



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

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Neonicotinoids: a historic day for the European Union Bees finally protected

Today, Member States have backed the proposal from the European Commission to ban all outdoor uses of 3 bee-killing neonicotinoids. By the end of the year, imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam insecticides will finally disappear from our environment for the sake of our bees. PAN Europe warmly welcomes the European Commission's steadiness in resisting to several Member States and the agroindustry that favour unsustainable practices in conventional farming.

A quarter of a century after being approved, neonicotinoids will be banned within a few months. EU Member States were requested to vote today on the proposal from the European Commission to ban all outdoor uses of 3 bee-killing neonicotinoids.

Since their approval at EU-level in the 90's, neonicotinoids have been largely proven to harm honey bees, other pollinators and the environment as a whole. Several studies also indicate toxicity on human health.

After years of battle from beekeepers and environmentalists, the European Commission restricted the use of 3 highly bee-toxic neonicotinoids in 2013. Imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam were then banned on bee-attractive crops.

Since then, evidence showed that even application of neonicotinoids on non-bee-attractive crops led to exposure of bees as these substances are highly persistent in the environment. In the meantime, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published a series of reports highlighting that there is no safe use for bees for these 3 insecticides. Based on EFSA's conclusions, DG Sante sent to the Member States a proposal to ban all outdoor uses for these 3 substances in March 2017¹. Another EFSA report from February 2018² has permitted DG Sante to speed up the process and to ask Member States to vote on its proposal today.

Martin Dermine, PAN Europe's Health and environment policy officer said: *'Authorising neonicotinoids during a quarter of a century was a mistake and led to an environmental disaster. Today's vote is historic. A majority of Member States gave a clear signal that our agriculture needs transition. Using bee-killing pesticides cannot be allowed anymore and only sustainable practices should be used to produce our food'*.

PAN Europe is a member of the Save the Bees Coalition³, a coalition gathering more than 100 EU NGOs that acted at EU and national levels to obtain today's ban.

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¹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/approval_active_substances/approval_renewal/neonicotinoids_en

² <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/180228>

³ www.beecoalition.eu

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe is a network of NGOs working to reduce the use of hazardous pesticides and have them replaced with ecologically sound alternatives. We work to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides and to support safe sustainable pest control methods. Our network brings together 40 consumer, public health, and environmental organisations, and women's groups from across Europe.