



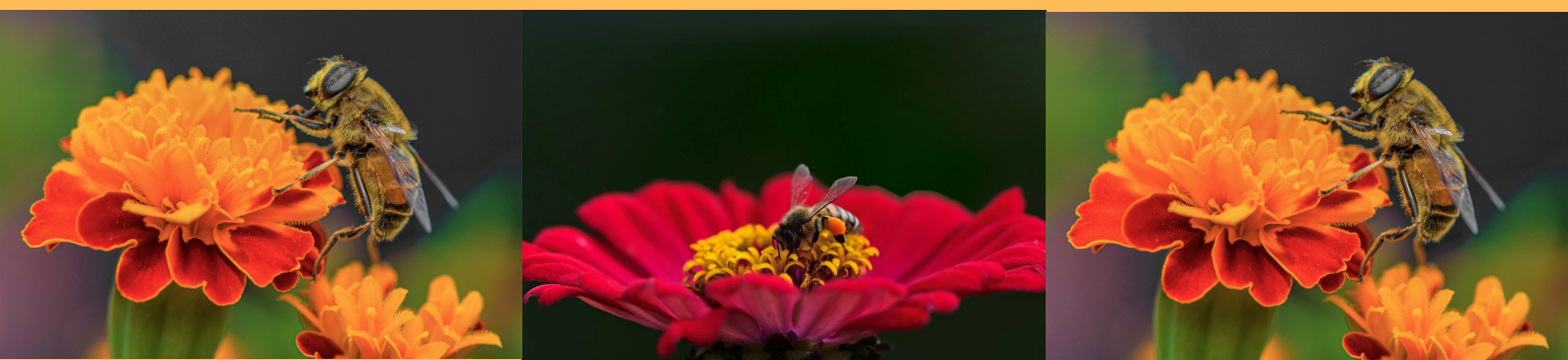
PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK EUROPE

ANNUAL
REVIEW

2020

"The more I learned about the use of pesticides, the more appalled I became... What I discovered was that everything which meant most to me as a naturalist was being threatened and that nothing I could do would be more important."

Rachel Carson, 1962
Biologist and Author of Silent Spring



"Many larger animals such as birds, fish, and frogs rely on insects for food. Wildflowers rely on them for pollination. As insects become scarcer, our world will slowly grind to a halt, for it cannot function without them. As Rachel Carson said, 'Man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself'"

Dave Goulson, 2021
Biologist and Conservationist

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Welcome

2020 has been a decisive year in the EU with regards to the fight against biodiversity loss and the protection of citizens' health against pesticides.

Francois Veillerette

PAN Europe President & Director of Générations Futures

The new European Commission has detailed its European Green Deal through the Farm to Fork (F2F), the Biodiversity Strategies (BS), and the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability (CSS). For the first time ever, has the European Commission acknowledged that pesticides were an important driver of biodiversity loss and a threat to people's health. The Commission has underlined the necessity to curve pesticides' use to protect biodiversity. In the F2F and the BS, the European Commission set the objective to reduce the use and risk of pesticides by 50% until 2030, to reduce the use of the most harmful pesticides by 50% until 2030 as well as to restore biodiversity in the EU. Furthermore, the CSS details measures such as the risk assessment of multiple exposures and a ban on the export of EU-banned pesticides.

An approach which the European Commission followed up publishing a report acknowledging that the EU Directive on Sustainable Use of Pesticides is not implemented. The European Commission then sent a number of letters to member states calling on them to start implementation, and as part of that stop applying essential use derogations.

Fungicide Mancozeb was banned as it was classified as toxic to reproduction and is an endocrine disruptor. It was also one of the most used pesticides in the EU. PAN Europe has been advocating to ban this substance and we managed to obtain this ban, despite the opposition from a series of Member States.

In parallel, the reform of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) has moved forward in the particular context that the newly elected Commission had to deal with the CAP proposal from the previous executive. No final decision took place in 2020.

During the period, PAN Europe has engaged with EU regulators and policymakers at all relevant levels on issues relevant to the objectives listed above (e.g. European Green Deal, SUD revision, CAP reform, Save Bees and Farmers European Citizens Initiative, risk assessment for pesticide).

