EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Mr Claude BARTOLONE*
*President of the*
*Assemblée nationale*
*Palais Bourbon*
*126, rue de l'Université*
*F – 75007 PARIS*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Assemblée nationale for its Opinion on endocrine disruptors.*

*The Commission welcomes the detailed observations and suggestions made by the Assemblée nationale and shares its views regarding the need to develop criteria for defining endocrine disruptors.*

*The Commission can assure the Assemblée nationale that it takes the risk to humans and to the environment from exposure to endocrine disruptors very seriously.*

*Already in 1999, the Commission adopted a Community Strategy for Endocrine Disruptors*[1] *aiming at increasing the understanding of endocrine disruption, making information available to the public, developing test methods to identify endocrine disruptors and addressing the risks arising from them.*

*Significant progress has since been achieved in protecting human health and the environment from endocrine disruptors.*

*The European Union introduced specific legislative obligations linked to endocrine disruptors in legislation governing water in 2000*[2]*, industrial chemicals in 2006*[3]*, plant protection products in 2009*[4] *and biocides in 2012*[5]*. In this legislation, the EU considered that endocrine*

[1] COM(1999) 706 final
[2] Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (Water Framework Directive)
[3] Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC
[4] Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC.

*disruptors pose similar regulatory concern as that of carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxicants and introduced a policy of preferably phasing them out or strictly controlling the risks arising from exposure to those substances where continued use can be justified. The Commission proposed specific provisions on endocrine disruptors also in the proposal for a Regulation on Medical Devices[6] which is now being discussed by the European Parliament and the Council. In addition to the adaptation of the regulatory framework, twelve test methods for the evaluation of chemicals for endocrine disruption and a guidance document on standardised test methods for the evaluation of chemicals for endocrine disruption were developed by the OECD and can be used on a systematic basis to identify endocrine disruptors[7].*

*In addition, in light of the progress achieved under the Strategy over the last 15 years and of the actions on endocrine disruptors agreed under the 7th Environment Action Programme[8], the Commission is currently reviewing and potentially revising the 1999 Strategy. The Opinion by the Assemblée nationale will be taken into consideration in this process.*

*The Commission is committed to developing harmonised scientific criteria for the identification of endocrine disruptors as mandated by the legislation on plant protection products and biocides and by the 7th Environment Action Programme. An impact assessment which aims at evaluating impacts of different options for these criteria and of their implementation in the sectorial legislation is to be carried out. As part of the impact assessment, a public consultation will be launched.*

*In addition, the Commission would like to recall that endocrine disruptors in plant protection and biocidal products are currently regulated as both pieces of legislation[4,5] provide for the application of interim criteria which are protective to the consumer and to the environment.*

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the concerns and issues raised by the Assemblée nationale and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič*
*Vice-President*

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[5] Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products

[6] COM(2012) 542 final

[7] http://www.oecd.org/env/ehs/testing/oecdworkrelatedtoendocrinedisrupters.htm

[8] Decision No 1386/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 'Living well, within the limits of the planet', OJ L 354, 28.12.2003, p. 171-200.