

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the discussions on a potential 15-year renewal of the EU market licence for glyphosate have started, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is seriously concerned that the EU scientific assessment on the cancer potential of this pesticide active substance dismisses important scientific findings from the existing cancer studies.

The Assessment Group on Glyphosate (AGG), formed by member states representatives from France, the Netherlands, Hungary and Sweden and acting as a joint rapporteur for the renewal dossier, recently concluded that glyphosate is not carcinogenic and therefore meets the approval criteria under EU law.

However, as presented in this report, the cancer studies provided by pesticide companies for the carcinogenicity assessment of glyphosate show the clear potential for the substance to cause cancer.

On the basis of this evidence, glyphosate should in fact be classified as a substance “presumed to have carcinogenic potential for humans”, and according to the EU law on pesticides, be removed from the EU market.

This report is based on the scientific analysis of Prof. Chris J. Portier - an independent expert in the design, analysis, and interpretation of environmental health data with a focus on carcinogenicity - and Dr. Peter Clausing - a toxicologist with a career in regulatory toxicology - on the carcinogenicity section of the AGG assessment report. The experts submitted their analysis to the parallel consultations organised by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). Their findings were also presented at ECHA’s Committee on Risk Assessment (RAC) discussions, responsible for adopting an opinion on the carcinogenicity of glyphosate.

Our analysis reveals the occurrence of clear and statistically significant tumours in ten out of 11 animal studies, which confirms the 2015 classification of glyphosate as ‘probable carcinogen’ by the International Agency for Research on Cancer’s (IARC).

These tumour incidences were reinforced by additional scientific observations such as: a comparison with background in-house data of unexposed animals; a rising trend in the number of tumours with increasing exposure to glyphosate, or the development of several tumours in the exposed animal groups. Despite these observations, all these tumours were systematically dismissed from the assessment, first by the AGG and now seemingly also by RAC members.

Overall, the glyphosate EU renewal process illustrates serious scientific shortcomings that question its scientific objectivity and fall short of adhering to European and international scientific rules and guidelines. Based on these findings, the EU authorities should take corrective measures as soon as possible in order to ensure that the procedure is carried out according to the highest scientific standards.

Visit HEAL’s report [‘How the EU risks green-lighting a cancer-linked pesticide’](#) (2022) for more information.