We have involved our members as much as we could in our different campaigns, to help influencing the position of the Member States.

The Covid-19 pandemic has obliged us to modify our working habits and our activities. From spring 2020, the office has worked remotely and direct contacts in person did not take place any more. Pesticides were high on the agenda in 2020, thanks to the European Green Deal and we managed to maintain our work, despite the sometimes difficult situation (children at home, loneliness for some staff members, etc.).

Our advocacy work involved the publication of technical reports, position papers, factsheets, briefings, and letters to policymakers as well as taken part in public consultations, technical meetings while addressing a number of conferences.

An interesting new topic was developed in 2020 and the result of our work was presented in the webinar "Hazardous and banned pesticides in imported food", hosted by MEP Eric Andrieu.

PAN Europe kept leading in the European Citizen Initiative on pollinators ("Save the Bees and Farmers"). The ECI was given a prolongation due to the Covid sanitary crisis and was prolonged by one year (September 2021).

The Bee Guidance Document also remained a hot topic as it was under revision by the EFSA and PAN Europe needed to fight the fact it was negotiated between the European Commission and the Member States behind closed doors! Our action forced the opening of the discussion to stakeholders.

The visibility of our work has increased in social media and the press also actively wrote about pesticides. PAN Europe sent 16 press releases and was quoted 97 times by the press including leading media such as The Guardian, Le Monde, De Morgen, and EU media such as Politico, ENDS Europe, Euronews, Euractiv.

Last but not least, our members accepted the proposed statutory changes, the board growing from 7 to 9 board members. I would like to thank PAN Europe's staff, my colleagues on the board as well as the members of PAN Europe for the amazing work done in 2020, hoping for this work to be continued in the years to come.

Who we are & what we do

PAN Europe is committed to bringing about a substantial reduction in pesticide use throughout Europe. Reducing pesticides (including biocides) is critical for the improvement of public health and that of agricultural workers, the protection of the environment, and the sustainability of future farming.

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) was founded in 1982 and is a network of over 600 non-governmental organisations, institutions, and individuals in over 60 countries worldwide working to minimise the negative effects and replace the use of harmful pesticides with ecologically sound alternatives.

The network's projects and campaigns are coordinated by five autonomous regional Centres. We envision a world in which agricultural productivity is achieved by truly sustainable agricultural production systems, in which agrochemical inputs and environmental damage are minimised, and where local people control local production using local varieties.

PAN Europe is the regional centre in Europe. Located in Brussels, it was founded in 1987 and brings together 45 consumer, public health, and environmental organizations, trade unions, women's groups, and farmer associations from across 27 European countries and the UK.



Why the fight against pesticides is important?



Continuing 'business as usual' is not an option: more and more scientific studies highlight that Europe is suffering from a serious biodiversity loss. There is now no more doubt that agriculture is the main driver of biodiversity loss. Citizens and decision-makers, thanks to the work of civil society are now well aware that pollinators strongly suffer from the use of pesticides. Aquatic biodiversity is severely harmed, as well as soil microbiota or earthworms.

PAN EUROPE

All of us are exposed directly or indirectly to pesticides and other agrochemicals. Pesticides are products designed to kill or repel undesired living organisms. Although each pesticide is meant to target a certain pest, most can have negative side effects on non-target species, including humans. When used in agriculture, they often contaminate the air, water, soil, wildlife, and beneficial insects (like bees and predators of insect pests), soil microorganisms, besides ending up in our food.

Farmworkers and their families most of all, but every citizen is exposed to dozens of different pesticides every day through food and the environment. There are particular concerns about the strong effects of pesticides on young children, including the unborn. Exposure to pesticides can cause cancer, change DNA, or pose risks to reproduction abilities. In addition, several pesticides exhibit endocrine-disrupting properties. The negative consequences of endocrine disruptor exposure (cancer, cognitive and sexual disorders, mental disorders) are rising in society and the contribution of pesticides to these effects is likely. Pregnant women and children are especially vulnerable to pesticide exposure.

PAN EUROPE Activities

What do we do to ensure rigorous implementation of the EU Pesticide Legislative Framework?

