



PRESS RELEASE

Glyphosate Lawsuit 2.0: Aurelia Foundation fights against 10-Year Re-Authorisation

The German Foundation Aurelia believes that the EU Commission's decision in November 2023 to authorise the active ingredient glyphosate for a further 10 years will exacerbate the biodiversity crisis and threaten food security in the EU in the long-term. Following its complaint against the one-year authorisation extension in 2023, Aurelia is now also taking legal action against the renewed long-term authorisation of glyphosate.

Berlin, 25 January 2024 | The non-profit Aurelia Foundation is applying to the EU Commission to have the glyphosate approval revoked. Aurelia will then induce a court case at the EU Court in Luxembourg against the 10-year re-approval. The total herbicide glyphosate threatens biodiversity and bees. Although the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the EU Commission recognised this problem during the approval process, the new authorisation does not contain any conditions to counteract the excessive use of the pesticide. There is still a lack of scientifically proven EU guidelines for assessing risks to biodiversity and to wild and honey bees. Numerous other environmental and health risks have not been sufficiently analysed. The member states are clearly overburdened with the task of controlling the use of glyphosate in an environmentally friendly manner under these circumstances.

Matthias Wolfschmidt, Chairman of the Board of the Aurelia Foundation:

"Pesticide-dependent agriculture is the main cause of the enormous loss of wild bees, other pollinators and soil fertility in Europe. The EU Commission's decision means that all biodiversity may be destroyed on 90 percent of EU arable land for another decade. However, the biodiversity crisis can only be overcome if bee diversity and soil fertility are given top priority on all agricultural land. With its glyphosate decision, the EU Commission is exacerbating the extinction of species and thereby jeopardising food security in the EU in the medium-term."

Lawyer Dr Achim Willand, partner at the law firm GGSC and legal representative of the Aurelia Foundation:

"There are significant gaps in the risk assessment. Now the member states are supposed to assess risks to biodiversity and insects when authorising individual glyphosate products and take 'risk mitigation measures'. However, the member states lack the technical, legal and administrative basis for this. For example Germany: For years, it has not been possible to establish reliable limits for the use of glyphosate in authorisation procedures and legislation."

The effects of glyphosate on aquatic organisms, residues in products and risks to bees, pollinating insects and amphibians have not yet been conclusively assessed, as the EFSA confirmed in its scientific conclusions of July 2023. Various studies carried out independently of pesticide manufacturers confirm the direct negative impact of glyphosate on the health and life expectancy of pollinating insects.

The Aurelia Foundation aims to put the threat to life posed by the biodiversity crisis at the centre of political action. With its lawsuits against the EU Commission, Aurelia is fighting for a food system that treats nature respectfully and at the same time provides our nutritional needs.

Background

Last year, Aurelia already filed a complaint at the EU Court against the EU Commission's decision to extend the authorisation of glyphosate for one year. These proceedings are independent of the new complaint and are being upheld because they challenge the EU Commission's common practice of extending authorisations for existing products whose risk assessment has not been completed.

The environmental non-profit organisation Deutsche Umwelthilfe e. V. (DUH) has joined Aurelia's lawsuit against the 10-year re-authorisation of glyphosate.

The lawsuits of the Aurelia Foundation are financially supported by the social enterprise ECOSIA.

Further information

Statement of claim by the Aurelia Foundation and Deutsche Umwelthilfe e. V. – submitted to the EU Commission (preliminary stage of the action before the EU Court):

https://www.aurelia-stiftung.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/868026-Antrag-Aurelia_DUH-Glyphosat-Genehmigung-24.01.2024.pdf

EU Commission on the destruction of nature ("Nature Restoration Law"):

https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/nature-restoration-law_en

EFSA press release, 6 July 2023:

<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/news/glyphosate-no-critical-areas-concern-data-gaps-identified>

More information on the application and the complaint:

<https://www.aurelia-stiftung.de/projekt/wir-klagen-gegen-glyphosat/>

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