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(54) Title: SUSPOEMULSIONS COMPRISING AN HPPD-INHIBITING AND A CHLORACETAMIDE HERBICIDE

(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

A chemically and physically stable suspoemulsion formulation, free from polymeric stabilisers having a molecular weight of between 10,000 and 1,000,000 daltons, comprising: (i) a continuous phase, (ii) an HPPD-inhibiting herbicide insoluble in the continuous phase, (iii) a chloroacetamide, and (iv) one or more aromatic ethoxylate compounds or derivatives thereof with the exclusion of formulations comprising all of a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 6-14 mol ethoxylate, in non-ionic form, and a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 14-18 mol ethoxylate in form of its suphate or phosphate, in anionic or acid form, and a dialkyl-sulfosuccinate salt is disclosed.

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(54) Title: SUSPOEMULSIONS COMPRISING AN HPPD-INHIBITING AND A CHLORACETAMIDE HERBICIDE

(57) Abstract: A chemically and physically stable suspoemulsion formulation, free from polymeric stabilisers having a molecular weight of between 10,000 and 1,000,000 daltons, comprising: (i) a continuous phase, (ii) an HPPD-inhibiting herbicide insoluble in the continuous phase, (iii) a chloroacetamide, and (iv) one or more aromatic ethoxylate compounds or derivatives thereof with the exclusion of formulations comprising all of a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 6-14 mol ethoxylate, in non-ionic form, and a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 14-18 mol ethoxylate in form of its suphate or phosphate, in anionic or acid form, and a dialkyl-sulfosuccinate salt is disclosed.

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SUSPOEMULSIONS COMPRISING AN HPPD-INHIBITING AND A CHLORACETAMIDE HERBICIDE

The present invention relates to a novel agrochemical formulation comprising at
5 least two active ingredients and the use thereof.

Agricultural pesticide manufacturers have identified the need for broad-spectrum
pesticidal products. Single active ingredient formulations rarely meet such broad-
spectrum requirements, and thus combination products, perhaps containing up to four
complementary biologically active ingredients, have been developed. Such products have
10 several additional advantages e.g. elimination of tank mixing; reduction in inventory
products; saving in time and money; and a reduction in the number of times the crop is
sprayed.

The development of such products is relatively simple providing that the active
ingredients to be combined are physically, chemically and biologically compatible. In
15 these situations the active ingredients can be combined in a broad range of formulation
types well known in the art. Where the active ingredients are not physically, chemically
and/or biologically compatible, it has been necessary to develop novel compositions to
overcome the problems associated with such incompatibilities. One example of a
formulation type is the so-called 'suspoemulsion' formulation. These suspoemulsion
20 formulations are formed by combining an emulsion phase, containing one or more active
ingredients, with a continuous phase also containing one or more active ingredients in the
form of a solid dispersion. This type of formulation has several user advantages related to
ease of transportation, storage and field application.

However, the formation of such suspoemulsion formulations is rarely
25 straightforward. The technical challenge and complexity to formulate suspoemulsion
formulations with satisfactory physical and chemical stability has been previously
reported (e.g. Suspoemulsion Technology and Trends, Joseph R. Winkle, Pesticide
Formulation and Adjuvant Technology, CRC Press, 1996).

Particular problems were encountered when attempting to formulate the active
30 ingredients of the present invention into a suspoemulsion. One of the preferred active
ingredients used is mesotrione (2-(2'-nitro-4'-methylsulphonylbenzoyl)-1,3-
cyclohexanedione), which may be present either as the free acid, or as a metal salt.
Mesotrione free acid is chemically unstable in aqueous medium under a range of pH
conditions and/or concentration. The problem of the chemical instability may be

overcome by chelating the mesotrione free acid with a metal chelating agent, for example a copper or zinc salt. However, the introduction of the metal salt into the composition surprisingly led to severe complications with the physical stability of the resulting suspoemulsion. In some cases it was noted that the chelated mesotrione particles were
5 migrating into the emulsion phase – leading to heteroflocculation/coagulation. In other cases direct heteroflocculation occurred. Depending on the surfactant system, this heteroflocculation/coagulation could happen instantaneously on a macroscopic scale or very slowly, only under stress at a microscopic scale. This was considered very abnormal behaviour as it appeared that the event was not just a flocculation (surface to surface)
10 event, but rather an actual migration of the mesotrione to the inside of the emulsion droplet.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a chemically and physically stable suspoemulsion formulation that comprises an HPPD-inhibiting herbicide as one of the active ingredients.

