

Spring/Summer Newsletter 2017

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A Season of Action for PAN Europe!

It has been a very busy period with many crucial decisions on pesticides and with great news. In this newsletter, read below about our campaign activities and latest news on pesticide regulation and from our network:

Policy Updates:

- The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- Save the Bees!
- European Citizens Initiative on Glyphosate
- Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)
- Pesticide Free Towns

News from Members:

- The Annual General Meeting of PAN members in Malles, Italy
- News from members across Europe

Learn more about our [campaigns](#), stay tuned

for [latest news](#) and find out how to [get involved!](#)

Happy summer holidays from PAN Europe!

Policy Updates

Pesticides and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

- **Pesticide Ban on Ecological Focus Areas**

The EU has just introduced a ban on pesticide use in productive areas of the so-called Ecological Focus Areas to simplify and streamline the 'greening' of its Common Agricultural Policy and to be applied by 2018 by the latest.

In the 2013 reform of the CAP, the idea of a green component was introduced whereby larger farms (beyond 15 hectares) must provide areas "to safeguard and improve biodiversity on farms". Following practices are allowed as EFAs. It is for Member States to select one or more of these options: (a) land lying fallow; (b) terraces; (c) landscape features (amongst them e.g. fieldmargins), (d) buffer strips; (e) hectares of agro-forestry; (f) strips of eligible hectares along forest edges; (g) areas with short rotation coppice with no use of mineral fertiliser and/or plant protection products; (h) afforested areas; (i) areas with catch crops, or green cover and (j) areas with nitrogen-fixing crops.

The new EU rules, adopted on 3 July, on greening means that Member States and farmers have to meet these obligations as from 2018 by the latest. Read [here](#) the key changes introduced by the new rules.

PAN Europe and its members [welcome this decision](#) as a logical step to put biodiversity at the heart of EFAs!

PAN Europe has been working on this topic along its negotiation process in the European Parliament, you can see some of the work we did [here](#) and also read our [factsheet](#).

- **Future of the CAP and Pesticides**

We are now entering in a new period of reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. The public [consultation](#) period has started, and PAN Europe has actively contributed, both by taking part in written public consultation and in the [conference](#) being held on the 7 July in Brussels. Read our press release [here>>](#) You can read our [briefing](#) explaining in 12 points why the CAP is not delivering

on pesticide use reductions.

>>PAST EVENT in Focus>>

IOBC-IBMA-PAN Europe [joint symposium on implementation of the Sustainable Use of Pesticide Directive](#) was held in the European Parliament in February 2017.

In 2017, the [5th European Symposium on implementation of the Sustainable Use Directive](#) was organised as a collaboration between PAN Europe, researchers in International Organisation of Biological Control (IOBC) and companies producing alternatives to pesticides in International BioControl Manufacturer Association (IBMA).

This year's topic focused on sustainable wine growing and the symposium gave answers to how companies, scientists, farmers and public authorities from both EU institutions and Member States are encouraging the move from killing to managing pesticide in the EU wine growing. Around 150 participants took part in this year's symposium in the European Parliament. As something new the symposium was webstreamed and debates were being organised in universities in Italy, Spain and Portugal.

The webinar and all presentations are to be found on our [webpage](#). Moreover, you can read the chairman's conclusion [here](#).

Prior to this year's symposium, we had been filming a lot of farmers testimonies explaining about to reduce pesticide use by uptakes of alternative through IPM which can be seen [here](#). Especially interesting are the [five testimonies from France](#), showing 50% pesticide use reduction is possible.

PAN Europe and IBMA followed up on this meeting, where many people asked for more practical approach, by organising a [farm visit](#) in Strasbourg to a IPM wine grower in May 2017.

We are pleased to announce that we have already started to reflect on the topic for next symposium that we aim at organizing in early 2018: it will be about cereals as requested by the chairman. We will keep you posted and hope to see many of you there!

Pesticide Statistics

Despite Eurostat was meant in 2016 to release a report on pesticide use, this has not been done. PAN Europe has downloaded Eurostat data and pesticide sale covering the period 2011 to 2015. Instead of a report on pesticide use, Eurostat has released a new really interesting [report](#) trying to explain why. This report explains that despite some beginner delays, the European Commission is now receiving information from Member States allowing them to annually publish statistics on pesticide sale.

