

Brussels 18 June 2018

EU Agriculture Council meeting to discuss pollinators' protection

In today's meeting from the EU agricultural ministers, Slovenia will be triggering a discussion on how to step up the protection of EU bees and other pollinators.

While the European Commission published its Communication on an EU Pollinators Initiative on 1st June 2018 (1), on the same day as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform proposal (2) was released, some Member States wish to speed up the improvement of the statute of European pollinators. Slovenia, backed by Poland and Luxembourg, has put to the agenda of the meeting an item on "Stepping up EU efforts to reduce the threat to honeybees and other pollinators" (3), with a set of concrete proposals on how to move forward.

Martin Dermine, PAN-Europe health and environment policy officer said: *"Intentions are good, actions are lacking. While we strongly support the efforts from Member States and DG Environment from the European Commission to discuss the protection of our pollinators, we believe that the most appropriate way to protect bees against pesticides is for Member States to adopt the 2013 Guidance Document on the risk assessment of pesticides on bees. Without it, bee-toxic pesticides still have access to the market and bees suffer from that situation"*.

Henriette Christensen, PAN-Europe's senior policy officer adds: "While the five recommendations (4) are a good step in the right direction, the way forward within the CAP is to seriously strengthen the wording of success indicators in reform proposals regarding pesticide use reductions and uptake of serious Integrated Pest Management, while adding a specific indicator on pollinators (starting with measuring bees and butterflies)."

Notes:

- (1) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/pollinators/index_en.htm
- (2) PAN Europe Press Release "Pesticide Dependency Reductions must become one of the success indicators of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)", <https://www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2018/06/pesticide-dependency-reductions-must-become-one-success-indicators-common>
- (3) <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9882-2018-INIT/en/pdf>
 - (1) The joint forces to reduce the endangerment of honeybees and wild pollinators at the European level could focus on the following priority measures: 'Protecting, restoring and connecting honeybees and other pollinator habitats in agricultural landscapes to ensure resources for them all year round;
 - (2) Raising the awareness concerning harmful substances (pesticides), promoting Integrated Pest Management through the Common Agriculture Policy and strengthening the risk assessment of pesticides on honeybees and other pollinators;
 - (3) Promoting investments in research on the status and trends of honeybees and other pollinators, the causes and consequences of their decline;
 - (4) Enhancing mutual EU cooperation in research in the field of bee-keeping and promoting knowledge transfer and good practice between countries and bee-keepers, and
 - (5) Establishing EU-wide monitoring schemes for different pollinator species and groups of pollinators.

Contact

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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.