



**Pesticide  
Action  
Network**  
Europe

# Press >>>>>>> Release <<<<<<<<

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## **EFSA actively undermines the protection of Wild Bees**

**Wild bees are in decline across the EU and to date, they still remain unprotected against pesticides. While the pesticide regulation claims that no unacceptable harm on the environment is accepted, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) just published an analysis supporting more harm to Wild Bees, through exposure to toxic pesticides.**

On 28 January, the EFSA published its 'Analysis of the evidence to support the definition of specific protection goals for bumblebees and solitary bees'<sup>1</sup>. Since a few years, the European Commission tries to set Specific Protection Goal (SPG) to define the level of harm that is acceptable on the environment. This approach has shown to be more political than scientific<sup>2</sup>.

Martin Dermine, Environment and Health Policy officer at PAN Europe said: *'As it did with honeybees, the EFSA once more considers as a baseline, that a 'healthy' bumblebee colony is a colony that is already exposed to agrochemicals in a conventional agricultural environment. They base themselves on weakened colonies to propose to regulators a level of acceptable harm caused by pesticides. According to EFSA, we should accept the bumblebee colonies to lose up to 10% of their population after each pesticide exposure. This is unscientific and unacceptable'*.

In its Analysis, the EFSA is feeding models with field data providing from agricultural areas, meaning they are exposed to dozens of pesticides, all year round. PAN Europe has already communicated this important scientific bias to the EFSA and the European Commission, this was also challenged in the Environment Committee of the European Parliament in October 2020<sup>3</sup>. But it seems that the 'scientific excellence' promoted in EFSA's communications is not put in practice!

Martin Dermine added: *'The EFSA is aware that scientific publications have shown long ago that pesticides act in synergy to damage bees. Nevertheless, they keep promoting a weak form of risk assessment, guaranteeing to pesticide companies that their bee-toxic pesticides will remain on the market'*.

PAN Europe has sent last week to EU Member States its Position Paper on the development of a protective risk assessment for Wild Bees<sup>4</sup>.

Martin Dermine concluded: *'When Wild pollinators are in decline and science shows that a main cause of that decline is the use of pesticides, the publication of this Analysis shows how disconnected the EFSA is from reality and how little scientific their approach is. We hope Member States will correct this approach a decide to finally protect wild bees!'*

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<sup>1</sup> EFSA, [Analysis of the evidence to support the definition of Specific Protection Goals for bumblebees and solitary bees](#).

<sup>2</sup> PAN Europe, [European Countries "improve" bees' protection against pesticides by allowing important mortalities in the hives](#).

<sup>3</sup> PAN Europe, [European Commission and EFSA under fire from the European Parliament's Environment Committee for watering down the protection of bees against pesticides](#).

<sup>4</sup> PAN Europe, [Position paper on the development of a risk assessment of pesticides on bumblebees and solitary bees](#).

**Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe** is a network of NGOs working to reduce the use of hazardous pesticides and have them replaced with ecologically sound alternatives. We work to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides and to support safe sustainable pest control methods. Our network brings together 40 consumer, public health, and environmental organisations, and women's groups from across Europe.