

Pesticide Action Network

Activity report



Pesticide
Action
Network
Europe

2021



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Introduction

In 2021, PAN Europe put a lot of energy in making sure that the European Commission Green Deal was converted into a specific legislation including the objective of reducing the use and risk of pesticides by 50% until 2030 and the use of the more hazardous pesticides (the candidates for substitution) by 50% until 2030. While other players lobbied actively towards a much lower ambition, the 50% reduction target was kept in both the Farm to Fork (F2F) and the Biodiversity Strategies (BS), with the BS also calling for a full phase out of pesticide use in public areas by 2030.

At PAN Europe we invested a lot of resources in making the European Citizens Initiative Save Bees and Farmers a success. On 30 September 2021, we reached 1.18 million signatures, which should, after validation of the signatures by the Member States, lead to the validation of our ECI by the European Commission in the course of 2022.

We continued at PAN Europe to take part in the negotiation discussions around the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), focusing in 2021 on integrating the Farm to Fork and the Biodiversity Strategy objectives in the new CAP. We also focused on ensuring the development of solid indicators to properly measure the pesticide use reductions, both within the CAP, and within the new Commission proposal for a Regulation on Statistical Inputs and Outputs (SAIO), in order to obtain good quality pesticide use statistics.

Last but not least, in 2021, a series of pesticide active substances were subject to ban/renewal discussions. PAN Europe contributed to the debate. Some highly toxic substances such as phosmet and alpha-cypermethrin were banned and the Commission proposed a ban on bee-toxic Sulfoxaflor insecticide, at the end of 2021.



EU Pesticide Policy

CAP reform: a major disappointment from the EU Green Deal

In the frame of the European Green Deal, and in order to align the new CAP with the EGD objectives, the European Commission had the possibility to align the modalities of the 56 billion euros budget with the objective to reduce pesticides and synthetic fertilizers while increasing the share of organic agriculture. Instead, the European Commission decided to move forward with the CAP reform initiated by the previous Commission. Nevertheless, we managed to link the CAP with pesticide reduction objectives by changing the wording of a specific indicator mentioning “reduction in risk and impact”, replacing it with “reduction in use and risk”, which aligns with the CAP and can indeed lead to effective pesticide reductions, contrary to the initial proposed indicator. Next CAP reform: 2027! indicator. Next CAP reform: 2027!

Farm-to-Fork and Biodiversity Strategy

The proposal by the European Commission to cut pesticide use and risk by half in the EU until 2030 gathered all our attention. On top of the general 50% reduction objective, the Commission promised to reduce by half the most hazardous pesticides (namely the Candidates for Substitution), while putting a safety factor on pesticide mixtures.

The European Commission contracted a consultant in 2021 to carry out an impact assessment, based on different scenarios of pesticide reduction, PAN Europe took part in several rounds of consultations, providing evidence on the need for an ambitious pesticide reduction, while maintaining farmers' profitability and yields. PAN Europe strongly advocated¹ to maintain ambitious objectives, despite the numerous pressure received by the Commission.

1. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/10/dg-sante-derailing-pesticides-reduction-objectives-european-green-deal

Halting the exports of EU-banned pesticides

In January 2021, the European Commission confirmed its intention to halt the exports of EU-banned pesticides², a file PAN Europe has actively been working on for several years now. The Commission now needs to carry out an impact assessment and make a legislative proposal. Such a move provides a strong signal that NGOs in third countries can ask for better protection against EU-banned pesticides as well. Leading by example, the European Commission will have more power in international arenas to ask its partners to take similar actions.



2. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/01/eu-commission-promises-end-export-eu-banned-pesticides-%E2%80%93-pan-europe-reacts

A better implementation of EU law on pesticide approvals

A strict implementation of regulation (EU) 1107/2009 is one of the core activities of PAN Europe. The regulation is meant to ensure that pesticides do not harm human health, animal health and the environment. Unfortunately, its implementation at European Commission and Member States level is insufficient.

In 2021, PAN Europe has contributed to the debate on negligible exposure. Despite of the strict rules that oblige banning pesticides that are identified as Carcinogenic, Mutagenic, Reprotoxic (the famous CMRs) or Endocrine Disruptors, the EU Commission is able to allow such pesticides in case it is demonstrated that the exposure to citizens and the environment is negligible. PAN Europe has been advocating to not allow new loopholes through a briefing on negligible exposure³.

Furthermore, PAN Europe has followed through on its work on imposing a MAF (Mixture Assessment Factor) in order to protect citizens against cocktail effects of pesticides. Our organisation has developed a position, asking for a MAF of minimum 10, that was shared with the Member States⁴.

PAN Europe continued monitoring the work from EFSA. A report⁵ was published on the fact EFSA follows industry proposals and ideologies, rather than implementing the precautionary principle, as laid down in EU law.

