

Brussels 5 February 2020

EU Court of Auditors underlines insufficient efforts by the European Commission and Member States in reducing pesticide dependency in the EU

Today, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) published a report criticising the lack of implementation of mandatory Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles at Member State level, the lack of connection between pesticide use and agricultural subsidies, and lack of transparency in pesticide statistics. This is in line with PAN Europe's position highlighting that Member States are failing to comply with EU policy [Sustainable Use of Pesticide Directive 2009/128/EC (SUDP)] aimed at effectively reducing pesticide use in agriculture.

In its recommendations, the [special report](#) 05/2020 'Sustainable use of plant protection products: limited progress in measuring and reducing risks' indicates the necessity to:

- (1) check that Member States convert the general principles of integrated pest management into practical criteria and that they verify them at farm level, allowing them to be linked to payments under the common agricultural policy (CAP) in the post-2020 period;
- (2) improve statistics on pesticides when revising the legislation to make them more accessible, useful and comparable; and
- (3) to assess the progress made towards policy objectives, improve harmonised risk indicators, or develop new ones, taking account of the use of pesticides.

Henriette Christensen, senior agriculture policy advisor at PAN Europe, stated: *“PAN Europe welcomes this report as it underlines many of the main issues PAN has identified over the last years, such as preventing the transition towards an environmentally-friendly and low-input farming model. The answer from the Commission to this report is far from acceptable. Rather than finally acknowledging the necessity to integrate the Common Agricultural Policy with pesticide policies, the Commission instead keeps promoting the same ideas that have not shown any positive results for more than a decade”*.

Since the publication of the directive on the sustainable use of pesticides in 2009, pesticide use has increased in nearly all EU Member States.

Martin Dermine, environmental policy officer at PAN Europe, added: *“The new Farm to Fork strategy is a fantastic opportunity to set ambitious targets to gradually lead our agriculture towards practices both agro-ecological and free from synthetic pesticides. Public money for public goods: it is time for CAP money to be spent to reconcile agriculture, citizens and the environment and we do not see this happening with the current CAP reform proposal”*.

PAN Europe calls for 50% quantitative use targets to be reached by 2025, 80% use reduction by 2030 and a full phase-out in 2035. These objectives must be introduced in two main policies undergoing revision; the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive and the Common Agricultural Policy.

Contact:

PAN Europe: Henriette Christensen, + 32 2 318 62 55, henriette@pan-europe.info