



*Human health
consequences of
pesticides
& the EU risk
assessment*

Angeliki Lyssimachou, PhD
Environmental Scientist/Toxicologist

Pesticides – a health concern



- Designed to be **toxic to living organisms** – they pass through biological membranes
- May **interact with hormones**, their synthesis and metabolism
- Unlike natural hormones they may **persist in the body**
- Acutely eradicate pests → most regulatory tests are acute
- Regulatory testing → **major gaps in long term effects** at low doses for endocrine disruptors, neurotoxic and immunotoxic compounds

Legal requirements - pesticides



Plant Protection Product Regulation (PPPR) 1107/2009:



- High level of protection for ALL
— *humans, animals, environment*
- Protect the vulnerable
— *pregnant women, children, babies*
- Use ALL scientific literature
- Consider active substances, products, food residues
- Consider mixture effects (cocktails)
- Apply the precautionary principle

Mutagens, Carcinogens, Toxic to Reproduction, Endocrine Disruptors, PBTs



Hazards

EU policy on endocrine disruptors



- Regulation 1107/2009 – scientific criteria for endocrine disruptors
 - Deadline: December 2013 (but presented in 2016)
 - Process delayed by market interests
 - Criteria will apply end of 2018
- Interim criteria in place since 2009
 1. Carcinogen Cat 2 + Toxic to reproduction Cat 2
OR
 2. Toxic to reproduction Cat 2 + toxic to endocrine organs

EU policy on endocrine disruptors



Since 2009 zero pesticides have been banned due to the interim criteria or due to their endocrine disrupting properties



Thifensulfuron-methyl - herbicide (renewal 2016-2031)

- Approved by Rapporteur Member State (UK)
- EFSA conclusion: interim criterion 2 is met (toxic to reproduction and mammary tumours)
- Herbicide approved by Member States
- Commission requested confirmatory data on:
 - Genotoxicity of metabolites
 - Mechanistic data on ED
 - Risk to aquatic organisms
 - Contamination of ground water



2,4- D - herbicide (renewal 2016-2030)

- Approved by Rapporteur Member State (Greece)
- Endocrine disruptor:
 - Reported effects on testis, prostate, kidney, thyroid (also thyroid levels), adrenal glands.
 - Commission's 2016 screening identified it as EDC
- EFSA identified data gaps for complete ED evaluation
- Herbicide approved by Member States
- Commission requested confirmatory data on:
 - Existing information on extended 1 generation study
 - Amphibian metamorphosis test



Lambda-cyhalothrin - insecticide (renewal 2016-2023)

- Approved by Rapporteur Member State (Sweden)
- Endocrine disruptor with developmental toxicity:
 - Brain morphological changes
 - Sperm effects
- EFSA identified data gaps for ED evaluation and toxicity of metabolites
- Insecticide approved by Member States
- Commission requested confirmatory data on:
 - A systematic review for the sperm effects
 - Toxicity of metabolites
- Lower doses & mitigation measures for Member States



Chlorpyrifos - insecticide (*under evaluation*)

- Endocrine disruptor:
 - Thyroid effects and anti-androgenic
 - Developmental neurotoxicity (brain dysmorphism) in infants and children
- Rapporteur:
 - Neuroendocrine toxicity not assessed
 - Neurotoxicity study requested
- Nevertheless, approved by Rapporteur Member State (Spain)
- EFSA conclusion in progress



Sustainable use of pesticides Directive

- Pesticides as a last resort (IPM)
 - crop rotation
 - resistant varieties
 - bio-pesticides
- Clear reduction targets
- Monitoring

**Not implemented by
Member States**



Solution - Promote alternatives



Organic < Conventional: 8-9 % !



Agroecology

flowers

plants

Increase up to 30%!

Conclusions



- Pesticides are approved even when hazard criteria are met
- The “dose makes the poison” does not apply in long term exposures → new tests/approach is urgent
- Independent scientific literature is still given little weight → regulators undermine pesticide effects
- Market and profit block the high level of protection for humans and the environment
- Policy should be strict and clearly promote the development of alternative methods and their uptake by farmers
- A different system for the production of our food is urgent



Thank you!



www.pan-europe.info

angeliki@pan-europe.info