

**Question for written answer E-009044/2011  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**

Subject: Glyphosate

I refer to Commissioner Dalli's response of 4 August 2011 to my letter of 4 July 2011 about my constituent Claire Robinson's concern over the delayed glyphosate review scheduled for 2015. Commissioner Dalli says of the Earth Open Source and other reports about the toxicity of glyphosate: 'So far, these reports did not reveal any possible risks from the use of glyphosate in plant protection products which were not taken into account at the initial approval in 2002'.

However, it is this very approval that is challenged in the Earth Open Source report, of which Claire Robinson is a co-author. Among other unscientific practices, the rapporteur Germany, in its draft assessment report that formed the basis of glyphosate's approval in 2002, minimised and dismissed findings of birth defects in lab animals in the industry's own studies. It:

- redefined unossified sternebrae malformations in lab animals as 'rather a developmental variation than a malformation' – against the clear advice of a recognized authority, *The Handbook of Skeletal Toxicology*, that this is a malformation;
- repeatedly resorted to 'historical control data', which will have an artificially wide range of variability, to 'disappear' findings of malformations in exposed groups of animals when compared with concurrent controls;
- wrongly claimed that malformations were only found at high, maternally toxic doses that poisoned the mother, when they were actually found at lower doses;
- dismissed findings of heart malformations in one study on the grounds that no other types of malformation were found in this particular study;
- dismissed malformations on the basis that their consequences were 'equivocal';
- dismissed statistically significant findings of malformations at lower-than-highest doses as non-treatment-related and irrelevant;
- dismissed statistically significant findings of malformations at lower-than-highest doses in the industry's own studies in setting the acceptable daily intake or 'safe level' for glyphosate exposure.

For these and many other reasons, Claire Robinson and Earth Open Source say that the current approval of glyphosate has wrongly dismissed findings of clear harm from glyphosate and is scientifically unsound. They say it is not enough to claim that these findings have been 'taken into account' when their meaning has simply been ignored or dismissed.

Can the Commission provide scientific justifications for the above practices by Germany?