

Brussels, 20 March 2019

Pesticide Action Week 2019: No more pesticides in non-agricultural areas!

Today marks the first day of “Pesticide Action Week” (1), a ten-day celebration of activities for a pesticide-free world. On this day, Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe urges EU Member States and the European Commission to take the first step and ban all non-agricultural uses of pesticides.

A [recent PAN Europe position paper](#) (2) highlights an increasing number of European governments, cities and towns taking decisions to ban the use of synthetic pesticides in public areas. In France and Belgium, pesticide use in private gardens was also recently prohibited. This transition to ban pesticides for non-agricultural uses has been supported by the European Parliament. The January resolution of the PEST Committee calls on the European Commission and the Member States to no longer allow the use of pesticides in areas used by the general public or by vulnerable groups, as defined in the EU Directive on sustainable use of pesticides (SUD) (3). This request was also reiterated in the European Parliament resolution of 12 February 2019 on the implementation of the sustainable use Directive (SUD) (4).

“Ending the use of pesticides in public areas and private gardens is just common sense. Since the ban of pesticide use in all non-agricultural areas in France, the law has been implemented without problems. In fact, 80 % of the population supports the pesticide ban in public private gardens and in public spaces. I call on other European countries and European institutions to follow the French example and implement a full ban on the non-agricultural use of pesticides” adds Joel Labbé, French Senator, author of the law banning pesticides in public areas and in private gardens (5)

PAN Europe calls on the European Commission and Member States to develop a regulatory framework ensuring a full ban on non-agricultural uses of pesticides while setting up a financial instrument to accompany the necessary ‘non-toxic transition’ both at local, regional, national and EU level.

“It is time for the European Commission to show leadership and adjust the regulatory framework to introduce a full ban on non-agricultural uses of pesticides, following up on what Members of the European Parliament have been calling for. This can easily be done as a part of the expected SUD revision in 2019, which could include a full ban on non -agricultural uses of pesticides among the changes to be proposed by the European Commission (6).” concludes Henriette Christensen, PAN Europe’s Senior Policy Advisor.

Notes:

- (1) Pesticide Action Week is celebrated during the first ten days of every spring (20th-30th of March) when usually the spraying of pesticides resumes. It has been a powerful force for awareness-raising and action for a pesticide free Europe. Launching the 14th edition, a coalition of NGOs led by Noé in France has issued a manifesto for “Zero Pesticides in Public Areas” calling for a total ban of pesticides in non-agricultural areas including forests, sports fields, cemeteries, parks and gardens. <http://noe.org/tout-sur-noe/actualite/manifeste-zero-pesticide-sur-toutes-les-zones-non-agricoles/>
- (2) PAN Europe Position Paper “A STEP FORWARD FOR PESTICIDE FREE TOWNS: Enacting a Europe-Wide Full Ban on Non-Agricultural Use of Pesticides” <https://bit.ly/2UG5yRj>
- (3) With “Labbé’s Law”, named after the senator Joel Labbé who introduced it, France has prohibited the use of pesticides in public areas and in private gardens as well as selling of pesticides to non-professional users. <https://bit.ly/2jrZz11>
- (4) The report on the Union’s authorisation procedure for pesticides drafted by the Special Committee on the Union’s authorisation procedure for pesticides (PEST), adopted by the Plenary on 16 January 2019 <https://bit.ly/2Yeq6mm>
- (5) European Parliament resolution on the implementation of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides <https://bit.ly/2Y7u3cf>
- (6) Article 4.3 of the Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides (SUD) states that in 2019 European Commission must submit a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the experience gained by Member States on the implementation of national targets established in order to achieve the objectives of this Directive. This report might - contrary to the report prepared last year - may be accompanied, if necessary, by appropriate legislative proposals.

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