

EU to greenlight Bayer-Monsanto takeover: source

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EU approval of the \$66 billion buyout of US agri-giant Monsanto by German chemical firm Bayer will come on Wednesday, sources say.

The EU is set to greenlight the proposed blockbuster buyout of US agri-giant Monsanto by German chemical firm Bayer after securing concessions in order to win approval, sources close to the matter said on Tuesday.

Several sources told AFP that Bayer had won the greenlight that would be officially announced by the commission on Wednesday in Brussels.

Brussels launched an in-depth investigation in August into the \$66 billion (56-billion-euro) [deal](#), which would create the world's largest integrated pesticides and seeds company.

The European Commission, which serves as the powerful anti-trust regulator for the 28-nation European Union, at the time cited concerns it could reduce competition in key products for farmers.

Brussels is also under pressure by environmentalists who fear that the deal would give too much power to the world's leading manufacturers of [genetically modified organisms](#) (GMOs) and the controversial weedkiller glyphosate.

The EU has won several concessions from Bayer including the announced sale in October by Bayer of parts of its agrochemical business to German rival BASF.

That deal would see Bayer sell the lion's share of its crop seeds units and its glyphosate herbicide business to BASF for 5.9 billion euros (\$7 billion).

Earlier this month, BASF also committed to buying Bayer's vegetable seed business in a last minute concession to Brussels.

The deadline for the merger approval is April 5 and the Leverkusen-based Bayer has been confident the Commission will green-light its deal.

Both Bayer and the commission refused to comment.

Bayer chief executive Werner Baumann said last month that if it receives the Commission's go-ahead, the Monsanto deal could be completed sometime in the second quarter.

In a letter to EU Competition commissioner Margarethe Vestager, activists from Friends of Europe warned against the merger due to its consequences on the environment.

"Blocking this deeply unpopular merger would be a big win for the EU — over a million citizens have called on EU competition chief Margrethe Vestager to block this [merger](#) from hell," the activists said in a statement.

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