

Call for Papers

The Science and Politics of Glyphosate: A One-Day Workshop on the most-applied Pesticide in the World

Thursday June 6th, 2019

Pavilion (*Paviljoen*) Serre
Erasmus University Rotterdam
Rotterdam, The Netherlands

This workshop brings together academics, scientists and policymakers to explore the controversial case of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup® and several other commercial broad-spectrum systemic herbicides. In light of the 2015 International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) monograph classifying glyphosate as a probable carcinogen, a flood of public discussion surrounding the safety and sustainability of this chemical has been unleashed. The debate has been partly fueled by the fact that glyphosate continues to be authorized by most countries around the world and, although not without their own controversies, influential regulatory agencies such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently maintain the relative safety of glyphosate. The monograph by IARC, which is the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization (WHO), has triggered a number of processes to challenge the legality of glyphosate, and in some cases, has been used as evidence in trials against the manufacturer. In the United States, for example, there are currently over 5,000 open cases by farmers and residents against Monsanto (now a subsidiary of Bayer) for health harms related to glyphosate; and in a recent case in San Francisco, a jury awarded a \$289 million verdict to a groundskeeper who contracted cancer after being exposed to the chemical for decades, which Bayer will appeal.

The dissensus among prominent scientific bodies complicates straightforward policy recommendations and regulatory action. Central to this debate, are not only scientific questions of fact-finding, but also the social questions of which facts and studies carry weight, and which do not. Law, policy, and corporate influence may be determinative in coproducing and providing legitimacy to the scientific methods through framing and selecting scientific questions and procedures. Questions of conflict of interest have been raised by experts as well as investigative journalists regarding the processes leading regulatory agencies' findings.

Such considerations raise systemic questions regarding the regulatory infrastructure through which chemical substances such as glyphosate are authorized: What interests are represented in the process? Are there systemic conflicts of interest? How does the type and provenance of studies reviewed or omitted affect regulatory outcomes? What would a "firewall" between industry-funded science and policy look like? As the mandate of public regulatory bodies is to protect the public interest, is this reflected in procedures, aims, and independent science reviewed by these regulatory agencies? And, in what ways, if any, are private interests protected by the rules, procedures and practices of regulatory agencies? What happens when regulatory bodies cease to have the power to regulate companies and chemicals in protection of the public interest, and instead become partners working together with the very industries they were formed to regulate? Is there an onus of proving safety or is the regime assuming safety of chemicals? More generally, what are the rules that shape the *de facto* burden of proof in the development and use of chemicals? And finally, what needs to happen politically to rehabilitate environmental regulatory institutions so that they can fulfill their mission to protect public health?

Using glyphosate as a case study of these larger issues, we invite papers addressing any of the proposed topics and related ones, from scientific and/or social science/law perspectives.

Tentative Schedule:

10:00-10:30 Coffee and pastries

10:30-10:45 Welcome: Director of the Erasmus Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity Initiative Prof. Dr. Martin de Jong

10:45-11:30 **Keynote: Prof. Dr. Sheila Jasanoff** (Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Harvard Kennedy School)

11:30-12:30 Roundtable on the Interrelation of Glyphosate Science and Policy

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 Panel 1 (Science)

15:00-15:15 Break

15:15-16:15 Panel 2 (Law & Politics)

16:15-17:00 Keynote/Wrap-up

17:00 Drinks and Networking

The workshop is free of charge. Lunch and refreshments are included. Registration is required via www.eur.nl/en/doip

Abstract submissions:

We invite submission of abstracts (600-800 words with author bio) by **March 28, 2019**.

Notice of acceptance will be made April 5.

Please send submissions or questions with the subject "glyphosate" to: hendlin@esphil.eur.nl

Organizing Committee

Professor Alessandra Arcuri, Erasmus School of Law & Assistant Professor Yogi Hendlin, Erasmus School of Philosophy

The Workshop is a joint initiative with funding provided by the [Erasmus Initiative of Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity](#) & [The Erasmus Institute of Public Knowledge](#)