Furthermore, the EFSA work on updating the Bee Guidance continued and PAN Europe was involved in order to ask for a strict implementation of the precautionary principle⁶.

3. www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/press-releases/PR%20with%20LIFE%20logo/PAN%27s%20position%20on%20NE_Nov2021%20%281%29.pdf

4. www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/briefings/CRA_Towards%20the%20implementation%20of%20a%20MAF.pdf

5. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/06/new-report-dangerous-pesticides-given-flawed-eu-safety-clearance-fresh

6. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/05/world-bee-day-european-bees-abandoned-policy-makers



A winning Save Bees and Farmers European Citizens Initiative

PAN Europe is proud to be the NGO behind the launch of the Save Bees and Farmers European Citizens Initiative (ECI)⁷. Together with a dynamic Circle of Organisers, we succeeded jointly to gather nearly 1.2 million signatures. Over 200 organisations have struggled during the pandemic (Covid-19) to collect signatures, but they helped us raise awareness among citizens on the issues linked to pesticides. The successful ECI has been a strong signal and motivator for the European Commission to propose ambitious pesticide reduction targets.

The 1.2 million signatures still needed to be validated for this ECI to be considered valid by the European Commission and the Parliament. If validated, it will become the 7th successful ECI of the EU, and the 2d anti-pesticide ECI, after the STOP Glyphosate ECI in 2017. If this happens, then in 2022, the European Commission and the Parliament will have to welcome the ECI and make a formal response to our demands for

1. A reduction of synthetic pesticides in the EU of 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2035,
2. A restoration of biodiversity in agricultural areas and
3. A massive support to farmers in the transition towards agroecology.

The ECI received also the blessing of the pope⁸!

7. www.savebeesandfarmers.eu

8. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/09/popes-blessing-bees



Denouncing citizens' exposure to toxic pesticides in the EU and around the world

Citizens exposure to pesticides is both underestimated during the regulatory process and constantly minimized by regulators. In the frame of the Save Bees and Farmers ECI, PAN Europe published its 'Pesticides in our bedroom' report, on the presence of pesticide residues in household dust, which triggered a lot of media attention.

PAN Europe also contributed to a new scientific publication⁹ about the presence of pesticide residues on children's playgrounds in South Tyrol, Italy. The topic was also discussed during a webinar co-organised

with EDC-Free Europe, Child Right International Network and Members of the European Parliament¹⁰.

Our Pesticide Free Towns campaign continued gathering new members and thus making visible the necessity for all EU towns to become pesticide-free¹¹.

Finally, PAN Europe led an action before the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organisation from the United Nations in Rome, to denounce the collaboration established between FAO and CropLife International¹².

9. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/02/new-study-childrens-playgrounds-contaminated-pesticide-drift-all-year-round

10. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/07/webinar-no-pesticides-our-playgrounds-schools-and-public-areas

11. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/06/eu-green-week-webinar-sustainable-future-our-cities-dedicated-pesticide-free

12. www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2021/12/un-fao-urged-abandon-controversial-pesticide-industry-partnership-more-187300



