

Integrated Pest Management - The Way Forward to Sustainable Agricultural Production

Panel: The state of the environment in a resource-constrained world

Good morning to you all.

Dear guests,

Not being fluent in English, I prefer to read my brief opening introduction to this panel on "The state of the environment in a resource-constrained world".

It's an honour for me to be here among you today.

As an MEP I know that Europe is already a world leader in environmental legislation but it has the power and duty to implement more ambitious policies to preserve biodiversity, protect citizens' health and promote a truly sustainable agriculture.

I come from a beautiful land, the North-East of Italy, where intensive agriculture set to a logic of unbridled profit and the consequent reckless use of pesticides is slowly destroying biodiversity, polluting groundwater and causing an increasing number of cancer patients, as we understand from health data collected by the official authorities.

Just yesterday in my province on the hills planted with vineyards of *Prosecco*, some billboards appeared showing the message "Stop Pesticides", sign of citizens' exasperation due to the spraying of pesticides often made even by helicopter notwithstanding the EC Directives.

From the hills where *Prosecco* is produced, to the valleys in Trentino, in Italy, planted with apple trees, to the endless plantations in the region of Almería, in Andalusia, we must reverse course, rethink European agricultural policy and clearly indicate that it is possible to produce a different sustainable approach with less chemistry.

It is a great honour for me to give the floor to Prof. Pimentel.

David Pimentel is a professor of ecology and agricultural sciences at Cornell University His research spans the fields of energy, population ecology, biological pest control, pesticides, sustainable agriculture, land and water conservation, livestock, and environmental policy. Pimentel has published 700 scientific papers and 37 books and has served on many national and government committees.

Unfortunately, due to illness David Gee hasn't been able to be here with us today.

Therefore, I will now give the floor to my colleague Pavel Poc.

Pavel graduated in General Biology - Ethology at the Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague. He specialised in the hormonal regulation of insect behaviour. After working as the Head of the Municipal Environmental Office in Mariánské Lázně he dealt with the invasive plants, especially the giant hogweed. Pavel Poc has been elected Member of the European Parliament in

2009 where he is a member of the Committees for Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI).