

Sri Lanka's President Bans Glyphosate Nationwide to Protect the Health of the People

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In one of his first official acts, Sri Lanka's newly elected president, Maithripala Sirisena, announced that his country's importation of the world's most used herbicide, glyphosate, was to be banned immediately and that the release of stocks already in the country was to be halted as well.

As noted by the Sustainable Pulse web site, Sirisena is a farmer and former Sri Lankan health minister. When announcing his decision, he said the chemical herbicide was responsible for a growing number of chronic kidney disease patients in the country, adding that the decision would further protect the country's farming community.

In Sri Lanka, chronic kidney disease now affects some 15 percent of the working-age population in the country's northern regions. That amounts to a total of around 400,000 patients. Some 20,000 people die annually of the illness, *Sustainable Pulse* reported.

The website added that the Sri Lankan ban [follows a pair of scientific studies](#) led by Dr. Channa Sudath Jayasumana that found that drinking water from abandoned wells contained concentrations of glyphosate and metals that were much higher. In addition, the studies indicated that spraying glyphosate increased the risk of deadly kidney disease by as much as five-fold.

"Outraged" over the truth

In addition, Sirisena's ban comes on the heels of a recent World Health Organization announcement that [glyphosate is a likely human carcinogen](#).

As reported by *GM Watch*:

The assessment by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) of glyphosate, which is used in herbicides with estimated annual sales of USD 6 Billion, will be of special concern to Monsanto, the company that brought [glyphosate](#) to market under the trade name Roundup in the 1970s.

As further noted by PBS, use of glyphosate has soared over the last 20 years and has received approval for use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency despite lingering questions about its safety. In addition, rampant use of the chemical has been criticized because of the rise in super weeds, which are weeds that are becoming resistant to glyphosate applications.

Naturally, biotech giant Monsanto – original developer and manufacturer of glyphosate – has launched a broadside against the IARC in [press release](#). The company says it was “outraged” by the IARC’s conclusions.

“We are outraged with this assessment,” said Dr. Robb Fraley, Monsanto’s Chief Technology Officer. “This conclusion is inconsistent with the decades of ongoing comprehensive safety reviews by the leading regulatory authorities around the world that have concluded that all labeled uses of glyphosate are safe for human [health](#). This result was reached by selective ‘cherry picking’ of data and is a clear example of agenda-driven bias.”

Glyphosate’s history of use and abuse

This is not true. We have documented [repeatedly](#) that glyphosate has been [identified](#) as causing [toxicity](#) in a variety of [circumstances](#) surrounding its use.

As we [also reported](#), Sri Lanka banned the sale of glyphosate herbicides in March 2014, but that decision was eventually overturned a few months later following a review.

The latest decision by Sri Lanka’s new president, however, will have a huge significance following the latest WHO report on glyphosate.

With Sirisena’s decision, [Sri Lanka](#) has become the second country after El Salvador in 2013 to ban the sale and use of glyphosate herbicides. El Salvador’s decision was also based on a higher-than-average occurrence of kidney disease associated with the chemical’s use.

Bermuda, meanwhile, has placed a temporary ban on the importation of glyphosate-containing chemicals and is reviewing the issue.

Monsanto is demanding a retraction of the IARC’s findings, which is typical; [the company’s operatives tend to bully](#) scientists and academics who dare to report findings that the biotech giant’s products are killing people.

Does Sri Lanka’s leader know something President Obama doesn’t? It appears pretty obvious that he does.

Sources:

<http://sustainablepulse.com>

<http://www.gmoEvidence.com>

<http://www.pbs.org>

<http://news.monsanto.com>

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