



Press Release

European Commission places a temporary suspension on dangerous insecticides

Today Member States agreed on a new piece of legislation restricting the use of dangerous pesticides called neonicotinoids (neonics). The ban will start to come into effect later this year, and will restrict the use of the three most common neonics, imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam on crops which are 'attractive to bees' and on cereals planted in the summer which cause dust clouds of toxic chemicals to be released.

This is a small step in the right direction for wildlife organisations. Buglife have been campaigning for a ban since 2009, after producing a report showing that neonicotinoids had harmful effects on wildlife and damaging the delicate relationship between pollinators and plants. Pollinator decline is a serious concern, with roughly two thirds of insects seeing worrying reduction in numbers, and more than 250 UK pollinators being threatened with extinction.

Vanessa Amaral-Rogers, Buglife's Pesticide Officer said "At last, the politicians are starting to listen to the science. This is a good start, but this ban will not be robust enough. In reality, a two year suspension is not enough to see our bee populations recover. Neonicotinoids have a half-life (the time taken for half of the chemical to disappear) in soil of over three years, and will still be used on winter crops. The next step is to put a monitoring programme in place which will assess how all pollinators, not just honeybees, are doing as a result of the ban."

This is the second time that the proposal has been put forward by the European Commission. In January, a report by the European Food Safety Authority identified a 'high acute risk' to honeybees from Imidacloprid, Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam, and an unknown risk to other pollinators such as bumblebees and hoverflies. Last month, the Standing Committee on Food Chain and Animal Health voted on the ban, but it failed to go through as a number of countries, including the UK, refused to vote. However the European Commission appealed the decision and this time the ban has met with favour, with fifteen countries voting in favour of the ban.

Vanessa said "The European Commission now needs to assess the risks from the remaining two neonics, acetamiprid and thiacloprid. Although these chemicals are relatively less potent than the other three, their toxicity can be increased by up to 560 times when combined with other chemicals such as certain fungicides. Acetamiprid and thiacloprid are used less frequently on crops, but we are concerned that they will be used to replace the main three once the ban is in force, removing any benefits that the ban would have".

Ends

Notes for Editors

For interview please contact Vanessa Amaral-Rogers, Buglife Pesticides Officer on 01733 201210 (111) or 07581 404298 or email: vanessa.amaral-rogers@buglife.org.uk

Buglife-The Invertebrate Conservation Trust is the only charity in Europe devoted to the conservation of all invertebrates, and is actively working to save Britain's rarest bugs, bees, butterflies, ants, worms, beetles and many more fascinating invertebrates. Further information is available on **Buglife's website** at www.buglife.org.uk Follow us on **Twitter** [@buzz_dont_tweet](https://twitter.com/buzz_dont_tweet) and 'Like us' on **Facebook**: [Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust](https://www.facebook.com/Buglife-The-Invertebrate-Conservation-Trust).

To find out more about Buglife's campaign on neonicotinoids please click on the link below www.buglife.org.uk/neonics

To read [Buglife's report on the impact of neonicotinoids](#) on honey bees, bumblebees and non-target invertebrates please click on the link below.

To donate £2 to help save our pollinators, text **BSOS13 £2** to 70070.