# Resolution on the draft Commission implementing decision renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean MON 89788 (MON-89788-1) pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council

2019/2857(RSP) - 14/11/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 448 votes to 185, with 30 abstentions, a resolution objecting to the draft Commission implementing decision renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean MON 89788 (MON-89788-1) pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Commission Decision 2008/933/EC authorised the placing on the market of food and feed containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean MON 89788 ('soybean MON 89788').

On 20 November 2017, the authorisation holder, Monsanto Europe S.A./N.V., on behalf of Monsanto Company, submitted to the Commission an application for the renewal of that authorisation.

***Member State comments***

Many Member States expressed concern over the quality of the post-market environmental monitoring (PMEM) plan, stating, inter alia, that it does not fully meet the objectives set out in Annex VII to Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Member States also commented generally that the monitoring of soybean MON 89788 is inadequate, that it does not provide any sound data to support the conclusion that there has been no adverse health or environmental effects with the import and use of soybean MON 89788 and that it does not provide lessons pertinent to the safety of its use for animal or human consumption.

Moreover, GM soybean, when it is cultivated in countries such as Brazil and Argentina, is a key driver of large-scale deforestation.

***Lack of assessment of glyphosate residues and metabolites***

Recalling that soybean MON 89788 has been made tolerant to glyphosate-based herbicides, Members noted that a number of studies show that herbicide-tolerant GM crops result in a higher use of those herbicides, in large part because of the emergence of herbicide-tolerant weeds. As a consequence, it has to be expected that crops of soybean MON 89788 will be exposed to both higher and repeated doses of glyphosate which will potentially lead to a higher quantity of residues in the harvest. In addition, questions remain about the carcinogenicity of glyphosate.

Members also raised the issue of the lack of maximum residue limits (MRLs) and related controls.

***Undemocratic decision-making***

Members stressed that the Commission recognised the fact that GMO authorisation decisions continue to be adopted by the Commission without a qualified majority of Member States in favour, which is very much the exception for product authorisations as a whole but has become the norm for decision-making on GM food and feed authorisations, is problematic. That practice has, on several occasions, been deplored by the Commission President as not being democratic.

On the basis of these comments, Parliament called on the Commission:

- to withdraw its draft implementing decision;

- in the meantime, to stop authorising GMOs when no opinion is delivered by Member States in the Appeal Committee, whether for cultivation or for food and feed uses, in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011;

- not to authorise herbicide-tolerant GM crops until the health risks associated with the residues have been comprehensively investigated on a case-by-case basis, which requires a full assessment of the residues from spraying the GM crops with complementary herbicides, their metabolites and any combinatorial effects;

- to fully integrate the risk assessment of the application of complementary herbicides and their residues into the risk assessment of herbicide-tolerant GM plants, regardless of whether the GM plant concerned is to be cultivated in the Union or is for import into the Union for food and feed uses;

- not to authorise the import for food or feed uses of any GM plant which has been made tolerant to a herbicide-active substance that is not authorised for use in the Union.

Parliament reiterated its commitment to advancing work on the Commission proposal amending Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

***Compliance with international obligations***

Parliament reiterated its concern that the Union's high dependence on imports of animal feed in the form of soybeans causes deforestation in third countries. It called on the Commission not to authorise the import of GM soybeans unless it can be clearly demonstrated that their cultivation did not contribute, directly or indirectly, to deforestation.

In this context, the Commission is urged to treat the Union's obligations under international agreements, such as the Paris Climate Agreement, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and to give them the weight they deserve, as well as communicating on how they have been taken into account in the decision-making process.