

# EU Directive on Sustainable Use of Pesticides

egeis

European Glyphosate Environmental Information Source

## Important Notes to users:

***This document is part of a toolbox which provides independent information on the sustainable use of glyphosate. It cannot however be definitive and users must ensure that they assess local factors and particularly take account of any national or regional legislative requirements. At the end of the document reference sources used in its preparation and links to other relevant documents are provided.***

## Summary

This new Directive (2009/128/EC) was agreed in late 2009 and establishes a framework to achieve a sustainable use of pesticides by reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment and promoting the use of Integrated Pest Management and of alternative approaches or techniques such as non-chemical alternatives to pesticides. The Directive's provisions are flexible and largely take the form of broad objectives, but are also specifically linked to other more detailed EU legislation such as the revised Regulation on the Placing of Plant Protection Products on the Market and the Water Framework Directive. The main features of the Sustainable Use Directive include: requirement for Member States to develop National Action Plans setting out targets, measures and timetables to reduce risks and impacts of use of pesticides on human health and the environment; requirement for Member States to establish certification schemes for spray operators, distributors and advisors; compulsory testing of application equipment; measures to protect the aquatic environment and drinking water, public spaces and special conservation areas; promotion and greater use of integrated approaches (e.g. Integrated Pest Management).

## Detailed information

The Directive establishes a framework to achieve a sustainable use of pesticides by reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment and promoting the use of Integrated Pest Management and of alternative approaches or techniques such as non-chemical alternatives to pesticides. The measures provided for in this Directive should be complementary to, and not affect, measures laid down in other related Community legislation, e.g. the birds and habitats directives, the Water Framework Directive, and the Placing of Plant Protection Products on the Market legislation.

The new measures have to be introduced over an extended timescale beginning two years after adoption of the Directive later this year and extending through to 2014 in the case of the provisions on Integrated Pest Management (IPM). The key elements in the Directive (including relevant dates of implementation) are:

### **National Action Plans**

- National Action Plans aimed at setting quantitative objectives, targets, measures, indicators and timetables to reduce risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment and at encouraging the development and introduction of Integrated Pest Management and of alternative approaches or techniques in order to reduce dependency on the use of pesticides should be used by Member States in order to facilitate the implementation of the Directive.
- Member States should monitor the use of plant protection products containing substances of particular concern and establish timetables and targets for the reduction of their use in particular when it is an appropriate means to achieve risk reduction targets.
- National Action Plans should be coordinated with implementation plans under other relevant Community legislation and could be used for grouping together objectives to be achieved under other Community legislation related to pesticides.
- Plans have to take account of social (including health), economic and environmental impacts of the measures in the plans and show how the requirements of the Directive are implemented.

- Plans have to be communicated to the Commission three years after entry into force of the Directive, reviewed at least every five years, and significant changes communicated to the Commission as soon as possible. The Commission is to make these plans available on the Internet.

### ***Training***

- Member States are to set up systems of both initial and additional training for distributors, advisors and professional users of pesticides and certification systems to record this whereby those who use or will use pesticides are fully aware of the potential risks to human health and the environment and of the appropriate measures to reduce those risks as much as possible.
- Member States have to ensure all professional users, distributors and advisors have access to continually updated appropriate training. The training needs to include a basic knowledge of comparative assessment for professional users and an awareness of counterfeit products.
- Member States must set up certification systems within four years of the entry into force of the Directive, and designate the competent authorities for their implementation. The certification systems shall include procedures for granting maintenance and withdrawal of certificates which shall provide evidence of knowledge of the people covered by the certification scheme.

### ***Sales of Pesticides and raising of awareness of risks***

- The sales of pesticides, including Internet sales, are an important element in the distribution chain, where specific advice on safety instructions for human health and the environment should be given to the end user at the time of sale, in particular to professional users.
- Member States have to ensure that all distributors selling pesticides (except small businesses selling non-professional products only) have sufficient staff holding a certificate to provide information to customers at the time of sale on pesticide use, health and environmental safety for the particular products.
- Member States must take measures to restrict sales of professional products to professional users. These measures on sales shall be in place six years after the date of entry into force.
- Distributors selling to non-professional users have to provide information on risks of use, hazards etc, storage, handling, application and disposal, and alternatives. This is expected to be in addition to that provided on product labels.
- Member States have to take measures to inform the general public and promote awareness-raising and availability of balanced information on pesticides, in particular health risks, risks for non-target organisms and the environment, and use of alternatives.
- Member States have to put in place systems for gathering information on pesticide acute poisoning incidents among groups of people regularly exposed to pesticides.

### ***Inspection of Application Equipment***

- Member States are to designate inspection bodies and to set up certificate systems and inform the Commission.
- Equipment in professional use is to be inspected regularly with not more than five years between inspections to 2020, and no more than three years thereafter. By seven years after the date of entry into force all equipment shall have been inspected at least once. New equipment must be inspected at least once within five years from the date of purchase until 2020 and then 3 yearly thereafter. Users need to conduct regular calibrations and technical checks.
- Member States may apply different timetables and inspection intervals following a human and environmental risk assessment including scale of use for non-spray equipment (granular, mists, foggers etc), handheld, knapsacks and other equipment listed in the national action plans, where these represent a very low scale of use.
- Handheld or knapsack equipment can be exempt from inspection subject to training particularly on the risks from the equipment, and users carry out checks themselves.

### **Protection of Water and Sensitive Areas**

- The aquatic environment is especially sensitive to pesticides. It is therefore necessary for particular attention to be paid to avoid pollution of surface water and groundwater by taking appropriate measures such as, the establishment of buffer and safeguard zones or planting hedges along surface waters to reduce exposure of water bodies to spray drift, drain flow and run-off.
- Use of pesticides in areas for the abstraction of drinking water, on or along transport routes, such as railway lines, or on sealed or very permeable surfaces can lead to higher risks of pollution of the aquatic environment. In such areas the pesticide use should, therefore, be reduced as far as possible, or eliminated, if appropriate.
- Use of pesticides can be particularly dangerous in very sensitive conservation areas. In other places such as public parks, sports and recreation grounds, school grounds and children's playgrounds, and in the vicinity of healthcare facilities, the risks from exposure to pesticides are high. In these areas, the use of pesticides should be minimised or prohibited. When pesticides are used, appropriate risk management measures should be established and use of low-risk pesticides as well as biological control measures should be considered.

### **Integrated Pest Management**

- The application of general principles and crop and sector specific guidelines of Integrated Pest Management by all farmers would result in a better targeted use of all available pest control measures, including pesticides. Therefore, it contributes to a further reduction of the risks to human health and the environment and the dependency on the use of pesticides.
- Member States have to take measures to promote low pesticide-input pest management so that by 1 Jan 2014 professional users switch to practices and products with the lowest risk to health and the environment.

### **Reference for further detailed information:**

- Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides ([Click here](#))

### **See also:**

- EU Regulation concerning the Placing of Plant Protection Products on the Market
- EU drinking water quality legislation
- EU Water framework directive

### **Document status:**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Version</b>	
Adrian Terry Cambridge Environmental Assessments	Final	February 2010

### **Disclaimer**

*All reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the information provided in this document is accurate but neither EGEIS nor the authors can be held responsible for any use to which it is put.*