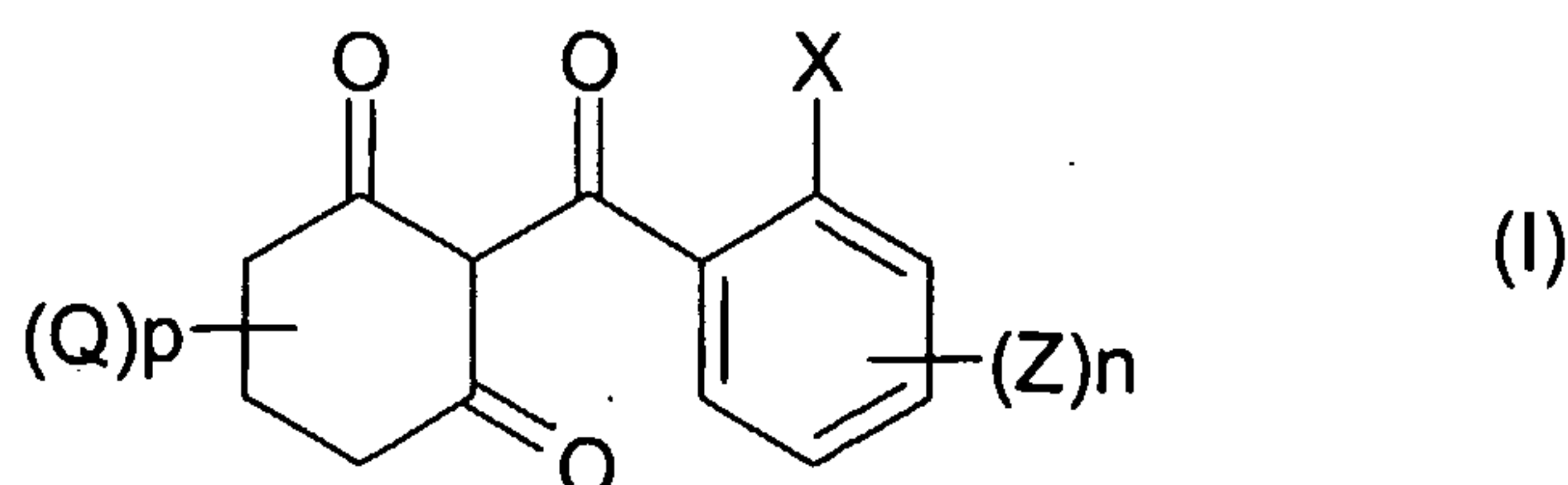
15 WO2004/080178 discloses a suspoemulsion formulation comprising a 2-(substituted benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione herbicide and a chloroacetamide; however, the formulations disclosed require the presence of a polymeric stabilizer. The present invention makes the use of a polymeric stabilizer unnecessary.

Accordingly, a first aspect of the invention provides a chemically and physically
20 stable suspoemulsion formulation, free from polymeric stabilisers having a molecular weight of between 10,000 and 1,000,000 daltons, comprising:

- (i) a continuous phase,
 - (ii) an HPPD-inhibiting herbicide insoluble in the continuous phase,
 - (iii) a chloroacetamide, and
 - 25 (iv) one or more aromatic ethoxylate compounds or derivatives thereof
- with the exclusion of formulations comprising all of a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 6-14 mol ethoxylate, in non-ionic form, and a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 14-18 mol ethoxylate in form of its sulphate or phosphate, in anionic or acid form, and a dialkyl-sulfosuccinate salt.

30 The continuous phase may be any suitable solvent, for example water, glycol or alcohol, but is preferably water.

In one embodiment of the invention, the HPPD-inhibiting herbicide is a triketone, for example a 2-(substituted benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione compound of formula (I)



wherein X represents a halogen atom; a straight- or branched-chain alkyl or alkoxy group containing up to six carbon atoms which is optionally substituted by one or more groups $-OR^1$ or one or more halogen atoms; or a group selected from nitro, cyano, -
 5 CO_2R^2 , $-S(O)_mR^1$, $-O(CH_2)_rOR^1$, $-COR^2$, $-NR^2R^3$, $-SO_2NR^2R^3$, $-CONR^2R^3$, $-CSNR^2R^3$ and $-OSO_2R^4$;

R^1 represents a straight- or branched-chain alkyl group containing up to six carbon atoms which is optionally substituted by one or more halogen atoms;

R^2 and R^3 each independently represents a hydrogen atom; or a straight- or
 10 branched-chain alkyl group containing up to six carbon atoms which is optionally substituted by one or more halogen atoms;

R^4 represents a straight- or branched-chain alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl group containing up to six carbon atoms optionally substituted by one or more halogen atoms; or a cycloalkyl group containing from three to six carbon atoms;

15 each Z independently represents halo, nitro, cyano, $S(O)_mR^5$, $OS(O)_mR^5$, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} haloalkyl, C_{1-6} haloalkoxy, carboxy, C_{1-6} alkylcarbonyloxy, C_{1-6} alkoxy carbonyl, C_{1-6} alkylcarbonyl, amino, C_{1-6} alkylamino, C_{1-6} dialkylamino having independently the stated number of carbon atoms in each alkyl group, C_{1-6} alkylcarbonylamino, C_{1-6} alkoxy carbonylamino, C_{1-6} alkylaminocarbonylamino, C_{1-6}
 20 dialkylaminocarbonylamino having independently the stated number of carbon atoms in each alkyl group, C_{1-6} alkoxy carbonyloxy, C_{1-6} alkylaminocarbonyloxy, C_{1-6} dialkylcarbonyloxy, phenylcarbonyl, substituted phenylcarbonyl, phenylcarbonyloxy, substituted phenylcarbonyloxy, phenylcarbonylamino, substituted phenylcarbonylamino, phenoxy or substituted phenoxy;

25 R^5 represents a straight- or branched-chain alkyl group containing up to six carbon atoms which is optionally substituted by one or more halogen atoms;

each Q independently represents C_{1-4} alkyl or $-CO_2R^6$ wherein R^6 is C_{1-4} alkyl;

m is zero, one or two;

n is zero or an integer from one to four;

r is one, two or three; and

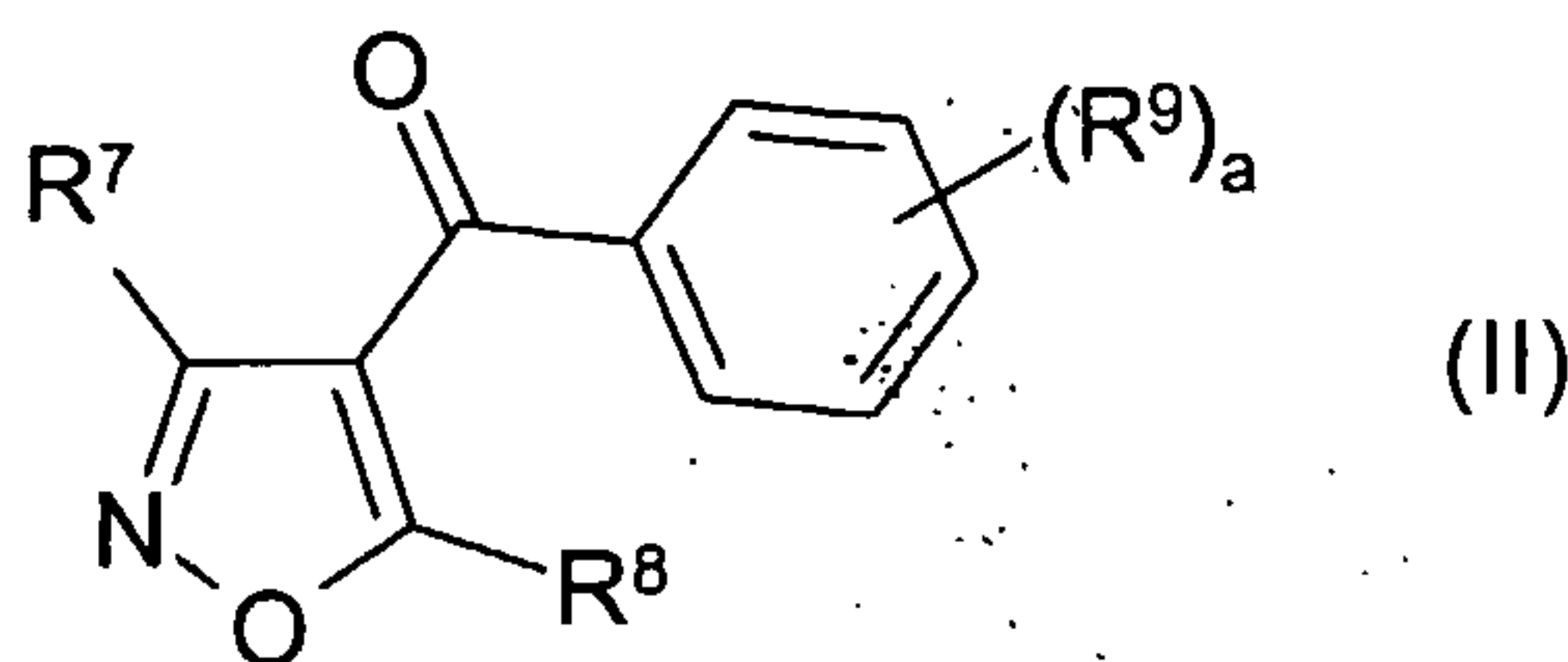
p is zero or an integer from one to six.

- 5 Suitably, X is chloro, bromo, nitro, cyano, C₁₋₄ alkyl, -CF₃, -S(O)_mR¹, or -OR¹; each Z is independently chloro, bromo, nitro, cyano, C₁₋₄ alkyl, -CF₃, -OR¹, -OS(O)_mR⁵ or -S(O)_mR⁵; n is one or two; and p is zero.

Preferably, the 2-(substituted benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione of formula (I) is selected from the group consisting of 2-(2'-nitro-4'-methylsulphonylbenzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione, 2-(2'-nitro-4'-methylsulphonyloxybenzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione, 2-(2'-chloro-4'-methylsulphonylbenzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione, 4,4-dimethyl-2-(4-methanesulphonyl-2-nitrobenzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione, 2-(2-chloro-3-ethoxy-4-methanesulphonylbenzoyl)-5-methyl-1,3-cyclohexanedione and 2-(2-chloro-3-ethoxy-4-ethanesulphonylbenzoyl)-5-methyl-1,3-cyclohexanedione; most preferably is 2-(2'-nitro-4'-methylsulphonylbenzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione:

The 2-(substituted benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione may be present in either the acid (non-chelated form) or as the metal chelated form. The metal chelated form of the 2-(substituted benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione may be made by adding a metal stabilizing salt to the suspoemulsion formulation. Examples of suitable stabilizing metal salts that may be used include calcium, beryllium, barium, titanium, magnesium, manganese, zinc, iron, cobalt, nickel and copper salts; most suitable are magnesium, manganese, zinc, iron, cobalt, nickel and copper salts; especially preferred is a copper salt, for example copper hydroxide. Suitably, the concentration of stabilizing metal salts in the suspoemulsion formulation of the invention is from 0.01 to 4.0%, and preferably from 0.02 to 1.5%.