PAN Europe is actively involved in the EU's decision-making process. Our advocacy work involved the publication of technical reports, position papers, factsheets, briefings, and letters to policymakers. We took part in public consultations, addressing a number of conferences, while actively contributing and taking part in a number of technical committees of the European Commission, of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) as well as within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). We also work with the Members of the European Parliament and the Member States in the Council.

There are major concerns with regards to the EU's pesticide policy and implementation of EU regulations. EU Directive 1107/2009 on authorisation of plant protection products and EU Directive 128/2009 on Sustainable Use of Pesticides, giving a worrying signal of lack of urgency in addressing the pesticides issue and, by extension, related issues of human health, water, and biodiversity protection.

Documents and reports supporting our work can be found at pan-europe.info

- Informing citizens and policymakers and raising awareness on pesticide issues, regulations, and non-chemical alternatives through reports, factsheets, policy briefings, press releases, blog contributions, and social media.
- Inspiring citizens' actions and amplifying the voices of those affected by pesticides.
- Influencing EU decision-making process by informing politicians on the scientific research updates on the adverse effects of pesticides.
- Sharing evidence and proposing regulatory changes for better protection of human health and the environment from the harms caused by pesticides.
- Organising workshops, conferences, webinars, and policy seminars.
- Carrying out legal actions against the non-implementation of EU-rules
- Promoting dialogue for change among governments, the private sector and civil society stakeholders.

PAN EUROPE BOARD

PAN EUROPE 2020 TEAM

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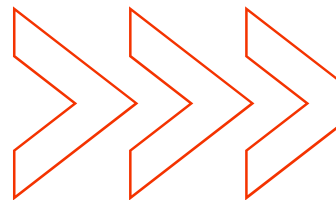
Jana Simanovska, Ecodesign Competence Centre | Latvia

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Needs on EU Pesticide Policy



In 2020 pesticides remained high on the EU agenda, peaking in May when the European Commission released its Farm to Fork (F2F) and Biodiversity (BS) Strategies proposing to reduce pesticide risk and use by 50% by 2030.

The BS clearly proposes to ban pesticides for use in public areas by 2030.

PAN Europe is calling for:

- All pesticides to be banned from all public areas.
- All pesticides to be banned for use in private gardens.
- Establishment of 150-meter non sprayed buffer zones to protect local residents.

Unfortunately, the F2F and the BS fix no specific quantitative targets and timelines regarding reducing pesticide dependency in the agricultural sector. Pesticides will become one of the new CAP's success indicators and member states will have to finally make the link between CAP measures and pesticides, however, it remains to be defined what will be proposed in the CAP Strategic Plans to be developed in 2022.

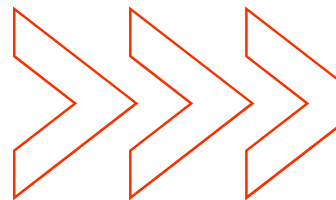
PAN Europe is calling for:

- Each CAP strategic plan having at least a 50% pesticide use reduction target
- Significant upgrading of the CAP measures to address pesticide use in the approach of more CAP funding the more pesticide use reductions
- Full transparency regarding pesticide use reductions at the farm level

In 2020, the European Commission also started to revise its agricultural promotion policy. PAN Europe has taken an active part in this debate, calling for moving away from only promoting economic sustainability but also promoting social and environmental sustainability.

PAN Europe is calling for:

- EU trade policies being revised considering social and environmental sustainability and as part of that also ensure no double standards for pesticides
- EU promotion policies to encourage the development of short-chain organic markets giving special attention to products of benefit to improve soil fertility
- EU marketing policies to be focused on diversification of products



In 2020, the European Commission revised its Guidance Document on derogations. The new guidance document is unfortunately very disappointing and, in our view, not in line with EU law. Giving a derogation for using EU-banned pesticides as a preventative measure (seed coating) is presented as acceptable while PAN Europe demands for a strict implementation of article 53 of the pesticide regulation: derogations should be given only in case of emergency and when there is no alternative.