However, the report also highlight shortages saying clearly that there is a need for more detailed statistics, for instance time to be able to better know where pesticide is used being able to distinguish between private and public use. The

current confidentiality clause makes it impossible to publish detailed information, with the result Eurostat is not able to feed EU statistics into important policy work. The information currently received from Member States is not allowing the European Commission to publish use statistics, which again means that citizens are not able to know the environmental and health risk that is being imposed on them due to pesticide use.

Save the Bees!

In 2013, the European Commission and member states decided a first set of restrictions to protect pollinators following concerns on the safety of neonicotinoids. The dossier of these substances contained numerous data gaps hampering the implementation of a risk assessment. The owners of these pesticides, Bayer and Syngenta, were consequently asked by the Commission to provide confirmatory information on the toxicity of neonicotinoids to pollinators with regards to the remaining authorised uses. During 2015 and 2016, the European Food Safety Authority has published a number of conclusions on the confirmatory information and identified new risks to bees while several data gaps remained. In conformity with the pesticide regulation 1107/2009, the European Commission sent a draft proposal to ban the use of neonicotinoids in the EU to the Member States, with an exemption for permanent glasshouses.

On Wednesday 22 June, the European Parliament's Committee on Environment voted **AGAINST** [the attempt of the pesticide industry's best ally in the European Parliament, British ECR MEP Julie Girling,](#) presenting a motion for resolution to reject the proposal. BEEhappy news!

In order to support the Commission proposal for a full ban, PAN Europe has launched the [Save the Bees Coalition](#) in order to join forces with as many national NGOs as possible to put pressure on national governments as in the end, it is the member states that will vote in favour or against the European Commission proposal to ban neonics. We are providing lobby letters that the members of the coalition can make use of in their home country, send to their members, their MEs, MPs, etc.

Join the [Save the Bees Coalition](#) and support us!

#StopGlyphosate European Citizens Initiative

The European Citizens' Initiative to ban Glyphosate kicked off in early February 2017, after mounting public concern about the hazardousness of the world's most-used weedkiller, Roundup Ready, since the World Health Organization published a study where it linked Glyphosate to cancer in 2015. PAN Europe, together with other civil society organizations, as well as campaigners and activists launched this ECI to ban Glyphosate, to reform the EU pesticides approval process, and to set mandatory targets to reduce pesticide use in the

EU.

The ECI's aim was to reach one million European citizens' signatures and submit the petition to the European Commission before the latter's next move to renew, remove or extend Glyphosate's EU license.

While it reached the one million signatures threshold on June 15th, the ECI remained open until June 30th; the million has been amply surpassed, having officially reached a total of 1,322,405 signatures which were handed to Member States on July 3rd!

On May 19th, the Stop Glyphosate coalition sent a joint open letter to EU Commission's First Vice-President, Frans Timmermans, to state the ECI's intended goals and to arrange for its official delivery to the Commission. Mr Timmermans has invited the ECI coalition to meet with him, in early October 2017, once the bureaucratic delivery procedure is completed.

Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)

On Tuesday 4th of July, Member States voted in favour of the Commission's proposal on EDC criteria, which will be used to identify pesticides that are endocrine disruptors in the future. In the meantime, the Commission has asked the scientific consultation group of EFSA and ECHA to prepare a guidance document that explains in detail how these criteria will be applied. The negligible risk derogation has not been presented yet, although the Commission had reassured the Member States that this will be discussed again in the future.

While we acknowledge the importance of finally having a set of criteria to regulate exposure to EDCs, and we recognise that the current proposal is improved compared to the one presented in June 2016, the Commission and some Member States however have not selected the criteria 100% based on science, and they have left room for misinterpretation that will lead to endless debates (i.e. whether a chemical is an ED or not) before we have the chance to see any pesticide actually getting banned.

While the outcome of the vote is already being heralded by Health Commissioner Andriukaitis as a "major step toward protecting citizens' health and the environment", PAN-Europe and other civil society exponents are strongly opposed to such an optimistic interpretation. The proposed criteria evidently contain loopholes, which top Endocrinology experts have warned Commission representatives will result in "fail[ing] to protect citizens and the environment from the dangers posed by EDC exposure"; this is mainly because in the main criteria text, the burden of proof required to classify a substance as an EDC is so high that leaves room for misinterpretation and will inevitably result in getting only few, if any, dangerous substances banned.

