

Commission slammed for failing to cut pesticides

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The European Commission's efforts to monitor and reduce the risks resulting from pesticide use are too vague, the European Court of Auditors warned on Wednesday in a report that also signalled that several member states were late in transposing legislation.

The EU executive "has been unable so far to substantially reduce and control risks associated with pesticide use by farmers," said ECA member Samo Jereb.

The forthcoming biodiversity strategy needs to develop a framework with EU-wide targets, alongside "actions and monitoring for those measures to be implemented and obtain results", an ECA member told reporters in Brussels.

On Tuesday, a [draft Biodiversity Strategy](#) draft revealed that the commission could propose a 50% reduction in pesticide use by 2030. But environmental groups such as Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe [have called](#) for a reduction of 80% by 2030, and for a full pesticide phase-out by 2035.

Some member states have failed to fully transpose the 2009 Sustainable Use Directive on pesticides, the report notes.

France, for instance, implemented the directive but has not transposed Integrated Pest Management (IPM) requirements into domestic law, it says.

Although EU rules require farmers to keep records of applying IPM, the auditors found that enforcement is weak, urging national governments to verify compliance and link it to income support under the post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The Commission should also develop better [risk indicators](#), according to the ECA, since neither of the first two EU-wide indicators [recently introduced](#) "takes into account how, where and when plant protection products are used", an ECA member said.

It "therefore still lacks a robust evidence base to assess whether the directive has achieved the EU's objective of making pesticide use sustainable", the auditors conclude.

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Follow-up: [ECA press release](#), [ECA report](#)