In 2020, reprotoxic fungicide Mancozeb was banned. It was celebrated by NGOs as Mancozeb was broadly used across the EU. Nevertheless, for a series of pesticides (sulfoxaflor, cypermethrin, etc.), the European Commission did not manage to get the support from the Member States to ban them, despite evidence that these pesticides do not fulfill the criteria to be approved. PAN Europe keeps advocating for strict implementation of EU law.

In 2020, the European Commission published its report on the Fitness check of pesticides regulation 1107/2009. PAN Europe considers that the conclusions of the Commission report are very disappointing. It is claiming that the regulation is mostly well implemented and that improvements should be done to facilitate the arrival of more pesticides on the market.

There is currently a major lack of transparency in terms of pesticides sales and uses. The widespread use of chemical inputs – pesticides and synthetic fertilisers – is “responsible for an increase in the prevalence of numerous diseases among farmers, and there are strong concerns about their impact on our food, including drinking water. European agriculture is also threatening biodiversity, the loss of which is causing alarm. In the space of one generation, 20% of common birds have disappeared, and some regions are lamenting the loss of three-quarters of all flying insects. This picture should also include the destruction of tropical forests, which we indirectly ‘import’ through the soybean produced in South America”, according to independent policy research institute IDDRI (1). PAN Europe is thus advocating for more transparency on pesticides statistics, in order to better assess the impact of pesticides laws on the effective use.



Agriculture

The EU Directive on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (SUD) adopted in 2009 provides a good policy framework to ensure a serious move towards a society less dependent on pesticides.

It calls on member states to set up quantitative objectives, targets, measures, and timetables to reduce pesticides use by developing national action plans and as part of that promote low pesticide-input pest management (including Integrated Pest Management) giving wherever possible priority to non-chemical methods in both agricultural and public areas with the purpose of reducing dependency on the use of pesticides).

Many aspects of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) are not new and have been practiced by generations of farmers as part of routine crop husbandry. Practices such as crop rotation, use of resistant varieties, under sowing, intercropping, non-crop vegetation attracting and protecting pollinators and predators, physical and mechanical weed control, build up and enhancement of soil organic matter, soil structure and water retention capacity have been part of good farm practice for centuries and are key principles of IPM.

Despite this long history, IPM is not effectively taken up by farmers across Europe. PAN Europe advocates for pesticide dependency reductions, encouraging policy changes towards ensuring that farmers apply integrated pest management based on solid agronomic practices to prevent pest build-up and on the use of non-chemical alternatives to work with not against nature. Farmers should apply pesticides only where absolutely needed and carefully select pesticides with the lowest harm.



Since 2012 PAN Europe has been working together with scientists united in International Organisation on Biological Control (IOBC) and companies producing alternatives to pesticides united in International Biocontrol Manufacturer Association (IBMA) building on a joint campaign 'IPM – working with nature'.

As part of this campaign we have for almost a decade been organising annual IPM conferences, prepared joint publications and exhibitions about alternatives, organised farm visits and a set of farmers' testimonies, and illustrations like the IPM triangle showed above.

For details see: <https://www.low-impact-farming.info>

This collaboration was reinforced in 2020, motivated by the European Green Deal, aiming at organising a number of joint events, but unfortunately, the COVID sanitary crises put a hold on this. Instead, we prepared a joint publication identification and scaling up of good practices on non-chemical and organic methods (2).

PAN Europe managed to identify farmers willing to testify about their experience with reducing pesticide use dependency within so-called EU expert groups here.

The SUD has to date not been fully included in the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which each year offers 60 billion euros to the farming sector. In the 2018 CAP reform proposal, the European Commission proposed to link certain 'soft measures' of the SUD like training of farmers, an inspection of equipment, and handling and storage of pesticides and disposal of remnants into the so-called statutory mandatory management aspects that the farmers need to apply to obtain basic payments. Also as something more interesting, the European Commission proposed to make basic payments conditional on farmers protecting nature and water framework directive, with details on what this means still to be defined. Instead, the European Commission did not propose to link basic payments to the concept of farmers needing to apply IPM. The proposal was only accepted by both Council and the European Parliament in 2021 and details of these measures are still in discussion. So our work, also on the so-called National CAP strategic plans will continue in 2021.

PAN Europe continued working on the Common Agricultural Policy, proposing how to integrate pesticide use reductions into the CAP, all these positions are available on our dedicated website page (3).