25 In a second embodiment of the invention, the HPPD-inhibiting herbicide is an isoxazole compound of formula (II)



wherein R⁷ is hydrogen or -CO₂R¹⁰;

R⁸ is C₁₋₄ alkyl or C₃₋₆ cycloalkyl optionally substituted by C₁₋₆ alkyl;

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R^9 is independently selected from halogen, nitro, cyano, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} haloalkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-4} haloalkoxy, $-(CR^{11}R^{12})_cS(O)_bR^{13}$, $-S(O)_bR^{13}$, $-OSO_2R^{13}$ and $-N(R^{14})SO_2R^{13}$;

or two groups R^9 , on adjacent carbon atoms of the phenyl ring may, together with
 5 the carbon atoms to which they are attached, form a 5- or 6-membered saturated or unsaturated heterocyclic ring containing up to three ring heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulphur, which ring may be optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, nitro, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxy, C_{1-4} haloalkyl, C_{1-4} haloalkoxy and $-S(O)_bR^{13}$, it being understood that a sulphur atom, where present in the
 10 ring, may be in the form of a group $-SO-$ or $-SO_2-$;

R^{10} is C_{1-4} alkyl;

R^{11} and R^{12} are independently hydrogen or C_{1-4} alkyl;

R^{13} is C_{1-4} alkyl, or phenyl or benzyl, each of phenyl and benzyl optionally bearing from one or five substituents which may be the same or different selected from
 15 the group consisting of halogen, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxy, C_{1-4} haloalkyl, C_{1-4} haloalkoxy, nitro and $-S(O)_bCH_3$;

R^{14} is hydrogen or C_{1-6} alkyl;

a is an integer from one to five;

b is zero, one or two; and

20 c is one or two (where c is two, the groups $(CR^{11}R^{12})$ may be the same or different).

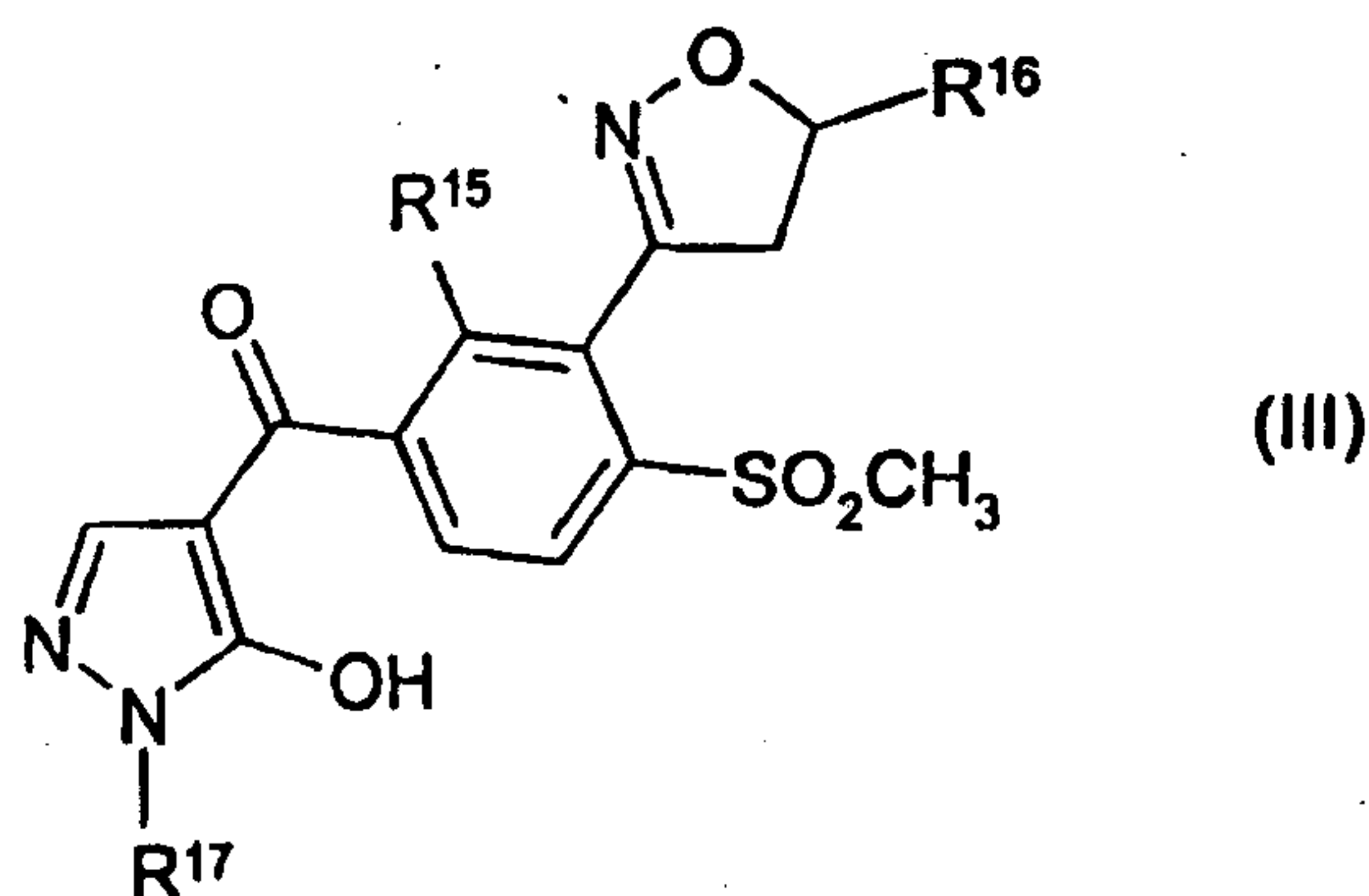
Suitably R^7 is hydrogen; R^8 is cyclopropyl; R^9 is halogen (preferably chloro), $-S(O)_bCH_3$, or C_{1-4} haloalkyl (preferably trifluoromethyl); and a is two.

