

How the European Commission involved stakeholders and managed conflicts of interest in reviewing the 'specific protection goals' for assessing environmental risks of pesticides

Case 1402/2020/TE - Opened on 15/09/2020 - Decision on 08/11/2021 - Institution concerned European Commission (No further inquiries justified) |

The complaint concerned a review by the European Commission of the criteria for assessing environmental risks in pesticides, the 'specific protection goals'. In particular, the complainant was concerned with the new method being proposed and alleged that there are conflicts of interest with the experts involved in devising this method.

The Ombudsman found that the Commission should have required one of the experts involved to submit a 'declaration of interests', given the expert's role in the process, but that the Commission has since rectified this. The Ombudsman urged the Commission to require declarations of interest from experts invited in their personal capacity to future events, and to assess and publish such declarations.