Furthermore, in 2020 the European Commission prepared a report on the evaluation of the SUD, which was followed up by a reaction from the Member States. PAN Europe prepared a set of recommendations and a report based on access to documents, showing the lacking engagement by MSs regarding their willingness to reduce pesticide dependency (4).

In 2020 PAN Europe took part in a number of public consultations, on SUD revision, on F2F and regarding the further development of pesticide use statistics, and on EU's policies on marketing and promotion of agricultural products.

The use of pesticides on average in Europe did not decrease in recent years despite the EU introduced a policy to reduce pesticide dependency a decade ago, the growing debate on the sustainability of the intensive agricultural model, and despite the entry on the market of pesticides that can be used at low doses. According to Eurostat, in 2019 almost 400,000 tonnes of pesticides continued to be sold in Europe, with the vast majority used in the agricultural sector. Four countries (France, Spain, Italy, and Germany) accounted for over two-thirds of the pesticides sales in the EU (5). In 2020, PAN Europe kept advocating for a better implementation as well as a revision of the rules in terms of access to pesticides statistics.

Implementation of the pesticides legislation and pesticide risk assessment reform

The European Union has one of the strictest regulations for pesticides in the world. This is true in theory but in practice, however, it is not sufficiently implemented.

In order to ensure that the Commission puts the problems resulting from pesticide use on the top of its political agenda, PAN Europe continued working together with NGO networks and scientific experts particularly via the Citizens for Science in Pesticides Regulation (CSPR) (7) coalition and Risk Assessment Reform (RA reform) campaign, and the European Parliament.

After the publication of the Commission REFIT report on the pesticide legislation, PAN Europe carried out an internal analysis of the Commission report. PAN Europe published in June 2020 its observations (8) on the REFIT evaluation report from the European Commission. PAN Europe wrote a briefing (9) on the REFIT of the pesticides and the MRLs regulations to detail the many downfalls of the evaluation published by the Commission.

PAN Europe published and sent its proposal for amendments to the European Council draft conclusions on the REFIT of the pesticides and the Maximum Residues Limits (MRLs) legislation.

PAN Europe published in April 2020 a press release (10) on the lack of improvements in the area of risk assessment of mixtures of endocrine-disrupting pesticides in our food. In September 2020, in collaboration with EDC-free Europe, PAN Europe wrote a briefing (11) on recommendations about endocrine disruptors' policy.

In March 2020, PAN Europe published a factsheet (12) on Mancozeb in order to support a ban on this chemical. There was strong opposition to a ban from a series of MSs but we successfully lobbied them, with the help of our members. Mancozeb used to be the n°1 pesticide in countries such as the Netherlands and Belgium.

In April 2020, PAN Europe published a press release (13) on its evaluation of the pilot study from EFSA on the cumulative risk assessment of neurotoxic and thyroid-harming pesticides.

Two of PAN Europe staff were co-authors to a peer-reviewed scientific publication entitled "Achieving a High Level of Protection from Pesticides in Europe: Problems with the Current Risk Assessment Procedure and Solutions" (14) in the European Journal of Risk Regulation, a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

This has resulted in:

- The hazard-based approach has been reinforced by the Farm-to-Fork and Biodiversity Strategies as well as by the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability.
- PAN Europe has been very successful in raising awareness on the presence of banned pesticide residues in our food, in particular in imported food.
- The European Commission has committed to halt the export of banned pesticides to third countries.
- The highly toxic fungicide Mancozeb has been banned.
- PAN Europe has succeeded in maintaining visible the numerous gaps in the pesticide risk assessment: mixture toxicity, neurotoxicity, etc.
- PAN Europe has published its updated consumer guide to minimize exposure to endocrine-disrupting pesticides.
- The European Ombudsman published its opinion on a complaint filed by PAN Europe on the dozens of authorisations of pesticide active substances with incomplete application dossiers.

In June 2020, PAN Europe took part in a joint meeting with NGOs and DG Sante on pesticides residues in imported food.

In July, we published an updated version of our Consumer guide (15), to avoid consuming endocrine-disrupting pesticides in our food.