Particularly preferred compounds of formula (IA) are selected from the group
 25 consisting of 5-cyclopropyl-4-(2-methylsulfonyl-4-trifluoromethyl)benzoyl isoxazole (isoxaflutole) and 4-(2-chloro-4-methylsulphonyl)benzoyl-5-cyclopropylisoxazole (isoxachlortole).

In a third embodiment of the invention, the HPPD-inhibiting herbicide is a compound of formula (III)

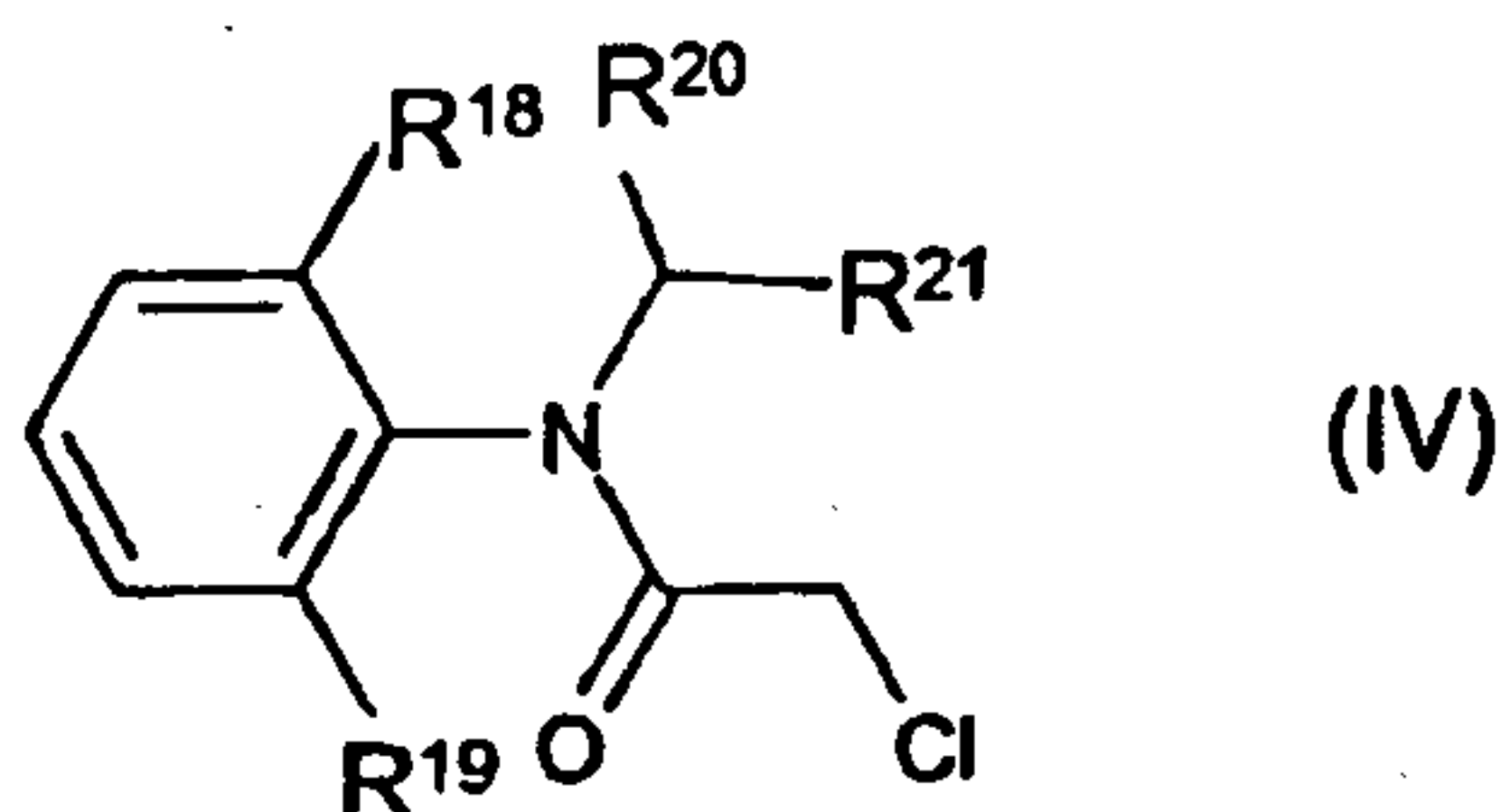
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wherein R^{15} is C_{1-2} alkyl or chloro; R^{16} is hydrogen or C_{1-4} alkyl; and R^{17} is C_{1-4} alkyl.

Suitably, the chloroacetamide suitable for use in the present invention includes compounds of formula (IV)



5

wherein R^{18} is hydrogen, methyl or ethyl; R^{19} is hydrogen or ethyl; R^{20} is hydrogen or methyl; and R^{21} is methyl, methoxy, methoxymethyl, ethoxy, or butoxy.

Suitably, the chloroacetamide is selected from the group consisting of metolachlor, acetochlor and alachlor, preferably metolachlor, and most preferably, s-metolachlor.

10

Suitably, the one or more aromatic ethoxylate compounds are selected from di- or tri-styrylphenol ethoxylates and their derivatives, such as phosphates and sulphates and salts thereof. Examples of the one or more di- or tri-styrylphenol ethoxylates or derivatives thereof include, but are not limited to, ethoxylated tristyrylphenol, sulphates and phosphates of polyarylphenol ethoxylates. These sulphates and phosphates being used either in their acid forms, or as salts, such as ammonium, triethanolamine, etc. Examples of such products include: SoprophorTM BSU', 'SoprophorTM S25', SoprophorTM TS/10, SoprophorTM 4D384, SoprophorTM 3D33, SoprophorTM FL, etc.

