

Greens welcome EU decision to investigate Bayer-Monsanto merger



22 August 2017

The Green Party has welcomed the announcement of a detailed investigation into the implications for competition in the seed and pesticides markets of a merger between agribusiness giants Bayer and Monsanto [1].

The investigation was opened today by Margrethe Vestager, the European commissioner for competition.

Green MEP Molly Scott Cato, together with other MEPS, launched a petition to block the merger in 2016 [2].

Dr Scott Cato, who sits on both the Economics and Agriculture committees in the European Parliament, said:

“It’s clear from the commission’s initial review of the potential merger that they share our concerns, as Greens, about risks of further consolidation in the market for seeds and pesticides. What is surprising is that this has not led them to reject the proposed merger at this stage. We are convinced that giving more power to agribusiness will only impoverish EU farmers further. It is the EU’s responsibility to protect its farmers against the power of the agro-chemical companies, and only a rejection of the merger can achieve this.

“We have seen that Commissioner Vestager has the courage to act on market abuse by corporations in the information and financial sectors, but nothing could be more important than controlling the power a small number of companies have over our food supply. This merger can only further undermine the livelihoods of Europe’s farmers and we call on the commission to follow the logic of their own review and refuse to grant permission for the merger.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-monsanto-m-a-bayer-eu-idUSKCN1B21GJ>
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/c815119c-6f4f-11e6-9ac1-1055824ca907>

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Green Party: Ford's scrappage scheme will only clean up its own image

The Green Party has responded to news Ford has launched a diesel scrappage scheme [1], saying what is really needed to clean up the UK's air is a proper plan from the Government including a national scrappage scheme and investment in public transport, walking and cycling.

The Government's clean air strategy, announced in July this year, did not include a scrappage scheme to help people get rid of their dirty diesel vehicles [2].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"We shouldn't put our health in the hands of car makers or rely on their altruism to have a right to clean air. Any scrappage is welcome, but Ford's scheme doesn't go far enough for long enough to make a real difference to much more than the company's own image.

"Instead of the scatter gun schemes we are seeing at the moment, there must be a coherent plan from the Government to clean up our toxic air including a national scrappage scheme to help people get rid of their dirty diesel vehicles, as well as investment in public transport, walking and cycling."

Notes:

1. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-41005208?ocid=socialflow_twitter&ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbcnews&ns_source=twitter
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jul/26/governments-air-quality-plan-is-cynical-headline-grabbing-say-critics>



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New position paper on trade confirms 'cake-and-eat-it' approach to Brexit



21 August 2017

Molly Scott Cato MEP, Green Party Brexit spokesperson, has responded to a new government position paper published today on its negotiating approach to 'goods on the market' [1]. The paper seeks to ensure 'the freest and most frictionless trade possible in goods and services' and provide exporters and businesses with confidence to plan ahead.

Dr Scott Cato was dismissive of the government's approach:

"Talk of a 'smooth and orderly' withdrawal from the EU will be fantasy if it involves leaving the single market and customs union. My discussions with businesses have made clear that remaining in both are seen as key to the health of the British economy and protecting jobs, something the CBI also recognise, though secretary of State for Business, Greg Clark, has his head in the sand on this.

"The problems the government is seeking to address in this paper demonstrate exactly the reasons the single market was first established – to allow unrestricted trade across the EU and avoid unnecessary duplication of compliance activities. Now the Tories, who supported the creation of the single market for these reasons in the first place, want to re-invent the same thing outside the EU.

This is the have-your-cake-and-eat-It approach to Brexit we have come to expect from both the Tories and Labour. But the EU27, rightly, can't accept the UK enjoying the benefits of the single market and customs union without being members."

"This is also another attempt to lead the EU where they have consistently refused to go: to discuss our future relationship ahead of resolving matters such as the question of the Irish border, the rights of EU citizens living in the UK and a divorce settlement."

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/position-papers-published-ahead-of-round-three-negotiations>

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[Green Party responds to sale of Green](#)

Investment Bank



18 August 2017

The Green Party has responded to the sale of the Green Investment Bank to Australian firm Macquarie, which was announced today [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“The completion of this sale is disastrous news for everyone who cares about the future of renewable energy. This was a bad deal for the taxpayer and a bad deal for the planet. In 2016, the GIB started to make a profit and it was set to deliver an annual return of 10 per cent.

“The Government was repeatedly warned that selling the GIB to Macquarie could result in asset-stripping and leave the bank unfit for purpose. The sale means taxpayers no longer have a say if this turns out to be true.

“As we grapple with soaring temperatures and a climate change denier in the White House we need to be investing in green energy, not flogging off our future security to the highest bidder.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.ft.com/content/e018d83a-835f-11e7-a4ce-15b2513cb3ff>

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Green Party responds to Barcelona attack



17 August 2017

Responding to the terror attack in Barcelona, Co-Leader of the Green Party Caroline Lucas said:

“We send thoughts and deepest sympathies to all those who have been affected by the terror attack in Barcelona. This was a monstrous act targeted at people who were out enjoying life in a joyful city. Our response to today's

events must be inspired by a desire to make the world a better place, not a thirst for revenge.”

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