

# Commission response to European Citizens' Initiative “Save bees and farmers!”

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#EUGreenDeal  
#EUTakeTheInitiative



“**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:

▶ 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.

## 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**.

