

# Background information to my Open Letter to the National Assembly for Wales about PISA tests and Ecocide

Rebecca Evans

AM for Gower

Wednesday, 9 November 2016

Dear Rebecca

I realise that the background to my document yesterday would not be clear to individuals because it has not been aired in the UK Media. Monsanto and the Glyphosate Task Force (representing industry) claim that glyphosate is safe for humans and the environment. The WHO International Agency for Research into Cancer says it is carcinogenic in humans. The German Rapporteur Member State's Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), EFSA and the British Parliament claim it is not carcinogenic. But the German Parliament has shown that the BfR was using industry statistics. It says that BfR was "endangering the population" by an "an intentional falsification of the content of scientific studies" and that "the fact that the results of the industrial studies were so blindly trusted is scandalous".

Biocide: is a chemical that kills life. Agrochemical companies and farmers call them Plant Protection Products. On page 4-5: The total weight of pesticides (herbicides and desiccants, fungicides, growth regulators, molluscicides and repellents, insecticides and seed treatments) applied to farmland in the UK in 2014 was in excess of 16,000 tonnes. The graphs apply to pesticides on oil seed rape 1988-2014. It shows that farmers have massively increased the use of chemicals on crops. We are eating non-organic food that has been poisoned with chemical residues. (see *Our Daily Poison: From Pesticides to Packaging, How Chemicals Have Contaminated the Food Chain and Are Making Us Sick* by Marie-Monique Robin, an award-winning French journalist and filmmaker and author of the above book.)

Biodiversity: This is short for biological diversity. This is the term for the number and variety of plants, animals and other organisms that exist on earth. It ranges from large mammals to microscopic organisms that breakdown and re-cycle all our waste products. The charity 'Buglife' calls these 'the small things

that run the world." They are an essential component of nature and they ensure the survival of human species by providing food, fuel, shelter, medicines and other resources to mankind. In 2015 scientists calculated the average rate of vertebrate extinctions over the last century and compared it with the background rate of losses. They estimated it to be up to 114 times the background rate. The authors said that this rate of losses of biodiversity indicated that a sixth mass extinction is already underway. Loss of biodiversity is the most urgent of the environmental problems.

**Ecocide:** This is the term for the destruction of biodiversity and the environment. The International Monsanto Tribunal was held in The Hague (October 14-16 2016). This was a preliminary trial brought by civil society against Monsanto. Five judges heard witnesses and are at present deliberating. They are likely to recommend that Ecocide becomes a crime against humanity for which individuals and countries can be prosecuted in the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

The UK, the Republic of Ireland and the US have lost more biodiversity over the centuries through use of man-made chemicals. It is possible that they could appear in the International Criminal Court if nothing is done to stop the amount of chemicals used by farmers. The UK State of Nature 2016 showed that:  
UK 165 species are considered critically endangered and likely to go extinct.  
England 109 species are critically endangered and likely to go extinct.  
Scotland 65 species are critically endangered and are likely to go extinct.  
Northern Ireland 45 species are critically endangered and likely to go extinct.  
Wales 41 species are critically endangered and likely to go extinct.

Humans need invertebrates; without them they cannot survive  
Prof E.O. Wilson the eminent field entomologist from Harvard said: "The one process now going on that will take millions of years to correct is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly our descendants are least likely to forgive us."

**Genocide:** This is the term for the killing of people for no reason other than their race (as in the massacres in Ruanda). Killing of people can either be done by weapons, or by chemicals, as in Vietnam War when US planes sprayed Agent Orange to kill off vegetation. However, Agent Orange also poisoned the

Vietnamese, who more than 40 years on are suffering the human legacy of birth defects and cancers caused by the herbicide. Glyphosate is now being sprayed by the US Military on coca crops in Columbia. The citizens of Columbia complain that it is causing birth defects in their children and cancers.

The situation in Swansea with the indiscriminate use of Roundup and other pesticides

Between 2010 when we wrote our two photo-journals and 2016 we have had massive biodiversity losses in our small nature reserve. Bumblebees, butterflies, moths, bush crickets, spiders, dragonflies, ladybirds, solitary bees, hoverflies, bats, beetles, shield bugs and many other small creatures have all but disappeared.

If this is happening to these species, what is happening to our children and to us? Glyphosate was found to be present in samples of water (river and tap water) taken in August 2013 and sent to a laboratory in Leipzig, Germany. The level of glyphosate in a Welsh river draining from areas of Japanese knotweed spraying was 190 parts per trillion (ppt) and in local tap water was 30 ppt. These were of the order of concentrations found in a laboratory study in 2013 that showed that breast cancer cell proliferation is accelerated by glyphosate in extremely low concentrations. Analysis in local tap water in August 2014 revealed a 10-fold increase since August 2013: from 30 ppt to 300 ppt.

Monsanto's glyphosate Roundup patent expired in 2000

Many companies now manufacture glyphosate with their own secret formulation. Formulants are chemicals that allow glyphosate to penetrate the plant. Roundup is Monsanto's formulated glyphosate. Scientists have found that formulated products are up to 100,000 more toxic to humans than glyphosate, the active ingredient. But the Regulatory Authorities in Europe only measure plain glyphosate. In 2012 the Chemicals Regulation Directorate approved 155 different glyphosate products for amateur use and 195 for professional use.

Toxicity of glyphosate to humans

Monsanto claims on the label that glyphosate is only toxic to plants, fungi and bacteria, not humans or other animals. But humans absorb nutrients through our gut microbiome, which consists of trillions of bacteria in our gut. Monsanto

bought glyphosate as a compound that was patented as a chelating agent for cleaning boilers: it did this by extracting minerals such as manganese, copper, zinc, molybdenum etc. These minerals are essential to making amino acids that are the building blocks of life. Glyphosate kills off beneficial bacteria and allows toxic ones such as Clostridium to flourish.

German Parliament said the German Member State BfR had used fraudulent science, so why is the British Government still supporting glyphosate as not being a carcinogen?

The Report says that BfR stands "accused of endangering the population" and shows BfR director Prof Andreas Hensel facing questions from experts before the German Parliamentary committee for food and agriculture. The BfR claimed that there were no signs of cancer in the animal studies. They dismissed five studies of malignant lymphoma in mice by statistical manipulation. One of the experts, Prof Dr Eberhard Greiser, a retired epidemiologist at the University of Bremen, says of BfR's actions, "I'd say this is an intentional falsification of the content of scientific studies." And the fact that the results of the industrial studies were so blindly trusted is scandalous.

Monsanto's sealed secret studies from the US EPA obtained under Freedom of Information

US Scientist Anthony Samsel analysed Monsanto's sealed secret long-term studies (15,000-20,000 pages) from the US EPA (on mice, rats, rabbit and beagles) that had radiocarbon studies that demonstrated glyphosate had been detected in every organ of the body. Monsanto knew that glyphosate was carcinogenic from the 1970s. An unpublished study on albino rats in 1990 also showed that glyphosate entered the eye and caused cataracts and tissue damage.

I have lived in Wales since 1969 and served in the NHS Hospitals in Wales for 32 years. It is very distressing to see the NHS in Wales so overburdened with chronic diseases, particularly psychiatric illnesses in young people, and cancers many of which are caused by man-made chemicals.

Human Rights Lawyers in the International Monsanto Tribunal say that people have a Right to Information. Whitehall and the London Media have violated

those rights. I hope that the press in Wales and Scotland will not deny us information.

Yours sincerely

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