, particularly with a focus on glyphosate, on human health. Conflicting reports have been published on the potential carcinogenic effects of glyphosate, and the aim of the workshop was to clarify the situation, to raise awareness on the issue and to open a debate.

The workshop was structured into three parts; the first part will discuss the policy context and latest developments. The second part focused on the challenges and options based on available research and evidence. The final part was dedicated to the perspectives from civil society and doctors on the issue.

Conclusions, follow-up and implications for ECHA

- The workshop was chaired by Mr Aloyz Peterle (Slovenian MEP for EPP). The co-chair, [redacted] (UK, S&D) was not present. Overall there was a lot of attention for the workshop with probably around 150 people listening (the room was packed) and quite a high number of MEPs present (the chair at some point mentioned 13 but some others still came later).
- The WS was set up in three sessions with 3 speakers each and some, unfortunately very limited, time in between for Q&A.
- After the intro by the chair who gave a short summary of the key events that have taken place till now [redacted] (SANTE) opened the first session and explained the approval process under the PPP regulation. She specifically stressed the rigorousness of the scientific assessment and the robustness of the regulatory decision-making and made a plea for not using the glyphosate case to start questioning the process as a whole.
- She was followed by [redacted] from the German UBA who basically concluded that the substance seems have ecological effects (on biodiversity) by that these can be limited when by taking specific measures when applying the substance in agriculture. She was followed by [redacted] from the centre for international and European law who gave and exposé on how the precautionary principle is being applied in EU chemicals risk management.

- In the short discussion that followed COM was challenged by [redacted] why indeed the PP was not invoked given the high uncertainty on the carcinogenicity (see IARC vs EFSA/BfR). Moreover he claimed that such broad spectrum herbicides should according to his reading of the law not be accepted at all.
- [redacted] (UK MEP, and farmer !) followed with a very strong statement that this substance should absolutely be approved since there are no alternatives and that it is unfortunately victimised due to consumer pressures.
- [redacted] kept distance from the PP debate by asking whether there's indeed sufficient uncertainty but then referred to the next speakers to address this in more detail. She did also note the JMPR conclusion and explained that the hazard and risk assessment should be seen as complementary.
- In the second session [redacted] and [redacted] explained the evaluations carried out by EFSA and IARC, respectively. [redacted] explained very clearly the EFSA report and the conclusions that there is no health concern for consumers which is based on the extensive risk assessment using a.o. measured residue data in crops and biomonitoring in humans. [redacted] explained the key studies and reasons why IARC has come to its conclusions whilst at the same time strongly emphasising that they provided a view on the hazards and in no way want to take a stance on the risks let alone the necessary risk management under different jurisdictions. She also challenged industry for not making all key studies fully available and claimed this stars to become common practice in other areas (like pharma).
- In this session I explained the ECHA CLH process, the fact that the glyphosate dossier is still in a very early stage of the process and the timelines which we foresee. I stressed specifically our intentions to work transparently and in close collaboration with all interested parties.
- Here, as expected, the discussion focussed on the IARC and EFSA conclusion with one MEP doing a back-of-the envelope calculation to demonstrate that risks are really very low and hence the substance should be accepted and another one trying to make IARC's conclusion look ridiculous by referring to the other activities that have a cat 2A classification such as night-shift working or sitting in from of an open fire. [redacted] replied that all effects have been looked at, including potential ED properties but that these generally occur at higher doses than the critical effect they have been working with in the risk assessment. [redacted] disagreed on that said he would ask EFSA for an official statement.
- No further question were posed on our further activities and no CoI issues were raised (although in a side remark [redacted] referred to [redacted] involvement in ILSI).
- The third session was chaotic due to extreme time pressure which made the chairman cut the speakers essentially after 5 minutes talking. The first two speakers were anyway difficult to follow where the second one ([redacted]) made quite strong accusations towards EFSA that they would have left out important information. The final speaker from HEAL basically stated that approval of glyphosate would be unlawful, that the EU citizens do not want this substance to be used at all and that it could have long term health consequences that can be avoided.
- I discussed after the meeting further with [redacted] who explained the extreme pressure under which they are now functioning. She clearly advised us to stay very, very factual and be very clear on what our evaluation will entail (and what not). Something we need to make (more) clear in our press release when the dossier good for PC. For the rest she indicated clear willingness to cooperate and stay involved in the further developments.
- From [redacted] I understood that the next compromise they will now put to the MS is an extension for 2(?) years of the current approval which will allow them to take

account of the RAC opinion. They of course want it asap but I made clear we have to respect the timelines and in particular make sure that all incoming comments will be properly handled by Germany and RAC which may need extra time which she understands.

- Obviously, with this new development there will be increased attention on our CLH process. Right after the meeting I received for instance already a request from an assistant of the green party in the German parliament who will be the rapporteurs and whether the German RAC members can vote or not.

[redacted]
(signed)

Annex: Agenda with speakers


Agenda 24 May 2016.pdf

Cc: ED, all directors, [redacted]/ExO, [redacted]