

## France to oppose EU's 5-year renewal for weedkiller glyphosate

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Activists have called for glyphosate to be banned

France will oppose a European Commission proposal to renew authorisation for controversial weedkiller glyphosate for five years instead of 10, saying Wednesday the new cutoff should be three years.

"France's position is three years," Environment Minister Nicolas Hulot, a celebrity green activist, told French media ahead of a vote by the 28 EU

member states in Brussels on Thursday.

The Commission, the EU's executive arm, had originally recommended approving the herbicide's use for another decade from December 15 but experts balked amid growing uproar over its alleged dangers.

Monsanto, the US agro giant that makes weedkiller Roundup, insists [glyphosate](#) meets the standards required to renew its European licence.

Glyphosate critics, led by environmental campaigners Greenpeace, are calling for an outright ban in Europe and last month activists handed the EU a petition signed by more than 1.3 million people backing such a move.

They point to a 2015 study by the World Health Organization's (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer that concluded it was "probably carcinogenic".

However, the European Food Safety Authority and the European Chemicals Agency both say glyphosate is unlikely to cause cancer in humans, in line with a 2016 review carried out by WHO experts and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

"The big change is that we are talking about an end, not simply a renewal," Hulot told French television BFMTV. "France is in the vanguard on this issue."

The minister said he sympathised with farmers "who are a bit overwhelmed by all the constraints imposed on them (but) over these three years we will be able to work towards alternatives" to glyphosate.

The current licence for using glyphosate expires on December 15.

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