

Sustainable use of plant protection products

2022/0196(COD) - 22/06/2022 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to reduce the use and risks of pesticides in the EU and to achieve the objectives set out in the Farm to Table Strategy and the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: [Directive 2009/128/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council established a framework for achieving a sustainable use of pesticides by reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment. **The evaluation of this Directive has shown that it has not achieved its overall objectives** and that Member States have not implemented it satisfactorily

In its [resolution](#) of 12 February 2019 on the implementation of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides, the European Parliament stated that the EU should act without delay to move towards a more sustainable use of pesticides and called on the Commission to propose an ambitious and binding Union-wide target for reducing pesticide use. The European Parliament reiterated its call for binding reduction targets in its resolution of 20 October 2021 on a 'Farm to Fork' strategy.

The Commission's Farm to Fork strategy proposes two specific objectives, namely to reduce the use of chemical pesticides and the risks associated with them and to reduce the use of more hazardous pesticides by 2030. **EU regulation in this area should therefore be strengthened.**

The Commission proposal has the following objectives:

- reduce the use and risk of chemical pesticides, in particular those containing more hazardous active substances;
- increase the application and enforcement of integrated pest management (IPM); and
- increase the use of less hazardous and non-chemical alternatives to chemical pesticides for pest control;
- improve the availability of monitoring data;
- improve the implementation, application and enforcement of legal provisions across all Member States to improve policy effectiveness and efficiency;
- promote the adoption of new technologies, such as precision farming that makes use of space data and services (including geospatial localisation techniques), with the aim of reducing the overall use and risk of pesticides.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes **new rules to reduce the use and risks of plant protection products in the EU**, in line with the objective of a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system set out in the Farm to Table strategy.

Binding targets

The proposal sets out the EU's objectives of reducing pesticide use and associated risks by **50%**, in line with the Farm to Table strategy, to which **Member States will (collectively) have to contribute**. It foresees that Member States should adopt binding targets under their national law, which can deviate from the 50% level of the EU targets under a binding formula. The Commission would issue recommendations to set increasing targets in certain cases and would publish trends in progress towards the EU's 2030 reduction targets.

Pest control

The proposal sets out strict rules to ensure that pest control is environmentally friendly through a comprehensive implementation framework in which all farmers practice 'integrated pest management'. **The use of plant protection products** would only be possible as a last resort after alternative methods have been considered.

The proposal requires professional users to keep records on IPM and to use independent advisors. It provides for the adoption and oversight of crop-specific rules for IPM that must be respected by professional users. It also provides for the establishment of an electronic IPM register.

Requirements for the use, storage and disposal of pesticides

The proposal sets out the requirement for professional users, distributors and advisors to hold a **training certificate** in certain circumstances. It also sets out general requirements for the use of pesticides and application equipment. In addition, it contains provisions on:

- **the use of plant protection products:** all pesticides would be banned from use in such areas (and within 3 metres of such areas) such as public parks or gardens, playgrounds or sports grounds, public footpaths, and environmentally sensitive areas;
- **protection of the aquatic environment and drinking water:** the use of all plant protection products is prohibited on all surface waters and within 3 metres of such waters;
- **aerial application:** this should be prohibited, with limited derogations on a case-by-case basis where it has a less negative impact on human health and the environment than any alternative application method;
- **storage, disposal and handling:** Member States should have in place effective measures and the necessary structures to facilitate the safe disposal of any unused plant protection products, dilute solutions containing plant protection products and packaging in a manner that does not endanger human health or the environment.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Under the new CAP (due to be implemented from 1 January 2023), Member States will be helped to: (i) fund actions in line with the pesticide-reduction targets in the farm-to-fork strategy; and (ii) promote sustainable farming practices.