PAN-Europe finds the vote's outcome especially deplorable as a conservative estimate found that the current burden on public health budgets from the

diseases arising from exposure to EDCs in the European Union is estimated is at least 163 billion Euro per year, and also in light of the fact that over [458,000 European citizens recently signed a petition](#) calling on Member States to reject the Commission's proposal.

Another regrettable element is France's last-minute change of position, which goes completely against electoral promises made by Emmanuel Macron in the run up to the vote. While Sweden and Denmark stood firm in their effort to secure better criteria by voting against the proposed ones, along with the Czech Republic, and while Latvia, Poland, Hungary and the UK abstained from voting, the rest of the EU Member States voted in favour of the Commission's proposed criteria, reaching a qualified majority after years of delay.

Now it is up to the European Parliament to reject such unfit criteria, and this will be our work for the next few months.

Pesticide Free Towns

Towns on the move towards being pesticide free! Pan Europe launched two years ago a [campaign on pesticide free towns](#), collecting good practice examples, illustrating many alternatives and showcasing achievements of towns across Europe towards a pesticide free urban environment. The dedicated campaign website currently exists in 7 languages and has been an inspiring source of information for many local campaigns in different parts of Europe. You can see the continuously growing community of pesticide free towns on [this map](#). We are delighted to see the campaign keeping on expanding!

Since 2017, pesticide use in towns (mainly in green areas) is one of the points that the EU Green Capital candidates need to inform about in their applications. The 2018 European Green Capital Nijmegen has a pesticide free green management since 1995!

Not only towns but also [regions are on the move going pesticide free!](#) All three Belgium regions have decided to ban pesticide use in public areas, which is now followed by Netherlands, France and Luxembourg.

There is also a growing support from national parliaments in EU Member States for [a non-agricultural pesticide ban](#). The French Senate has unanimously adopted a European resolution to ban non-agricultural pesticides across Europe. PAN Europe warmly welcomes the resolution and together with its members calls on the Parliaments of other EU Member States to adopt similar resolutions.

News from Members

The Annual General Meeting of PAN Europe members in Malles, Italy

30 YEARS of Action towards a pesticide-free Europe! In May, PAN Europe members gathered in Malles Venosta located in the gorgeous Alpine region of Süd Tyrol (Alto Adige) in Italy. Apart from celebrating our common action for a pesticide-free Europe, getting better know one another and presenting the different activities carried out in the PAN network, this gathering gave us a great opportunity to visit the town of Malles where a group of motivated citizens and a committed mayor achieved to ban pesticides through a public referendum in the whole Malles, including agricultural areas. You can read [here](#) the inspiring story of Malles and the dynamic community that used people-power, drive and initiative to go pesticide-free.



PAN Italy

The [Marcia Stop Pesticidi](#) took place on May 28th, 2017 in the province of Treviso between the towns of Cison and Follina. More than 3000 people took part in it, as well as 120 national and international associations and committees, and it was endorsed by a series of organisations (PAN-Europe, Greenpeace, etc).

The march was organised by people from all over the province of Treviso, as a reaction to the intense pesticide exposure they have increasingly been subjected to as a result of intensive grape monoculture to satisfy Northern markets' (mainly UK) ever-greater demand for prosecco.

People living and working in and around the areas where intensive chemical-dependent monoculture is carried out, in particular pregnant women and small children) are the most exposed to pesticides residues, and thus to tumoral diseases and conditions altering the endocrine (hormonal) system. The

Comitato Stop Pesticidi (Committee to Ban Pesticides) organized the Marcia Stop Pesticidi as a sign of protest against the endorsement by local and national authorities of the agrochemical, monocultural agricultural model being imposed on them, on their health and their environment.

The March's outcome was so successful that barely a week later the 2018 Marcia Stop Pesticidi was already organized and advertised. See the [photos of the march on Facebook](#).

The Danish Society for Nature Conservation

Private households unite against pesticides! Almost 10.000 private households in Denmark have united against the use of pesticides in an initiative called "[Giffri Have](#)"- Gardens without pesticides. Take a stroll around a neighborhood in Denmark and you are likely to notice a beautiful flower-sticker on one or two mailboxes. The sticker indicates that the garden behind the mailbox is free from pesticides and other forms of insect-killers.

