



To the Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the
Committees on Health, Environment and Agriculture
Parliament of Denmark
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Honorable Members,

Allow me to bring to your attention an issue of the utmost importance for the livelihoods, health and happiness of your constituents that requires immediate action both at European Union and Member States level, namely increasing the availability of biological low-risk plant protection products (PPPs). These are viable alternatives to traditional and often hazardous pesticides, while contributing to sustainable agriculture and benefitting both public health and the environment. On 15 February 2017, the European Parliament adopted with near unanimity a Resolution urging the European Commission to limitedly amend Regulation 1107/2009 so as to facilitate market access for biological low-risk PPPs. In disregard to the European Parliament's request, the Commission launched a full review of the Regulation under the 'REFIT' programme, an exercise that will take many years to complete.

On 5 October 2017, I had the privilege to chair an informal dinner for the Members of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed and officials from the Permanent Representations. Please find enclosed my letter to the European Parliament reporting on this event (Attachment 1). Attached, you can also find the speech of IBMA (International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association) Executive Director Mr David Cary (Attachment 2) and an overview of instances where the Commission adapted Regulations within short time periods following European Parliament Resolutions (Attachment 3). This demonstrates that when there is political will, there is a regulatory way, as a Belgian diplomat remarked during the event. Indeed, the Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's ENVI Committee Mr Pavel Poc stated in a [video message](#) that while 1107/2009 needs to be modernized, this cannot be done at the expense of public health and the environment. "European constituencies – precisely today and precisely when public health is at stake – deserve and require that politics set priorities."

Currently, of the 493 active substances approved in the European Union, 77 chemical ones are candidates for substitution. However, in the absence of authorised alternatives caused by the current regulatory framework, they remain on the market. European farmers need alternatives to chemical pesticides. SMEs that drive innovation and create jobs need support in a competitive market. European consumers need food that is produced in a sustainable manner. According to the UN, each year around 200 000 people die from acute pesticide poisoning, while exposure to chemical pesticides is linked to cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, hormone disruption, developmental disorders and sterility. How many more people will die or will have their health severely damaged before the REFIT exercise is over? Action must be taken *now*, otherwise future generations will hold us responsible.

Honorable Members, may I call on you to urge your Governments to take leadership on this urgent matter. I remain at your disposal for any further consultation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Mark Eyskens', written over a horizontal line.

Prof Mark Eyskens
Chairman, PA International Foundation
Former Prime Minister of Belgium

Encl.:

- Attachment 1: Letter to the Members of the ENVI Committee of 10 October 2017;
- Attachment 2: Speech of Mr David Cary on 5 October 2017;
- Attachment 3: Overview of European Commission action following European Parliament Resolutions.