



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Louvain la Neuve, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017.**

### **A Possible Total Ban on Neonicotinoids. Good news for bees, the environment and food security**

After years of research, discussion and activism, the possibility of having a total ban on neonicotinoids seems to be closing in. The English daily newspaper, The Guardian, published that draft regulations from the European Commission reveal the incentive to “prohibit the insecticides that cause ‘acute risk to bees’”. Hours later, Politico published the news as well and made the draft documents public.

In 2013, the Commission already imposed a partial ban on clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam, all three neonicotinoid insecticides that are of great risk to bees. These products by Bayer (first two) and Syngenta (last one) were however only the tip of the iceberg on this issue of neonicotinoids. Scientific evidence both from independent researchers and from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has been clear on the risk that neonicotinoids pose on bees. Such kind of research led to the temporary ban in 2013 and now it gives a chance to achieve a full ban on neonicotinoid-based insecticides used in open air.

This permanent ban is an important step forward to ensure bees health, environmental protection and food security. Based on evidence and following EFSA’s advice, the Commission seems to be addressing the neonicotinoid problem setting a route towards a safer crop management. However, the ban will apply to outer fields only, leaving the use of such pesticides in greenhouses unaddressed. This raises a concern of citizens and fauna living in greenhouse areas. Now different organizations wonder if the closed quarters of greenhouses will give a wholesome protection from the toxicity of neonicotinoids.

Now that the draft regulations are public after being just mentioned as an exclusive by The Guardian, environmental protection organizations that have been working towards the ban of dangerous pesticides welcome the news and are eager to see its application.

BeeLife’s president Francesco Panella has stated “Until when will the EU continue to spread campaigns with worst pesticides like DDT?”

The unacceptable impact of an agricultural production model based on the systemic biocides of fertility is increasingly undeniable. Bees and pollinators, among others; prove it.

The perverse effects of contamination of systemic molecules on living beings are proven on every front and scientific profile. There are no more excuses. Only the ‘scientists’ from in the payroll of chemical firms may still try to bring such a cloud of confusion to rise again. But falsifying scientific studies is more and more an impossible task to do. Even Syngenta has

failed while trying to present its 'studies' to the European Union, to try and prove the acceptability of their neonicotinoid molecule Thiametoxam. A failed attempt to renew its authorization in European implementation.

If the European Union considers the conclusions of its own referential scientific organisms, there is no other possibility. On the other hand, we have already proven that there is no need of neonicotinoids to achieve a great production, without contaminating the environment and avoiding the destruction of the possibility of today's agricultural production.

It is time to ban neonicotinoids. If once again the game of passing the ball around among the Member States will avoid the ban, the EU will lose all decency. It would be the triumph of short term interests of lobbyists. And the Commission will have to stand besides Trump to deny climate change to maintain a coherence among itself.”.

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