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#TheGoodPestManager

Urban rat control in Europe

Summary of responses from
national pest control associations

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The 1998 European Directive on Biocides replaced by a UE regulation in 2012 subjects to an evaluation process for biocides including rodenticides to authorize their marketing in the EU.

The next product authorisation renewal of anticoagulant rodenticides is scheduled for 2024. The anticoagulant rodenticide active substances are considered candidate substances for substitution.

In anticipation of this re-evaluation process, it is necessary to advance in the study of alternatives to anticoagulants so that they can be evaluated in terms of efficacy, safety and humaneness.

The German Environmental Agency (UBA) has initiated an e-consultation with the Member States to find out what the situation of rat control is in urban areas, mainly in the sewage system. This consultation was made in the context of the 'NoCheRo' Project whose objective is to establish a certification scheme so that non-chemical alternatives to rodent control can be evaluated taking into consideration aspects related to animal welfare, certification systems; one of the candidate systems being traps.

The points included below are therefore a summary of the responses given for the purpose of answering the abovementioned e-consultation.

Key points coming out of the consultation are as follow:

- In almost all countries the treatment with **anticoagulant rodenticides is the main tool to control rat populations**. This is due to their high level of efficacy especially in city environment where the rodent pressure is high. In that case, traps are not an alternative.
- The use of anticoagulant rodenticides is subject to special **risk mitigation measures, prohibitions and use restrictions**.
- **Traps** (live-catch traps, snap traps and glue-traps, etc.) are viewed **unanimously** as an alternative to anticoagulant rodenticides, **only in cases where the level infestation is very low** or they are used when the use of rodenticides is prohibited to avoid secondary contamination (e.g., food industry).
- In addition to economic reasons, there are currently **no accreditations or certifications** on the traps that guarantee their efficacy, safety and **minimize animal suffering**
- **Control of rats in sewage system:**
 - **Sewer systems are the main source of brown rat contamination in cities since they are very accessible for this species.**
 - **Anticoagulant rodenticides are currently the most effective tool.**
 - Traps are not used for the control of rats in sewers mainly because it is not an economically viable control method.
- **Changes in rodent management in urban areas over the last 10 years**
 - **Integrated pest management (IPM) has been implemented** in most countries, emphasising exclusion and restriction measures. This has resulted in a **reduction in the consumption of rodenticides and a greater professionalisation of the sector.**
- **Evolution of urban rat infestations**
 - The general feedback is that there is a **trend towards increasing rat populations in cities** due to several causes: climate change, greater transit of goods, pressure from animal groups, policies against the use of chemical products against the control of rats, etc.

If you are a regional or national authority looking for more information on the present developments around urban rodent management in Europe and you have questions, please contact the CEPA Secretariat at secretariat@cepa-europe.org.