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## EU BEE WEEK: Greenwashing buzzing

**This year's Bee Week in the European Parliament has been the occasion for the agroindustry to make sure the real solutions needed to support the beekeeping sector have not been discussed.**

While no one would contest the importance of organising a Bee Week in the European Parliament every year, PAN Europe strongly regrets that this year more than ever, the organizers failed to discuss the real issues faced by the beekeepers and the way forward for a flourishing beekeeping sector. This is not surprising considering that the co-organizers are mainly agroindustry organisations. Indeed, the pesticide industry (ECPA), conventional farmers (COPA-COGECA) and the agroindustry-funded French Biodiversity network have been joined, this year by the sugar beet sector, CIBE<sup>1</sup>. The presence of the latter is very surprising as sugar beets do not produce nectar, they do not need bees for pollination and CIBE strongly promotes the use of bee-killing neonicotinoids...

Martin Dermine, PAN Europe's Health and Environment policy officer said: *'Sadly, the Bee Week is losing credibility. ECPA, COPA-COGECA and CIBE have been incredibly active in lobbying the European institutions to avoid a ban on neonicotinoids despite the fact that there is no more doubt about their toxicity to pollinators and the environment as a whole. We do not understand why MEPs accept to take part in such an event co-organised by those responsible for honey bees', bumble bees' or butterflies' decline! This is green/bee washing!'*

Further, the organisers focussed many discussions on a better coexistence between farmers and beekeepers, avoiding discussions on the way we treat the environment. Martin Dermine added: *'Very little space has been left to discussions about biodiversity and the quality of the environment. Bees and wild pollinators today lack resources because of the lack of trees, wild flowers and flowering hedges that disappeared because of monocultures and pesticides. Our dominant industrial model of farming does not leave any space to diversity and nature is 'managed'. Further, research has proven that wild flowers are strongly contaminated with pesticides that drift from the fields. Evidence shows that the state of the entire biodiversity (insects, birds, soil life, etc.) is in a dramatic situation, a rapid transition of our agriculture towards agroecology is necessary!'*

PAN Europe recommends to the Members of the European Parliament to re-evaluate the organisations that take part to the Bee Week so that next year's Bee Week edition gives a more credible image to the European Parliament's engagement for bees!

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<sup>1</sup> [www.beeweek.eu](http://www.beeweek.eu)