

Press release

Paris, 19 June 2013

The day of the meeting to seal the fate of the National Strategy on Endocrine Disruptors (SNPE),* 27 civil society organisations are publishing a manifesto [1] and a public petition [2], calling on the government to adopt an ambitious strategy to reduce exposure of populations and ecosystems to endocrine disruptors.

Since February 2013, the SNPE has been in roundtable negotiations with various public and private actors. This process was put in place so that the European Union would take action on the subject, particularly in the context of new legislation on pesticides and biocides, and after a decision announced in the national environmental conference in September 2012.

The process follows the first steps taken in France against bisphenol A, which was made possible because of a favourable convergence of views between the French parliamentarians from both right and left, civil society, researchers and experts at ANSES (French national health and safety agency). A priori, the government can build on this consensus to develop a SNPE which meet the challenges of public health and the protection of biodiversity described in the recent joint report by the World Health Organization and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) [3].

However, as the negotiations progress, government ambitions appear to be receding. Several signals have concerned associations involved in the negotiations:

- While Delphine Batho announced in December 2012 regulatory action on phthalates as one possible outcome of SNPE, government negotiators are reluctant to take action on this commitment. The same logic would suggest that BPA in thermal paper be subject to additional restrictions since the last report of ANSES unambiguously establishes the risks of dermal exposure among women of reproductive age, but yet again, no concrete proposals have been put forward.
- Six months after the entry into force of the BPA legislation on food containers, the implementing decree on compulsory labelling of products in the interim period has not yet appeared, nor has it been the subject of a specific consultation.
- After showing leadership, France is returning any regulatory action to the European authorities despite the apparent deadlock as evidenced by the repeated positions from European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) that are in denial of the change of toxicological paradigm of endocrine disruption.
- Even more serious is the fact that France is not playing a role in the current European negotiations aimed at establishing criteria for identifying endocrine disruptors and at setting out their regulation (i.e., whether or not they should be kept on the market). This means that Britain, Germany, DG SANCO of the European Commission, EFSA and industry (chemicals, pesticides, cosmetics) have a free hand to undermine the basis of any relevant regulation.

Together against endocrine disruptors - A broad coalition of civil society organisations including environmental protection and health promotion groups, co operative health insurers and consumer associations have decided to publish a public petition, backed by a manifesto, to reaffirm the need to act quickly and consistently on endocrine disruptors.

For our organizations, the focus should be on reducing the exposure of populations, especially pregnant women or of childbearing age, and ecosystems from endocrine disruptors already identified in regulatory measures, which include the removal from the market of pesticides and biocides that are endocrine disruptors. SNPE must make innovation and substitution a priority by promoting green chemistry and non-chemical alternatives (with the priority being on cosmetics, toys, food and medical devices) as well as the implementation of an exemplary policy on behalf of the state and communities.

SNPE must also promote the mobilisation and training of all relevant actors to prevent exposure and to provide clear information to the public to enhance their ability to make informed choices on

consumption.

Finally, in order to strengthen, adapt and sustain public research resources and expertise, it may be necessary to consider some financial contribution from companies generating hazardous chemicals (e.g., in chemicals and agrochemicals) or users (e.g., manufacturers of foods and consumer goods).

Note: Fifth and final meeting on SNPE with stakeholders takes place today.

Useful links: Website 'Together against EDCs' <http://www.stop-aux-pe.org>

Petition on Change.org: <http://www.change.org/StopPE>

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[1]. <http://stop-aux-pe.weebly.com/manifeste-des-associations.html>

[2]. <http://www.change.org/StopPE>

[3]. <http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/endocrine/en/>

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