This popular initiative was founded by The Danish Society for Nature Preservation and The National Association for Practical Organic Gardening in 2015. The aim is to secure as many hectares of pesticide-free soil as possible and at the same time to demonstrate that those of us with private gardens are not going to sit around and wait for political action against pesticides.

3 square metres per person

When signing up to join the "Giffri Have"-initiative a member has to register the size of their garden and thereby the size of the pesticide-free area. Today, privately owned gardens have already secured almost 19.000 hectares from pesticides which equals as much as 3 square meters per Dane.

The reason why most garden owners join the initiative is to protect the unique resource of groundwater, the environment in general and their own health.

Facts: In Denmark around 21 tonnes of pesticides stem from private gardens.

Most are used to combat weeds, fungus and snails. Visit "Giffri Have"

on www.giffri-have.dk

VELT, Belgium

2020withoutpesticides ("[2020pesticidevrij](#)") is a campaign with the aim of no more pesticides on the shelves in stores and learning people how they can maintain their gardens, terrace and drive without using pesticides. Researche made it clear that the use of these pesticides are harmful for mankind and the environment.

2020withoutpesticides is mainly communication and has a focus on awareness, change of behavior and sharing of knowledge. There are three main target audiences: private, business (suppliers and producers) and the government. The campaign started in May 2016 and will end on December 31, 2020; exclusively in Dutch.

This campaign has been launched by Velt, an association for living and gardening in an ecologic way. Velt has already proven for more than 40 years that ecologic gardening works with great results. This association today counts 17,000 members in Flanders and the Netherlands.

The campaign 2020withoutpesticides is coordinated from within the Velt-team. Velt developed brochures, posters, flyers, a website, movie clips, garden signs, etc. The website creates a community for the largest ecogarden of Flanders by registering everyones acreage, who grows a kitchen garden without the use of pesticides. Every day we see this pesticide free community growing in Europe.

New Member in Focus: Eco Hvar / Croatia

by Vivian Grisogono, President, Eco Hvar

Hvar Island on Croatia's Adriatic coast is - potentially - a paradise on Earth. Indeed, much the same can be said of most of the rest of Croatia, with its stunning diversity of landscape, climate and wildlife alongside its fascinating cultural heritage. But things could be better. When I moved to my family's homeland in 2004, I soon became aware that animals and the environment were sorely in need of help. So a few like-minded friends founded the registered charity Eco Hvar in 2013.

Hvar's wonderfully fertile soil and clean air were being undermined year on year by the relentless use of herbicides, artificial fertilizers and insecticides. Local authorities and individuals alike were determined that there was no risk to workers, consumers, visitors... 'this herbicide is safe enough to drink' was one of the lines bandied about. All PAN members know where that comes from. Things came to a head a few years ago when a local park was sprayed with herbicide, without due warning, just where local toddlers and children played. My protest led to a confrontation with a young agronomist, who was a member of the local Council's Environment Committee. When he told me there was no proof that Roundup was dangerous, I produced some PAN material detailing scientific studies about its ill-effects, which he glanced at with a sniff. The incident spurred me to research the subject and write about it on our website (www.eco-hvar.com), which is in English and Croatian. There is just one Croatian scientist, Marijan Jošt, who is at the forefront of revealing the perils of pesticides, and particularly GMOs. Our material, which is based on scientific studies in peer-reviewed journals, has been distributed as leaflets and flyers in Croatian, and we have a discreet but reasonably strong media presence.

The UNESCO-listed Greek Plain (Chora or Ager) in Stari Grad, the oldest town on Hvar, is a case in point. The widespread use of pesticides could easily jeopardize the UNESCO recognition. However, individual landowners are moving away from using chemical pesticides, and there is a major project in the pipeline to enhance the amenities of the Plain, including promoting organic agriculture.

We accept that progress towards eliminating pesticide use is (painfully) slow.

Great patience and perseverance are required. PAN members have shown themselves to be resilient, resourceful and resolute. Eco Hvar is humbled and extremely grateful to have been accepted into the group.

SUPPORT OUR WORK



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