

PRESS RELEASE

Bee-killing neonicotinoids tomorrow at vote in the European Parliament, with a scent of the pesticides industry's influence

Tomorrow, the Committee on Environment of the European Parliament will gather to discuss and vote on 3 motions for resolution tailor-made for the pesticide industry to keep bee-killing pesticides in the market

DG Sante's March 2017 proposals to ban imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam were a logic step toward an improvement of the protection of bees, pollinators and the environment in general in Europe. The pesticide industry's best ally in the European Parliament, British ECR MEP Julie Girling, has presented to the European Parliament's Committee on Environment a motion for resolution to reject the proposal.

As often, MEP Girling's proposal takes one by one the arguments from the pesticide industry¹. There seems to be no difference between the work of the conservative MEP and the financial interests from the pesticide industry.

Background: 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 information² and identified new risks to bees while several data gaps remained. In conformity with the pesticide regulation 1107/2009, the European

1 <http://cropscience.bayer.co.uk/about-us/save-our-seed-treatments/>

2 EFSA 2015a. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for bees for the active substance clothianidin considering all uses other than seed treatments and granules. EFSA Journal. 2015;13: 4210, 77 pp. doi:doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2015.4210

EFSA 2015b. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for bees for the active substance imidacloprid considering all uses other than seed treatments and granules. EFSA Journal. 2015;13: 4211, 82 pp. doi:doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2015.4211

EFSA 2016a. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for the active substance clothianidin in light of confirmatory data submitted. EFSA Journal. 2016;14: 4606(34 pp.). doi:doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2016.4606

EFSA 2016b. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for the active substance imidacloprid in light of confirmatory data submitted. EFSA Journal. 2016;14: 4607, 39 pp. doi:doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2016.4607

EFSA 2016c. Technical report on the outcome of the consultation with Member States, the applicant and EFSA on the pesticide risk assessment for thiamethoxam in light of confirmatory data. EFSA supporting publication. 2016; 1020. 27 pp.

Commission sent a draft proposal to ban the use of neonicotinoids in the EU to the Member States, with an exemption for permanent glasshouses³.

Martin Dermine, PAN Europe's pollinator expert said: 'Julie Girling's motion for resolution is a remake of Bayer and Syngenta's lawyer's pleas we have heard earlier this year in the European Court of Justice, at the hearing of the court case where these companies attacked the 2013 ban. Such a similarity between an MEP's work and the industry's argumentation is shocking. Bee-killing neonicotinoids should never have been authorised and it is more than time to ban them. All MEPs should support the Commission's proposal!'

Francesco Panella, president of Bee Life said : "Neonicotinoid insecticides pollute our bees, our water and our soil. We hope that the MEPs of the Environment Committee will vote for bees and biodiversity instead of the lies and interests of pesticide industry and their puppets. The EP already made the right choice in the case of pesticides in EFAs. Let's stay coherent!"

Contacts: Bee Life, Francesco Panella: +32 (0) 10 47 34 16, info@bee-life.eu
PAN Europe, Martin Dermine: +32 (0) 486 32 99 92, martin@pan-europe.info

³ <http://www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2017/03/bee-killing-neonicotinoids-european-commission-proposal-complete-ban-0>