

Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food & the Marine

5th July 2023

The Committee's [Political Contribution on COM\(2022\)305](#) - *Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the sustainable use of plant protection products and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.*

Thank you, Chairman. I am joined today by Anne-Marie Dillon, Senior Inspector.

I would like to thank the Chairman and Committee members for inviting us here today to discuss the Committee's contribution on the EU Commission's proposal for a Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation to replace the existing Sustainable Use Directive.

As you know the proposal was published by the EU Commission on the 22nd of June 2022 and forms one of the 27 actions outlined in the Farm to Fork Strategy, namely, to revise the Sustainable Use Directive.

Since our last meeting with you and Committee members on this topic in November 2022, the EU Council negotiations of this regulatory proposal have continued and there have been 7 Council Working Group meetings during the Swedish Presidency. Parallel discussions are also on-going in Parliament with committee and plenary votes scheduled to take place later this year.

Ireland supported the Council Decision in December 2022, asking the Commission for additional information to complement their initial impact assessment on the proposal with a focus on food and feed security, administrative burden, availability of alternatives to chemical pesticides and sensitive areas. The Commission has just

published this additional information today. This report will now be considered in detail as part of the negotiations during the Spanish Presidency of the EU Council.

We recognise the importance of the issues highlighted in your Committee's contribution, namely the need for further information on the impact of aspects of the proposal, the need for viable alternatives, concerns about the proposal for sensitive areas and implementation of Integrated Pest Management.

DAFM also held a public consultation in respect of the regulatory proposal. More than 300 submissions were received and indeed some of the issues outlined in your contribution have also been raised in the public consultation.

The issues you have raised coupled with the outcome of the public consultation will continue to help inform our position as we engage in the ongoing EU Council negotiations.

The Department has also commissioned research, which Teagasc has commenced, on the availability and feasibility of non-chemical alternative methods and on the implementation of the proposed Integrated Pest Management requirements including consideration of crop specific rules for the main crops in Ireland.

While Ireland supports the overall objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the impact of any regulatory changes requires detailed consideration. Therefore, we will work constructively with the other MS's and the Presidency in considering the Commission's report and actively engage in further discussions on all chapters of the regulatory proposal.

The Department will continue its engagement with stakeholders and this committee as this file progresses.

Anne-Marie and I are happy to answer any further queries which the Committee may have.