

**Question for written answer E-003053/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: S-metolachlor: the corn herbicide that contaminates water

S-metolachlor, a herbicide used on corn, is the successor to metolachlor, which is classified as a probable carcinogen and banned in France since 2003.

The third best-selling herbicide produces metabolites (stable compounds resulting from the biochemical transformation of an initial molecule during its degradation) known as ESA-metolachlor, which are polluting practically all surface water in France through run-offs.

The supply of drinking water is therefore affected, as this water is often collected from watercourses. This pollutant has a potential endocrine disrupting effect on the thyroid and exposes farmers to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (cancer of the lymphatic system). It is also toxic to aquatic organisms.

In addition to reducing the doses used and respecting sensitive areas, measures already recommended by the producer of S-metolachlor and certain agro-ecological techniques, such as the establishment of grass strips along streams, can reduce pollution.

1. Is the Commission aware of any specific alternatives that could reduce the use of this product?
2. Are drinking water suppliers, whose expertise is invaluable, consulted when pesticides are authorised or renewed?
3. Does the Commission plan to make them privileged partners with a view to reducing the pollution of our waters by pesticides and nitrates?