



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Health and food audits and analysis
F3 - Plants and organics

Grange,
SANTE.F3

BACK-TO-OFFICE NOTE

Country / Venue: Videocall

Subject: **Presentation on the implementation of SUD by [redacted] followed by panel discussion. Break out Group on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides, CropLife Europe Conference.**

Dates: 11/03/21, 10.30-11.45 CET

Participants: [redacted] (UIPP France), [redacted] (BASF); [redacted] (CAP, Portuguese Farmers' Association); [redacted] (SANTE); [redacted] (EESC Alternate Member)

[redacted] (**BASF**) presented the industry view on the evaluation and review of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD). [redacted] underlined that, since 2009, the SUD has definitely improved the situation, but it should be refined and updated. In particular, to reflect technological progress and to improve implementation.

[redacted] gave some examples of possible improvements, focusing on issues such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), where a centralised database of guidelines in Member States would be helpful. [redacted] underlined that the revision of SUD is an opportunity to look at the potential of digital technologies which are being developed at lightening speed e.g. digital forecast systems, targeted application systems. [redacted] also suggested that the SUD review should review provisions on aerial application systems and spraying equipment. Finally, [redacted] underlined the need for improved indicators and the need for an impact assessment.

[redacted], (**CAP, Confederation of Farmers in Portugal**), representing about a quarter of a million farmers. [redacted] stressed that the agricultural sector is facing an enormous challenge - 9 billion people to feed, no increase in agricultural land. We have to increase food productivity and yields. We need a strategy that can pay attention to the different realities and different starting points of different Member States. [redacted] highlighted key issues including: the development of precision farming, that the EU authorities can promote and support – saying it is hard to understand why use of drones is being treated as aerial spraying; the promotion of conservation; and the increased use of biological controls as an alternative to use of chemical products.

[redacted] (**SANTE F3**) introduced the political context – things are very different now than in 2009 when SUD was first put into place. [redacted] outlined the pesticide

targets set out in Farm to Fork in the context of the Green Deal. [REDACTED] covered the methodology behind the targets and the trend to date –reduction of risk at EU level of 17% - of course there are variations between Member States. This is an encouraging trend, but it needs to continue and decrease further if we are going to reach target of 50%. [REDACTED] outlined the timeline for the review of SUD, with a legislative proposal due in the first quarter 2022. [REDACTED] outlined the key findings from audits, surveys and recent reports on the implementation of SUD, including: disappointing implementation of NAPs, need for better implementation of IPM, training and certification –are success stories for SUD; gaps in pesticide poisoning and reporting, and a continuing reduction in aerial spraying and good control of aerial spraying. Underlined no decisions taken, in consultation phase, and outlined some policy options under consideration including:

- NAPS – how to make sure these are used better, e.g. with specific requirements or with templates
- IPM – introducing new crop specific guidelines, record keeping
- Targets should they be mandatory? At the moment aspirational
- How can we improve indicators?
- The role of precision agriculture including the use of drones. How to facilitate drones and the contribution to they can make to sustainable use of pesticides and reduced risk
- Limit access to higher risk pesticides? with clearer labelling? Limiting them to professional users? Use of prescription system? Taxation?

[REDACTED] (**EESC Alternate Member**) European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) outlined the main conclusions of the report by the EESC on the Evaluation of SUD.

Main conclusions of the report:

- NAPs have proven to be effective; and
- SUD has raised awareness of all actors involved.

The main shortcomings:

- Main problems identified by EESC remains the lack of professional knowledge. EESC found there is not enough knowledge about how to use pesticides amongst final users but also the bodies checking them.
- The other main issue, coming clearly from all five visits, is the lack of available alternatives to pesticides.

There was a wide range of questions to the panel, covering many of the issues raised in the presentations, including: on improving HRI; on the need for complementary indicators; the role of CAP and SUD - and the need for them to come together; the need for an enabling regulatory environment to foster the use of digital technologies and biopesticides; on the need to invest further in certification and training; and the importance of targeted EU research to support Farm to Fork goals.

(Signed)

[REDACTED]