

# ***Pesticide permitting in Hungary***



Bratislava, 2006  
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# The Clean Air Action Group (CAAG)

[www.levego.hu](http://www.levego.hu)

- founded in 1988
- a national federation of 132 environmental NGOs

**CAAG works mainly on greening:**

- the state budget
- transport
- ambient air
- energy
- chemicals including pesticides, biocides
- urban management and urban development

## Types of activities:

- research
- environmental counselling
- legal aid
- awareness raising
  - press
  - Lélegzet
  - public forums
  - campaigns
- proposals for decision-makers

## International relations

### Member organisation of:

- European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E)
- Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN-EUROPE)
- The International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN)
- Climate Action Network Europe (CAN-Europe)

### Good working relations with:

- Birdlife International, CEE Bankwatch Network, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, WWF
- many national NGOs and other institutions



# Pesticide use in Hungary

- Hungary is an agricultural country, with a strong export economy.
  - 958,000 smallscale farmers, 8,000 large enterprises
- Hungary was a major global manufacturer of pesticides
  - producing 60 of the 200 most important actives in global use (early 1990s, 60,000 tonnes/year active ingredient production: acetochlor, benomyl and thio-carbamate)
  - Production declined until 2000; in 2001, the volume sold was 12,860 tonnes,
    - The most commonly used pesticides in Hungary are: acetochlor, metolachlor and atrazine herbicides; copper, sulphur, carbendazim, mancozeb and captan fungicides; and for soil sterilisation terbufos.

# Pesticide producers in the Hungary in 2001

Cég	Aránya a magyar piacon (%)
BASF	19,1
Novartis*	14,7
Aventis	11,1
DuPont	9,2
Zeneca*	9,0
Nitrokémia	4,7
Bayer	4,6
Summit-Agro	4,2
Monsanto	3,9
Dow	3,4
Rohm and Haas	3,1
Others	13,0
Toral	100,0

\* 2000-ben egyesültek Syngenta AG v név alatt

Hungarian products now account for only 10-12% of the national market.

# Pesticides used in Hungary

Concerns have been raised by certain NGOs and academics over many of the pesticides registered for use in Hungary.

- **Around 400 active ingredient is permitted in Hungary**
- **Scientist concerned that at least 80 should be restricted**

- NGOs feel that the Ministries of Environment and Water and Ministry of Health need to be much more proactive in protecting human health and the environment and are critical of the Ministry of Agriculture for authorising many pesticides without adequate attention to hazards to human health and the environment.
- However, pesticide usage and impacts issues are not really addressed by the public or policy makers in Hungary.

# Environment



- **More than 120 pesticides permitted in Hungary is classified as Hazardous to the environment**
- **Pesticide pollution is not only from agricultural activity but also from chemical industry**
  - ÉMV's Sajóbábony factory has been the target of Greenpeace protests against water pollution, after independent analysis showed several pesticide concentrations much higher than limits.
  - One major accident concerning pesticides occurred in 1998 when the Chinoi factory released cypermethrin into the Danube.
    - The factory admitted only 120 litres (6 kg active ingredient) but measurements showed that it was probably 2,400 litres (120 kg active ingredient). Thousands of dead fish followed the path of contamination



## Environment - water pollution

- The Plant Protection Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences found pesticide residues in the 57,9% of 121 surface and drinking water sample in 2001
- In 2002 and 2003 surface water measurements of the same institute show that 50% of the water samples contained pesticide contamination over the drinking-water limit.
  - The two pesticides that were found in most samples, including in Lake Balaton and the river Danube, were atrazine and acetochlor, at concentrations sometimes 100-1000 higher than permitted.

# Food residues

- ⌘ Before the 90s pesticide contamination was around 2% of sampled food produce
- ⌘ in 1994 after the liberalisation of the pesticide market it increased to 5-6%.
- ⌘ In 1997 residues were found in 16.5% of greenhouse crops, 5.6% exceeded permitted levels and 12.6% contained banned products.
- ⌘ **In 2004 Greenpeace found DTC in lettuce samples, in much higher concentration than it is permitted**

The five most problematic crops for residues in Hungary:  
**lettuce, cucumber, peppers, tomato and table grapes**

# Bad examples

- **Atrazine:** essential use until 2007
- **Captan:** used in households as a general pesticide, produced by Bayer under the name 'Orthocid'. 'Environment friendly' is written on the pack although it is potentially carcinogenic, teratogenic and mutagenic, and classified in PAN North America's database as a Bad Actor substance.
- **Lindane:** was banned in Hungary only in 2003 although as recently as 1998 Budapest VM sold 50 tonnes in Hungary.