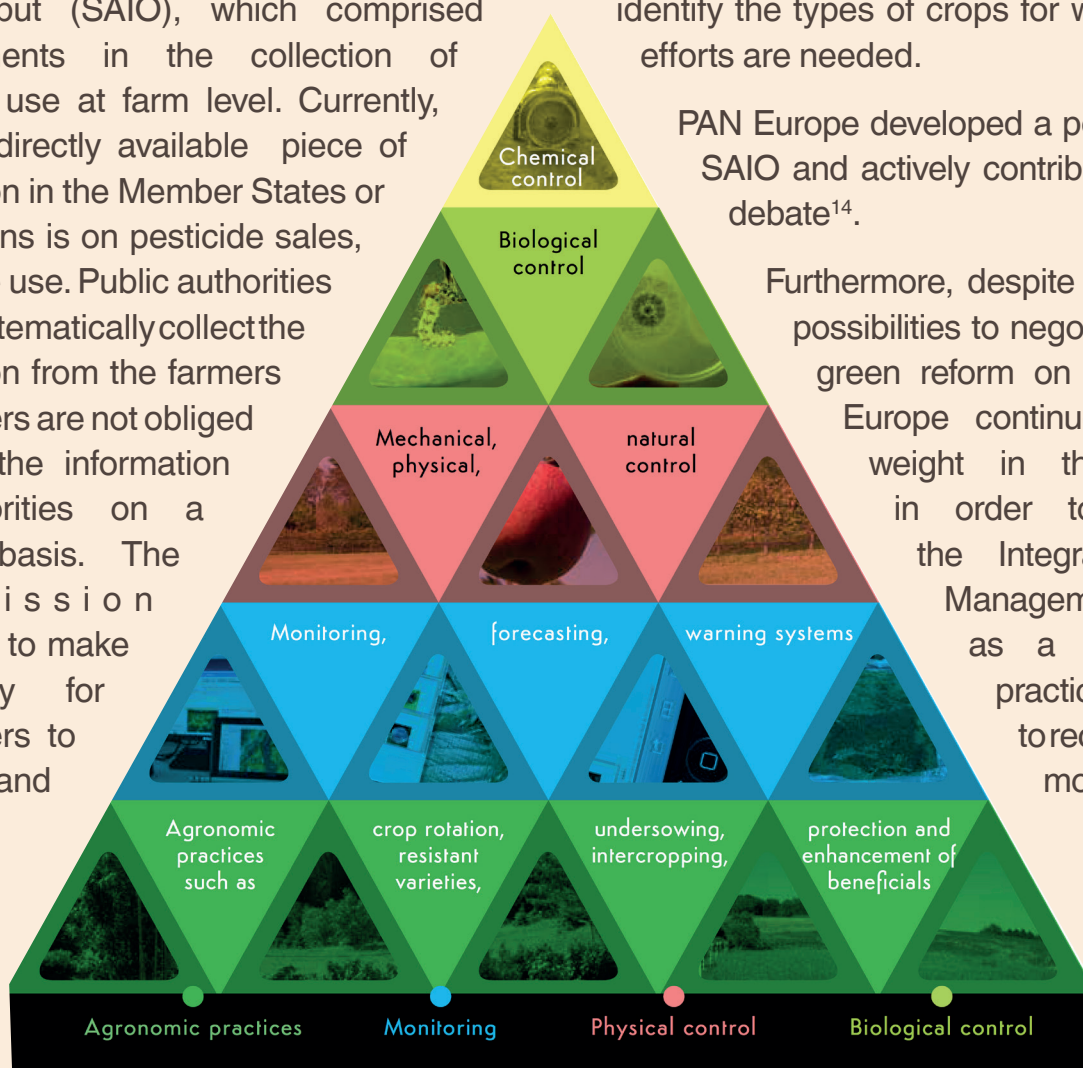
Agriculture

This year, important discussions took place in the European Commission as well as in the Council and the Parliament on pesticide statistics. The Commission proposed a new Regulation on Statistics on Agricultural Input and Output (SAIO), which comprised improvements in the collection of pesticide use at farm level. Currently, the only directly available piece of information in the Member States or the Regions is on pesticide sales, not on the use. Public authorities do not systematically collect the information from the farmers and farmers are not obliged to send the information to authorities on a regular basis. The Commission proposed to make mandatory for the farmers to collect and

transmit of the information on pesticide use in a precise way, by farmers. Obtaining precise information on pesticide use is of paramount importance in order to be able to monitor reduction in pesticide use and be able to identify the types of crops for which more efforts are needed.

PAN Europe developed a position¹³ on SAIO and actively contributed to the debate¹⁴.

Furthermore, despite of the little possibilities to negotiate a truly green reform on CAP, PAN Europe continued putting weight in the debate in order to position the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a mandatory practice in order to receive public money¹⁵.



13. www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/press-releases/PR%20with%20LIFE%20logo/210331%20Statistics%20on%20Agricultural%20Input%20and%20Output.pdf

14. www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/field/Press%20Release/PAN%20Europe%20position%20on%20revision%201185_2009.pdf

15. www.pan-europe.info/resources/reports/2021/04/using-cap-turn-ipm-triangle-its-solid-base

A fundamental change in Access to EU Justice

Over the last couple of years, PAN Europe supported a campaign led by the EEB and ClientEarth in order to force the European Commission to reform the Aarhus regulation align it to the provisions of the Aarhus convention and broaden the access to justice for EU NGOs. In October 2021, the European Parliament and the Council agreed on a new Aarhus regulation that enables civil society to challenge pesticide approvals at EU-level.¹⁶ Until then, NGOs were only allowed to go to national courts on national authorisations of pesticides, while the only way they could obtain the opinion from the Court of Justice of the EU, was by asking national courts to send prejudicial questions. Thanks to this reform, PAN Europe and others will be able to challenge EU pesticide approvals, in order to gradually correct the numerous bad implementations of EU law regarding pesticides.



16. https://docs.google.com/document/d/12o730lmtJpaCmru5h6_zxJy6yumS59q1_VS3mdG-Xn0/edit

Inside PAN Europe

At PAN Europe we are grateful for the support we get from the Life programme of the European Commission Directorate-General for Environment, as well as from the following donors The European Environment and Health Initiative - EEHI and Marisla Foundation; the Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation, Léa Nature et al.

PAN Europe is a member-based organisation. We bring together a diversity of European organisations working jointly to replace the use of hazardous pesticides. We try to support our members and work together in order to foster a great cooperation in the network. Our current network unites 48 member organisations at the moment.

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





Board Members



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www.pan-europe.info/support-us

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We thank you for your continued support in our efforts against pesticides!

