

6 December 2022

Meeting with representatives of Turf Sports re Impact Assessment of the SUR proposal on this sector

Attendees:

██████████ (Croplife, GAPEG), ██████████ (EPPA SA Consultancy)

██████████, ██████████, ██████████ (all SANTE F3)

██████████ is a former employee of Bayer’s professional division, now divested, dealing with the professional use of plant protection products (PPPs) including for turf sports. He chairs Croplife’s GAPEG working group which also covers PPP use for infrastructure such as railways, in amenities, private sports clubs and gardens. He suggested that a legislative wording of “freely accessible by the general public” could allay stakeholder concerns concerning the sensitive areas provision aspect of the SUR proposal.

██████████ outlined the background to the development of the SUR proposal, the current status of the inter-institutional negotiations and relevant provisions of the current Directive.

██████████ accepted that the current Directive has been implemented in a very varied way but the proposed SUR provision on prohibiting all PPP use in sensitive areas will lead to real turf being replaced with artificial turf with unwanted negative environmental and socio-economic consequences. He has analysed relevant feedback comments submitted via the Commission’s Better Regulation Portal on the adopted SUR proposal and believes that technologies are available which would allow up to a 90% reduction in PPP use, but a total prohibition as foreseen in the proposal is not feasible. In many cases alternative biocontrol solutions are not yet available for use on turf. Sectors such as golf courses make major positive socio-economic contributions in MS and also help biodiversity. Private gardeners are also concerned about being affected by a total prohibition on PPP use.

██████████ has collected some data on the possible impact such a prohibition could have and will aim to raise these concerns based on objective data during the inter-institutional negotiation of the proposal or in national impact assessments being prepared by some ██████████ ██████████ acknowledged that non-agricultural users of PPPs had given little or no input during the previous policy formulation and consultation phases and their input even at this late stage would be useful.