In September 2020, we published a policy report (16) and a technical report (17) on the presence of residues of banned pesticides in imported food. We have presented our results in a webinar (18) organised in the European Parliament and co-chaired by PAN staff in September 2020 on Hazardous pesticides and EU's double standards.

PAN Europe has published its yearly analysis (19) of the pesticide residues in food in the EU.

PAN Europe has initiated a new court case on the active substance Captan in the Netherlands.

We also followed up our case with the European Ombudsman on the numerous pesticides approved with incomplete industry dossiers (20).



Biodiversity



In their notorious reports published in early 2019, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Biodiversity Council (IPBES), and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) left no doubt that the lead causes of the global climate and ecosystems crisis are man-made and that their solution requires rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society. These include a radical shift and a fundamental transformation of land use, especially in the way we farm and produce our food.

SAVE BEES AND FARMERS EUROPEAN CITIZENS INITIATIVE

In the wake of the successful Stop Glyphosate! (21) ECI (of which PAN Europe was among the initiators) from 2017 and the ensuing European Parliament PEST Committee (22), PAN Europe, and several other EU NGOs decided that the time was ripe to take action on the role of agriculture and its potential as a solution to the climate and biodiversity crises. Together with an alliance of over 200 environmental NGOs, farmer and beekeeper organisations, charitable foundations, and scientific institutions from across the European Union, PAN Europe decided to launch a new European Citizens' Initiative calling for a new, bee-friendly model of agriculture for a healthy environment in the EU.

The European Citizens' Initiative Save Bees and Farmers! (23) wants to become a catalyst for the transformation of agriculture towards a model that is based on agroecological principles and that therefore promotes biodiversity. Such an agricultural model preserves natural resources, prevents soil degradation, builds up soil fertility, and thus contributes to climate protection by absorbing more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere than it releases. This model is the only possible response to the growing challenges posed by the biodiversity and climate crises and is therefore also best suited to securing the world's food supply and ecosystemic balance for future generations.

In order to make this model become a reality, the ECI sets forth three main demands addressed to the European Commission:

- to phase-out synthetic pesticides entirely from EU agriculture by 2035;
- to introduce measures to restore biodiversity in agricultural areas;
- to introduce measures to support farmers in the transition towards agroecology.

Other activities of PAN Europe of relevance to biodiversity in 2020:

The Save Bees and Farmers ECI was officially registered in September 2019, and the signature collection officially kicked off in November. The Covid sanitary crisis, unfortunately, led to a massive reduction in signature numbers. Partner NGOs had to adapt to the sanitary crisis and struggled very much to remain visible in media and social media, due to the omnipresence of Covid news. Maintaining the motivation in the Circle of Organisers and the office before the difficulties and the low signature numbers was a difficult task for PAN Europe but we succeeded in maintaining a running ECI, collect new funds, and gather new members, reaching over 200 at the end of 2020, compared to the 50 members when officially launching it in November 2019.

Should the ECI be successful, the European Commission and the European Parliament will be legally bound to consider our demands and set forth legal acts for their implementation.

PAN Europe effectively brought the voice of civil society in the ongoing discussions with the DG SANTE, EFSA, and the Member States on the improvement of pesticide environmental risk assessment and the impact of pesticides on ecosystems.

Bees

The European Union has been discussing the revision of the Bee Guidance Document (BGD) since 2013 due to Member States' opposition to implementing it, fearing too many pesticides would be removed from the market. In 2019, the European Commission sent a mandate to review the BGD in light of new scientific evidence, involving MSs and stakeholders. PAN Europe has been extremely active to influence the discussions and expose the fact the EFSA was negotiating secretly with DG Sante and the MSs without involving stakeholders. We took part in online consultations and meetings.