15

The concentration of HPPD-inhibiting herbicide in the formulation is suitably from 10 g a.i./litre to 200 g a.i./litre, preferably from 25 g a.i./litre to 100 g a.i./litre. The concentration of chloroacetamide in the formulation is suitably from 100 g a.i./litre to 800 g a.i./litre, preferably from 250 g a.i./litre to 600 g a.i./litre. The concentration of ethoxylate in the suspoemulsion formulation is suitably from 5 g a.i./litre to 150 g

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a.i./litre, preferably from 10 g a.i./litre to 75 g a.i./litre. Suitably, the formulation comprises at least 300g/litre of total a.i.

Whilst any pH may be appropriate for the formulations of the invention, a pH in the acidic range is considered preferable, and most preferably the formulation has a pH of 5 or less.

The suspoemulsion formulation of the present invention may also optionally comprise one or more additional active ingredients. The one or more additional active ingredients may be a pesticide, for example a herbicide, fungicide, insecticide or the like; or the additional active ingredient may be a compound selected from the class of compounds known as safeners or antidotes. The concentration of additional active ingredient in the formulation is suitably in the range of from 1 g/l to 500 g/l, and preferably from 2 g/l to 300g/l

In a further embodiment of the invention, the suspoemulsion formulation further comprises an additional active ingredient which is a herbicide, for example a herbicide selected from the class known as triazines, for example atrazine or terbuthylazine; a phosphonate herbicide, for example glyphosate or salts thereof; or a phosphinate herbicide, such as glufosinate or salts thereof. The concentration of additional herbicide is suitably in the range of from 5 g/l to 500 g/l, and preferably from 10 g/l to 300 g/l. Most preferably, the additional herbicide is a triazine, preferably atrazine or terbuthylazine.

In a still further embodiment of the invention, the suspoemulsion formulation comprises an additional active ingredient selected from the class of compounds known as safeners or antidotes, for example benoxacor, or dichlormid. The concentration of safener is suitably in the range of from 1 g/l to 100 g/l, and preferably from 2 g/l to 40 g/l.

In a yet further embodiment of the invention, the suspoemulsion formulation further comprises at least two additional active ingredients, wherein at least one of the additional active ingredients is a herbicide, for example a triazine, such as atrazine or terbuthylazine, and at least one of the other additional active ingredients is a safener, for example benoxacor or dichlormid.

The suspoemulsion formulation of the present invention may also optionally comprise an electrolyte component. By the term 'electrolyte component', we mean a compound which produces ions when in solution, for example a salt of an alkali metal, such as sodium, or alkaline earth metal, such as magnesium. In one preferred

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embodiment, the salt is a chloride salt, for example magnesium chloride. In a second preferred embodiment, the salt is a nitrate salt, for example ammonium nitrate. Suitably, the concentration of electrolyte in the suspoemulsion formulation of the invention is from 0.1 to 200g/l, and suitably from 1 to 50g/l, and preferably less than 10g/l..

5 Other formulation components as appropriate may be included in the suspoemulsion. Such other components may include none, some or all of the following: crystallization inhibitors, viscosity modifiers, spray droplet modifiers, pigments, antioxidants, foaming agents, light-blocking agents, antifoam agents, sequestering agents, neutralizing agents, buffers, corrosion inhibitors, dyes, odorants, thickening agents and
10 freezing point depressants, for obtaining special effects.

 In a further aspect of the invention, there is provided a method for controlling the growth of undesirable vegetation such as weeds, which may be present around the locus of a desired plant species (which may or may not exhibit resistance, either by natural means or by genetic modification, to one or more herbicides), e.g. a crop such as corn,
15 which comprises applying the formulation of the invention to the locus of such undesirable vegetation. Examples of undesirable vegetation include, but are not limited to, velvetleaf, redroot pigweed, common water hemp, Palmer amaranth, ivyleaf morning glory, prickly sida, giant ragweed, common ragweed, common cocklebur, Eastern black nightshade, common lambsquarters, Pennsylvania smartweed, common sunflower,
20 jimsonweed, hemp sesbania, toothed spurge, common purslane, large crabgrass, yellow foxtail and kochia. The weeds may or may not demonstrate resistance (either naturally or genetically modification) to one or more herbicides. The suspoemulsion formulation may be applied pre-emergence or post-emergence of the crop. Preferably, the formulation is applied pre-emergent. The formulation may be applied by air or on the ground by known
25 techniques, such as hydraulic nozzle spray.

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In an embodiment, the invention relates to a chemically and physically stable suspoemulsion formulation, free from polymeric stabilisers having a molecular weight of between 10,000 and 1,000,000 daltons, comprising: (i) a water continuous phase, (ii) 2-(2'-nitro-4'-methylsulphonyl benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione or a metal chelate thereof insoluble
5 in the continuous phase, (iii) a chloroacetamide selected from the group consisting of metolachlor, acetochlor and alachlor, and (iv) an aromatic ethoxylate compound or derivative thereof selected from the group consisting of a tri-styrylphenol ethoxylate, and phosphates, sulphates and salts thereof; with the exclusion of formulations comprising all of a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 6-14 mol ethoxylate, in non-ionic form, and a
10 tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 14-18 mol ethoxylate in form of its sulphate or phosphate, in anionic or acid form, and a dialkyl-sulfosuccinate salt.

