



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe



Neonicotinoids in the European Union

Martin Dermine – PAN Europe – 4 November 2014



Neonics in EU



- 1994: 1st use of neonics (imidacloprid) in West of France on sunflower – 1st massive colony losses in this region
- Colony losses have spread across Europe as neonics use increased, especially in intensive agriculture areas
- Scientific evidence on the harm of neonics to bees have been piling up in the last years
- Big focus of media, high public awareness

What does law say (Regulation 1107/2009)

- EU: mitigation measures. No spraying of insecticides on bee-attractive flowering crops.
- No harmful effects on non-target animals and the environment.
- Need for enough toxicity information for approval of the pesticide
- Possibility/obligation to withdraw substance approval according to new scientific evidence.

What measures

- Italy. 2008: ban on seed coating (maize). Revival of the beekeeping sector. No impact on crop yields (Apenet).
- Slovenia: 2008-2010: ban on maize and sugar beet seed coating. No more massive colony losses after the ban
- France: ban on imidacloprid, fipronil and thiamethoxam seed coating (rape seed, maize).
- Germany: ban on maize seed coating but authorised for many other crops.

2012: tipping point

- 2 simultaneous publications:

Henry *et al.* A common pesticide decreases foraging success and survival in honey bees.

Witthorn *et al.* Neonicotinoid pesticide reduces bumble bee colony growth and queen production.

- European Commission requested European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to make a report
- EFSA's report: high risk of neonics and fipronil to bees
- 2013: ban on bee-attractive crops.

2013 ban on neonics

- Permanent
- For seed coating on bee-attractive flowering crops
- Spraying remains authorised after flowering
- Seed coating remains authorised on winter cereals and beet
- Ban is based on the risk posed to bees and the lack of scientific data on chronic toxicity, sublethal toxicity, toxicity to bumble bees, solitary bees, dust toxicity...

2015: review of the ban

- Based on new evidence from independent science
- Data provided by industry to fill in the data gaps
- EFSA will make a new evaluation

Legal actions

- Bayer and Syngenta suing the European Commission before the European Court of Justice against the ban
- Coalition of NGOs intervening to support the European Commission
- PAN Europe going to court to obtain a full ban (follow 100% EFSA's report)

Derogations

- Emergency authorisations authorised
- 5 Member States giving derogations on maize, sunflower and potatoes
- Member States abusing the derogation system

Thank you for your attention!!!