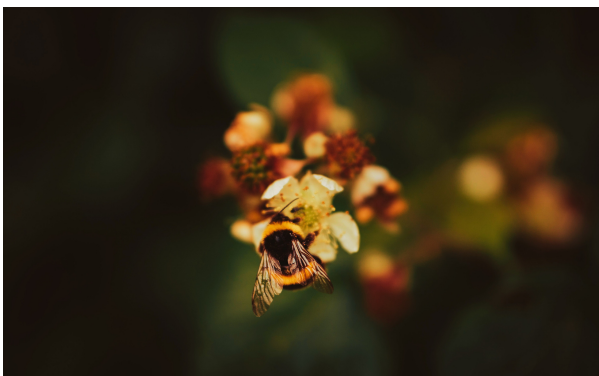
PAN Europe has been actively calling for a review and a ban of the new generation neonicotinoids Flupyradifurone and Sulfoxaflor as evidence prove their toxicity at field-realistic doses for bees.

PAN Europe took part in a bilateral meeting with DG Santé on Specific Protection Goals.



Following the pressure PAN Europe, jointly with beekeeping organisations, put on the European Commission for the increasing numbers of derogations provided to farmers for the use of neonicotinoids on sugar beet, the European Commission has sent a mandate to the EFSA to assess the validity of such derogations by the Member States. The EFSA conclusions are awaited in Fall 2021. PAN Europe has been lobbying both the European Commission and EFSA to strongly improve the way they carry out this work. Indeed, in 2018, the EFSA received a similar mandate and carried out a very poor job (6), without any proper analysis of the agronomic justifications behind the derogations.

PAN Europe has carried out one new legal action in Belgium, jointly with our member Nature&Progrès Belgique against the provision of a derogation on the use of neonicotinoids in sugar beet in Belgium. In the legal action, we ask the Belgian administrative court to send 5 prejudicial questions to the Court of Justice of the EU, in order to better define the limits of the use of article 53 of pesticides regulation 1107/2009/EC.



PAN EUROPE

“I support the Pesticide Action Network Europe and the European Citizens' Initiative Save Bees and Farmers because we need strong and loud NGOs fighting for a green future. We know that our climate- and biodiversity crises will be worsened by the current CAP-Deal and undermines good initiatives from the commission like the Farm2fork Strategy. Thus we need PAN and others to help us raise the public pressure in our fight.”

Thomas Waitz
Member of the European Parliament (Greens/EFA)
Co-Chair of the European Green Party, Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

"Endocrine disruptors, pesticides, toxic recycling: exposure to potentially dangerous chemicals is a major environmental and health issue. It is essential that Europeans be better protected against these risks. With more than 4 million tons of pesticides used worldwide every year, practices that are more respectful of the environment and the health of animals, farmers and consumers are not a whim but an imperative. In this respect, PAN Europe is an extremely valuable ally, its expertise is undoubtedly an added value in the environmental fight. I fully support the demand of the European Citizens' Initiative Save Bees and Farmers to phase out all synthetic pesticides in the EU by 2035, as well as concrete measures to restore biodiversity in agricultural areas. This is a matter of public interest."

Eric Andrieu
Member of the European Parliament
(Socialists & Democrats)
Committee on Agriculture and Rural
Development, Committee on the
Environment, Public Health and
Food Safety,
Chairman of the PEST Committee
for the European Parliament (2014-
2019)



"Sustainable agriculture is possible, which is why I invite you to sign the Save Bees and Farmers European Citizens' Initiative. It is a fundamental instrument of participatory democracy that allows European citizens to take an active part in EU policy and to ask the European Commission to address issues we care about. We have already been able to achieve this in the past and we will succeed again! I have signed, and you?"

Eleonora Evi
Member of the European
Parliament (Non-attached
Members)
Committee on the
Environment, Public Health,
and Food Safety

EU NETWORK OF PESTICIDE-FREE TOWNS

Pesticides are not only used in agriculture but also in towns and cities. They are used in the green areas of schools, playgrounds, kindergartens, parks, private gardens, sports fields, sidewalks, and cemeteries. While on the one hand workers applying pesticides must wear protective clothing, on the other hand immediately after application kids and families come play, picnic, and lounge freely on the grass, where they come in direct contact with the pesticides.

There is no need for the use of pesticides in towns. This has been repeatedly proven by the many towns and cities that are already pesticide-free. 70 percent of European citizens live in cities and citizens are increasingly concerned about the use of pesticides, showing there is a strong political and public interest to ban the use of pesticides in public areas.

