

EU legislators vote to slash use of pesticides

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EU legislators on Tuesday voted to slash use of pesticides by half across the bloc, despite opposition from some conservative groups.

But green politicians were left to regret the rejection of a proposed

symbolic declaration calling for a complete ban on controversial weedkiller glyphosate.

A parliamentary commission rejected making a declaration a month before the 27 member states are due to decide on appeal whether to extend the use of glyphosate, something the WHO fears could be carcinogenic.

Earlier this month the bloc failed to agree to do so as divisions emerged and the matter will now go to an appeals committee in early November.

Tuesday saw the EU's environment committee vote by a narrow majority—47 [votes](#) to 37—to set binding targets on reduced [pesticide use](#) that targets a 50-percent reduction by 2030.

The pesticides judged the most hazardous will see use pared back by two-thirds compared with 2013-2017.

The committee has also banned use of pesticides in designated sensitive areas, including [public parks](#), around schools and at Natura 2000 protection sites.

Among those voting against were the rightwing European People's Party and the far right, while farmers and agri-cooperatives are opposed to seeing the EU impose too tight a set of regulations in the sector.

"Given the impact of the war in Ukraine (on cereal markets) this proposal seriously places in danger (European) independence in terms of food security," said conservative Austrian lawmaker Alexander Bernhuber.

He warned of a risk of reduced yields that could lead to higher agriculture imports.

Austrian Green MEP Sarah Wiener, leading the campaign on the issue, said she was pleased at an outcome bringing agreement "on feasible compromises in an ideologically-charged and industry-dominated discussion."

Belgian Socialist lawmaker Marie Arena said the outcome would benefit farmworkers and the environment alike as "abusive [use of pesticides](#) makes people sick," as well as decimating bee numbers.

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