

Commission response to European Citizens' Initiative "Save bees and farmers!"



"Save bees and farmers: towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment" European citizens' initiative

supported by over **1 million citizens** across the EU





It calls on the Commission to:







5 April 2023 #EUGreenDeal #EUTakeTheInitiative

 phase out synthetic pesticides by 2035

 restore biodiversity in agriculture

 support farmers in this transition

Why it matters

• The interlinked crises of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss threaten Europe's agriculture and long-term food security.

In the EU, one in three bee, butterfly and hoverfly species are in decline. 80% of crop and wild flowering plant species depend on animal pollination.

• No pollinators means no life on the planet. Losing insect pollinators would destabilise the functioning of ecosystems.

Environment



Commission's response

The Commission welcomes this initiative, as climate change and biodiversity loss constitute growing challenges for Europe's agriculture.

The priority now is to work towards the **swift adoption** of the legislative proposals made by the Commission and currently being negotiated by the European Parliament and Member States, while maintaining high ambition.

Their effective and timely **implementation** together with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) under the European Green Deal is of essence.

Since the start of the ECI in 2019, the Commission has taken ambitious actions under the European Green Deal to address pollinator decline and ensure the sustainability of food systems:

Revised EU Pollinator Initiative: New Deal for Pollinators

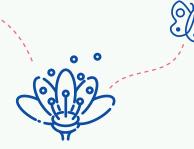
Response to the "Save bees and" farmers!" initiative with **42 actions** to tackle the causes of pollinator decline, improve knowledge and mobilise all actors across society

EU Farm to Fork Strategy & the **Biodiversity Strategy**

- 10% of agricultural area should be under high-diversity landscape features, for example buffer strips, rotational or non-rotational fallow land, hedges, ponds, to restore biodiversity in agriculture
- **#** At least 25% of agricultural land should be under **organic farming**
- *** Reduce nutrient losses** from agriculture by at least 50% by 2030, while ensuring that there is no deterioration in soil fertility.

Proposal for a Nature Restoration Law

- ***** New **binding targets** for the restoration of agricultural ecosystems
- **Reverse** the decline of pollinator populations by 2030 and **monitor** them regularly



Proposal for a 'Sustainable Use of Pesticides' Regulation

- **Reduce** the risk and use of **chemical pesticides** in EU agriculture by 50% by 2030
- **CAP funds** to compensate farmers for 5 years during the transition

EU Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027

- CAP funds come with a set of environmental conditions, covering 90% of agricultural area in the EU
- **#** €100 billion in **support for farmers** for green transition
- 49.5 million hectares to be covered by additional measures supporting the conservation/restoration of biodiversity or reducing the use of pesticides. Supported agricultural practices may include organic farming, agro-ecology, or precision farming

EU global commitments

In the Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed in December 2022 in Montréal, the EU and its Member States committed to reduce by half the overall risk posed by pesticides by 2030.



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