# Pesticide permitting

- Since the 50s to sell and to use any pesticide is only possible with a permit from agricultural authorities
- Since 2004 the Hungarian permitting system is Harmonised with the EU legislation
- The Central Service for Plant Protection and Soil Conservation makes opinion on the active ingredients with consulting health authorities
- Since 2004 new stakeholder forum the NEET

# The NEET



- The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development established a Plant Protection Product Permitting Council (NEET) with 9 members
- Members of the NEET:
  - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development,
    - Central Service for Plant Protection and Soil Conservation, (the Hungarian Designated National Authority)
  - Ministry of Environment
  - Ministry of Health
  - One environmental NGO
    - (Clean Air Action Group got elected by the assembly of green NGOs)
  - Three representatives of the plant protection products manufacturers,
  - Plant Protection Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
  - the food safety authority

# The NEET

- Discuss the specific questions of plant protection product use
- Prepares opinion on plant production products permitting legislations
  - *On the revision of 91/414*
  - *On the Pesticide Thematic Strategy*
- *Discuss and propose opinion on permitting plant production products*
- Discuss national issues related to plant production products

# A NEET

## NGOs proposal for issues to be discussed in the NEET

- Revision of the permitted substances for „free use”
- Revision of the permitted active ingredients permitted for integrated pest management (eg. endosulfan).
- The restriction of the three „most problematic” active ingredients atrazine, endosulfan and dichlorvos
- More and more effective residue analysis, especially more measurement for sensitive products (eg. Letucce)
- Measures to be taken to reduce the use of banned active ingredients (currently about the 12% of all uses)
- Propose limit values and monitoring for pesticide residues in surface water

# Activities in NEET

- **Discussion of the new criteria for PPP categories**

In Hungary PPP's have to be categorized with a scoring system or:

- **Category I PPPs: only plant protection engineer expert can use, sell and buy it.**
  - *PPPs: R40 (carcinogenic), R45 (possible carcinogenic), R46 (mutagenic), R49, R61, endocrine disruptors, immunotoxic, neurotoxic...*
- **Category II PPPs: can be used, buy or sell after plant protection course**
  - *PPPs: toxic (T), hazardous to the environment (N), R41, R43, R65*



# Activities in NEET

## Discussion of the new criteria for PPP categories

### Category III:

*Everyone can use it in households*

*PPPs: No worsen classification than Xn „harmful”*

*For all possible household uses a category III PPP must be permitted*

# Hungarian National Opinion

1. The **Lisbon strategy** approved in 2000, with the aim of developing “European innovation and knowledge”, had the objective to make Europe, within a decade, the most competitive region of the world. Following the Dutch proposal, in 2005 (i2010 program), supplementary remarks and precisions were added and the importance of research+development programmes was emphasized. It is obvious that chemical industry is the centre of innovation for PPPs as it has both the financial and personnel conditions. Making industrial applied research unreasonably difficult without professional justifications as well as increasing expenses shall result in decrease of interests, which is in opposition with the demand for improving competitiveness. Such unjustified amendment, influencing the industry, is **the termination of possibility for granting provisional national authorisation, the planned substitution system and the fact that parallel import is not regulated**. The new legislation shall presumably have negative effect on innovation and raise the prices, which, in turn, shall entail the decrease in the competitiveness of agricultural production.

# Activities in NEET

**Discuss the Hungarian National Opinion:**

**- „Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market”:**

# Hungarian National Opinion

1. Hungary does not agree with the termination of possibility for granting **provisional national authorisation**, which, in line with earlier Hungarian legislation of several decades, allowed gradual launching of new, modern PPPs posing, accordingly, less risk to man and the environment, and gave practical experiences before their wide distribution.
2. In order to have clear provisions of **parallel import** and to prevent regular legal disputes and differences in interpretation, Hungary purposefully asks that the EU provides for the parallel import also at the level of regulation.

# Hungarian National Opinion

- 3 Hungary does not agree with the introduction of **substitution system**, as it is worded at present. Propose that the regulation gives details of the operation of the substitution system, since it seems unavoidable that subjective aspects be included in the procedure.
- The reduction of the number of PPPs goes against the principles of market economy, decreases the option of users' choices and increases the risk of resistance development.

In addition, one of the major Community principles, i.e. the free movement of articles, is also hurt: the consumer's right to choose from the products which are otherwise in conformity with the various regulations. The substitution system cancels this right because it restricts the use of products which have been approved by, and met strict criteria.

# Hungarian National Opinion

## 4 Zones for the authorisation of PPPs:

Hungary expresses doubts whether the proposed form of strict zone system would give a solution.

- The system of three zones does not grant flexibility, it is neither scientifically nor practically sound, therefore cannot be accepted.
- At present, the EU has two zone system:
  - NATURA 2000, the system of bio-geographical regions, defining 11 zones in Europe
  - EPPO „Guidance on comparable climates” (September 2005) with 4 zones in Europe.
- Ireland and Hungary or Northern France and South Italy considered as one region.
- Hungary propose that the zones be established in compliance with the EPPO „Guidance on comparable climates”.

# Hungarian National Opinion

5. The draft deals also with **minor uses**, but it does not mention that if industry shows no interest, financial sources should be provided to manage the problems.
6. Thinks the **definitions** are not proper and clear.
7. Propose some addition to the chapter of **data protection**. The draft governs only the data protection of new authorisations.

# The main demand of NGOs

**The mandatory substitution of the most harmful pesticides when safer alternatives are already available**

- As in the biocide directive
- As in REACH, as the European Parliament adopted it at the first reading





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# Thank you for the attention!

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