One advantage of the suspoemulsion formulation of the present invention is that, under the majority of conditions, season-long control of weeds is obtained by just one application of the formulation.

15 The invention will now be described by way of example only.

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Description of Products used in the Examples

Component	Description
Soprophor TM BSU (Rhodia)	Tristyrylphenol with 16 moles EO
Soprophor TM S/25 (Rhodia)	Tristyrylphenol polyglycoether EO 25
Soprophor TM 4 D 384 (Rhodia)	Ethoxylated tristyrylphenol sulphate, ammonium salt
Berol 922 TM (Akzo Nobel)	Nonylphenol copolymer 20 PO/25-30 EO
Soprophor TM FL (Rhodia)	Tristyrylphenol-polyglycoether-phosphate triethanolamine salt
Atlox TM G 5000 (Uniqema)	Copolymer butanol PO/EO
NANSA TM EVM63/B (Huntsman)	Dodecyl-benzene sulfonic acid Ca-salt linear solvent sol.
Isopar TM L (Exxon Chemical)	Isoparaffinic solvent
Proxel TM GXL (Avecia)	1,2-benzisothiazolin-3-one in sol. approx. 20%
Attagel TM 50 (Engelhard Corp.)	Attapulgate clay (magnesium aluminium silicate)
Kelzan TM (Kelco)	Heteropolysaccharide
Antifoam MSA (Dow Corning)	Polydimethylsiloxane
Silicon oil DB 100 compound (DOW Corning)	

EO = ethylene oxide;

PO = propylene oxide.

Example 15 1. 1 Preparation of Premixes1. 1. 1 Preparation of S-metolachlor oil phase

	% wt
S-metolachlor	75.0
Isopar L	15.0
10 NANSA EVM63/B	5. 0
ATLOX G 5000	5. 0

First charge s-Metolachlor; add NANSA EVM63/B, Atlox G5000 (preheated to 50-60°C) and Isopar L. Mix until dissolved.

5 1.1.2 Preparation of Mesotrione Millbase

	%wt
Mesotrione	35.00
Soprophor S/25	3.50
Acetic Acid (80%)	7.73
10 Copper hydroxide (100%)	5.05
Antifoam MSA	0.10
Kelzan	0.10
Ammonium nitrate (60%)	4.30
Water	rest

15

Mix together the water, acetic acid and copper hydroxide. Add the mesotrione. The ammonium nitrate solution, the Soprophor S/25 (surfactant), Antifoam MSA and the Kelzan are added and mixed until uniform. The slurry was ground to a median particle size of less than 2.5 microns.

20

1.2 Preparation of Final Formulation

	%wt
Mesotrione Millbase	15.95
S-Metolachlor oil phase	62.0
25 Kelzan	0.02
Propylene glycol	4.65
Proxel GXL	0.19
Silicon oil DB 100 compound	0.09
Attagel 50	1.40
30 Water	rest

First charge water, add propylene glycol and Mesotrione millbase and mix until uniform. Add the Proxel GXL (preservative), Silicon oil DB 100 compound (antifoam

agent) and thickener gels (Kelzan gel and Attagel 50 in form of aqueous gel containing the clay and tetra sodium pyrophosphate) under agitation. Slowly add the oil phase in such a way as to form an emulsified organic phase.

5 Example 2

2.1 Preparation of Premixes

2.1.1 Preparation of S-metolachlor Oil Phase (see 1.1.1)

2.1.2 Preparation of Mesotrione Millbase

	%wt
10 Mesotrione	35.00
Berol 922	5.70
Acetic Acid (80%)	7.73
Copper Hydroxide (100%)	5.05
Antifoam MSA	0.10
15 Kelzan	0.10
Ammonium nitrate (60%)	4.30
Water	rest

Mix together the water, acetic acid and copper hydroxide. Add the mesotrione.

- 20 The ammonium nitrate, the Berol 922 (non-ionic surfactant), the Antifoam MSA and the Kelzan are added and mixed until uniform. The slurry was ground to a median particle size of less than 2.5 microns.

2.2 Preparation of Final formulation

	%wt
25 Mesotrione millbase	15.95
S-metolachlor oil phase	62.0
Kelzan	0.02
Propylene glycol	4.65
30 Proxel GXL	0.19
Silicon oil DB 100 compound	0.09
Attagel 50	1.40
Water	rest

First charge water, add propylene glycol and mesotrione millbase and mix until uniform. Add the Proxel GXL (preservative), Silicon oil DB 100 compound (antifoam agent) and thickener gels (Kelzan gel and Attagel 50 in form of aqueous gel containing the clay and tetra sodium pyrophosphate) under agitation. Slowly add the oil phase in such a way as to form an emulsified organic phase.

Example 3

3.1 Preparation of Premixes

3.1.1 Preparation of S-metolachlor Oil Phase (see 1.1.1)

3.1.2 Preparation of Mesotrione Millbase

	%wt
Mesotrione	25.00
Soprophor BSU	5.70
15 Acetic acid (80%)	7.70
Copper hydroxide (100%)	3.6
Antifoam MSA	0.10
Kelzan	0.10
Water	rest

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Mix together the water, acetic acid and copper hydroxide. Add the mesotrione, the Soprophor BSU (surfactant), Antifoam MSA and Kelzan and mix until uniform. The slurry was ground to a median particle size of less than 2.5 microns.

