

EN

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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(20.3.2026)

Under the Soil Monitoring Law¹, the Commission will establish an indicative list of soil contaminants including pesticides and their metabolites which Member States will take into account when setting the soil contaminants to be monitored. The cited study will be considered in this exercise.

Decisions on the approval of active substances in plant protection products are based on a scientific risk assessment considering effects on human health and the environment, including soil organisms, in accordance with criteria set in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009². The Commission mandated the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in June 2024³ to review the risk assessment methodology for non-target arthropods other than bees, in-soil organisms and non-target terrestrial plants. EFSA clarified procedural aspects, timelines, deliverables and methodologies⁴.

Under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the EU and all Member States committed to reduce the risk from pesticides on biodiversity by at least half by 2030.

Additional measures are set through the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD)⁵, which requires farmers to apply the principles of integrated pest management (IPM), prioritising preventive measures and natural pest control before chemicals as a last resort. Member States must adopt national action plans for reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment including soils.

Horizon Europe, notably the Mission Soil⁶ and Cluster 6⁷, funds research and innovation and Living Labs (e.g. SoilRes⁸ and MultiSoil⁹) that apply IPM, reduce the use and risks of pesticides, and improve soil health and biodiversity, with further funding opportunities in the Work Programme 2026–2027¹⁰.

¹ Directive (EU) 2025/2360 of the European Parliament and of the Council on soil monitoring and resilience, OJ L, 2025/2360, 26.11.2025.

² Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.

³ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2025-00658?search=terrestrial+ecotoxicology>.

⁴ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2025.EN-9216>.

⁵ Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, pp. 71–86.

⁶ Mission Soil ‘A Soil Deal for Europe’, <https://mission-soil-platform.ec.europa.eu/>.

⁷ Cluster 6 ‘Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment’, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-6-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_en.

⁸ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101218994>.

⁹ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101218951>.

¹⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/calls-for-proposals>.