
Results of the Breyer Report on Plant Protection Products (PPP)

1st Reading Plenary Vote

The results of the vote on the Breyer report were positive in some key areas, such as on the restrictions and prohibitions in use and distribution of PPP, deletion of overly bureaucratic and unrealistic requirements to inform neighbours of pesticide spraying activities and the establishment of clearer rules for the parallel trade of PPP. However, there are some areas that will have to be looked at again in 2nd reading, including authorisation zones and mutual recognition of authorisation tests.

Key issues

Information to neighbours

Conservatives successfully supported the rejection of:

- the obligation to inform neighbours of spraying activities at least 48 hours before the product is used;
- having a minimum requirement set out in the authorisation of a PPP that obliges users to inform neighbours who could be exposed to spraying;
- the establishment of a centralised system for notifying neighbours of spraying activities.

However, an authorisation to use or distribute a PPP in a Member State may include the obligation to inform any neighbours who could be exposed to the spraying activities before the product is used and who have requested to be informed. In other words such a requirement could be attached to the use of a particular pesticide deemed to be of high risk.

Restrictions and prohibition of pesticide use

Conservatives successfully supported:

- an addition to the list of requirements relating to the distribution and use of PPP that will set clear rules for the use of pesticides in and around areas used by the general public or in areas around sensitive populations.

This means that rather than having an approach where there are blanket bans and restrictions on the use of PPP in areas such as residential areas, parks, gardens, sports ground etc, authorisations to use and distribute PPP will include specific requirements as to how and where PPP can be used. This will protect the public from exposure to harmful products.

Impacts on human health

Conservatives were unsuccessful in rejecting:

- an amendment, tabled by the Greens, PSE and others, that will now mean that in order to receive an authorisation, you will not will have to prove there is a risk in order to have the substance banned. Their addition adds the term "suspected" risk, which brings in an element of uncertainty.

The Commission proposed that an active substance can only be approved if it is considered not to have endocrine disrupting properties that may be of toxicological significance in humans, unless the realistic exposure to humans is negligible. The adopted text, tabled by the Greens, PSE and others, now means that you do not have to prove there is a risk in order to have the substance banned.

Parallel trade of PPP

Conservatives successfully supported:

- the inclusion of rules that will allow the parallel trade of PPP between Member States, provided that the product is identical to one that has already received an authorisation in the receiving Member State.

Fees and charges

Conservatives successfully supported the rejection of:

- an amendment that had wanted to set a minimum common fee which would have been used to finance supervision, control, rehabilitation and reorganising of agriculture into pesticide-free cultivation.

Member states will still be able to recover the costs associated with any work they carry out arising from obligations under this Regulation

Authorisation zones

Conservatives and the EPP were unsuccessful in adopting:

- the establishment of three authorisation zones, based on broad climatic criteria. This approach would have meant that once a PPP had received an authorisation from one Member States within each zone, it would not have to receive another authorisation to be used by a Member State within the same zone. Although this approach was not perfect (the division of the three zones was fairly arbitrary), it was preferable to the approach that has been adopted where each of the 27 Member States will now have to approve the use of PPP.

Conservatives will work at the second reading stage to find a less bureaucratic approach.

Animal testing

Conservatives successfully supported:

- calls for tests on vertebrates to be undertaken only as a last resort, and to make sure that double testing is avoided by sharing existing test data.