25 3.2 Preparation of Final Formulation

	%wt
Mesotrione Millbase	22.3
S-metolachlor oil phase	62.0
Kelzan	0.02
30 Propylene glycol	4.65
Proxel GXL	0.19
Silicon oil DB 100 compound	0.09
Attagel 50	1.40

Water rest

First charge water, add propylene glycol and mesotrione millbase and mix until uniform. Add the Proxel GXL (preservative), Silicon oil DB 100 compound (antifoam agent) and thickener gels (Kelzan gel and Attagel 50 in form of aqueous gel containing the clay and tetra sodium pyrophosphate) under agitation. Slowly add the oil phase in such a way as to form an emulsified organic phase.

Example 4

10 4.1 Preparation of Premixes

4.1.1 Preparation of S-metolachlor Oil Phase (see 1.1.1)

4.1.2 Preparation of Mesotrione Millbase

	%wt
Mesotrione	35.00
15 Soprophor 4 D384	5.70
Acetic acid (80%)	7.73
Copper hydroxide (100%)	5.05
Antifoam MSA	0.10
Kelzan	0.10
20 Ammonium nitrate (60%)	4.30
Water	rest

Mix together the water, acetic acid and copper hydroxide. Add the mesotrione. The ammonium nitrate, Soprophor 4 D384 (ionic surfactant), Antifoam MSA and Kelzan are added and mixed until uniform. The slurry is ground to a median particle size of less than 2.5 microns.

4.2 Preparation of Final Formulation

	%wt
30 Mesotrione Millbase	15.95
S-metolachlor oil phase	62.0
Kelzan	0.02
Propylene glycol	4.65

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Proxel GXL	0.19
Silicon oil DB 100 compound	0.09
Attagel 50	1.40
Water	rest

5

First charge water, add propylene glycol and mesotrione millbase and mix until uniform. Add the Proxel GXL (preservative), Silicon oil DB 100 compound (antifoam agent) and thickener gels (Kelzan gel and Attagel in form of aqueous gel containing the clay and tetra sodium pyrophosphate) under agitation. Slowly add the oil phase in such a way as to form an emulsified organic phase.

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Example 5

5.1 Preparation of Premixes

5.1.1 Preparation of S-metolachlor Oil Phase (see 1.1.1)

15 5.1.2 Preparation of Mesotrione Millbase

	%wt
Mesotrione	25.00
Soprophor FL	5.70
Acetic Acid (80%)	7.70
20 Copper hydroxide (100%)	3.6
Antifoam MSA	0.10
Kelzan	0.10
Water	rest

25 Mix together the water, acetic acid and copper hydroxide. Add the mesotrione. The Soprophor FL (surfactant), Antifoam MSA and the Kelzan are added and mixed until uniform. The slurry was ground to a median particle size of less than 2.5 microns.

5.2 Preparation of Final Formulation

30	%wt
Mesotrione Millbase	22.3
S-metolachlor oil phase	62.0
Kelzan	0.02

	15
Propylene glycol	4.65
Proxel GXL	0.19
Silicon oil DB 100 compound	0.09
Attagel 50	1.40
5 Water	rest

First charge water, add propylene glycol and Mesotrione millbase and mix until uniform. Add the Proxel GXL (preservative), Silicon oil DB 100 compound (antifoam agent) and thickener gels (Kelzan gel and Attagel in form of aqueous gel containing the
10 clay and tetra sodium pyrophosphate under agitation. Slowly add the oil phase in such a way as to form an emulsified organic phase.

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CLAIMS:

1. A chemically and physically stable suspoemulsion formulation, free from polymeric stabilisers having a molecular weight of between 10,000 and 1,000,000 daltons, comprising:
 - 5 (i) a water continuous phase,
 - (ii) 2-(2'-nitro-4'-methylsulphonyl benzoyl)-1,3-cyclohexanedione or a metal chelate thereof insoluble in the continuous phase,
 - (iii) a chloroacetamide selected from the group consisting of metolachlor, acetochlor and alachlor, and
 - 10 (iv) an aromatic ethoxylate compound or derivative thereof selected from the group consisting of a tri-styrylphenol ethoxylate, and phosphates, sulphates and salts thereof;
 - with the exclusion of formulations comprising all of a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 6-14 mol ethoxylate, in non-ionic form, and a tristyrylphenol-ethoxylate having 14-18 mol ethoxylate in form of its sulphate or phosphate, in anionic or acid form, and
 - 15 a dialkyl-sulfosuccinate salt.
2. A suspoemulsion formulation according to claim 1, wherein the chloroacetamide is *S*-metholachlor.
3. A suspoemulsion formulation according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the formulation has a pH of 5 or less.
- 20 4. A suspoemulsion formulation according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the formulation further comprises one or more additional ingredients selected from the group consisting of herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, safeners and antidotes.
5. A suspoemulsion formulation according to claim 4, wherein the additional ingredient is a triazine herbicide.

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6. A suspoemulsion formulation according to claim 4 wherein the additional ingredient is a safener or antidote.
7. A suspoemulsion formulation according to claim 4, wherein the additional ingredient comprises at least a triazine herbicide and a safener or antidote compound.
- 5 8. A suspoemulsion formulation according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the formulation further comprises an electrolyte.
9. A method for controlling the growth of undesirable vegetation comprising applying to the locus of said undesirable vegetation a suspoemulsion formulation as defined in any one of claims 1 to 8.