While many towns and cities in Europe are already pesticide-free as part of national regulation (e.g. France, Belgium, and Luxemburg), there is a growing number of cities and towns across Europe that are individually working towards becoming pesticide-free, or interested in doing so. Going pesticide-free not only helps to protect cities and towns' people and environment, but it is also fundamental in the transition to becoming a truly green city.

PAN EUROPE

Since 2015, PAN Europe has been running a campaign on Pesticide-Free Towns with a dedicated website (24) in 8 languages, aiming at showing that banning the use of pesticides in non-agricultural areas (both public and private) is possible, engaging with players we share this approach.

More and more member states and municipalities around Europe are taking action to ban the use of pesticides in public areas including cemeteries, sidewalks, parks, schools, kindergartens, sports fields, railways, to name a few. Towns making the effort to become pesticide-free represent a significant step in reducing our dangerous exposure to pesticides. Despite very limited means for this campaign, PAN Europe continues spreading knowledge and good practices from across Europe on pesticide-free management of green public spaces and together with its members continued inspiring and encouraging towns and cities to join the European Network of Pesticide Free Towns ([Pesticide-free-towns.info/towns-network](https://pesticide-free-towns.info/towns-network)) and become pesticide-free. The network is expanding.

In 2020, three new stories from local mayors were added, one webinar was organised and 'PFT one tour' with two actual events were organised in 2020. Throughout the year, we exchanged with our members while addressing one national event, with no less than two EU Green Capital laureates joining our network.

Tallinn (25) - finalist of the European Green Capital 2022 award:

Tallinn has joined the movement of European Pesticide-Free Towns, we have mapped our use of pesticides and we are taking steps to reduce it systematically.

Tallinn Urban Environment and Public Works Department has reduced the use of pesticides necessary for keeping roadsides clean of weeds by 58% (in comparison with data from 2017).

We expect this collaboration to obtain increased attention in the coming years as the Biodiversity Strategy (26) says on Greening urban and peri-urban areas: To bring nature back to cities and reward community action, the Commission calls on European cities of at least 20,000 inhabitants to eliminate the use of pesticides.

"We joined the Pesticide-Free Towns network because we believe that even in a territory as small as ours, maintaining a strong focus on the quality of environmental interventions is an element of community awareness."

Emanuele Rallo
Mayor of Oriolo Romano, Italy

"Here in Ozalji, we are convinced that managing urban green spaces without the use of chemistry is not a utopia. That is why we have joined the European Pesticide Free Towns network. Belonging to a European network is very important to spread this message to the rest of Croatia and the whole of Europe."

Gordana Lipšinić
Mayor of the pesticide-free town of Ozalji, Croatia



"We were shocked to learn that Portugal is one of the countries where the effects of glyphosate are most devastating and aggressive. This is why we decided to protect the health of our citizens by joining the European network of Pesticide Free Towns."

Luís Newton
President of Borgo di Estrela, Lisbon, Portugal

"Joining the Pesticide-Free Towns network was a choice in line with the central role played by environmental sustainability practices in authentic villages, attention to the quality of life of the people who live there and a determined strategy to combat climate change".

Rosanna Mazzia
President of the Association of Authentic Villages (Borghi Autentici d'Italia) of Italy

"Our municipality has always been attentive to environmental policies, carrying out innovative projects and initiatives. Joining the European Pesticide-Free Towns network means opening a European horizon to our efforts and finding support in interacting with other municipalities that share our experiences."

Angelo Radica
Mayor of Tollo, Italy, Member Municipality of Pesticide-Free Towns

Inside PAN Europe

How is PAN Europe financed?

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“Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation is pleased to fund PAN Europe’s essential work – it is clear that a wholesale change towards low impact methods of farming is needed and PAN Europe is facilitating that change through educating policy-makers on viable alternatives to damaging pesticides.”

–Christine Oliver, Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation

PAN Europe is a member-based organisation. PAN Europe brings together a diversity of European organisations working to replace the use of hazardous pesticides. We place a real emphasis on supporting our members and working to foster greater cooperation among the network. Our network unites 45 member organisations. In 2020, PAN Europe has welcomed one new member: EDEN environmental center (Albania). (27)

Find the full list of PAN Europe’s members [here](#). (28)

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Acknowledgement

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