



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food and feed safety, innovation
Director

Brussels,
 SANTE/E4/ER/od (2018)1809469

Dear Mr Riss,

Subject: Proposals suggesting further restrictions to the use of three neonicotinoids (clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam)

Thank you for your letter, dated 16 March 2018, that you send to President Juncker, in which you raise concerns about the timing of the vote on the proposals the Commission services prepared, suggesting further restrictions to the use of three neonicotinoids (clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam). President Juncker has asked me to reply on his behalf.

In 2013, the Commission severely restricted the placing on the market and the use of plant protection products and treated seeds containing these three neonicotinoids (Regulation (EU) No 485/2013) including for many vegetable and fruit crops. This decision was based on new scientific studies which had become available at that time.

The Commission included in that legislation a specific provision to request confirmatory information to the applicants of the three active substances by 31 December 2014. It is important to recall that the confirmatory information requested was meant to confirm that the uses which are still allowed, can be considered safe. The assessment of the confirmatory information was initiated without delay. The conclusions of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for the active substances clothianidin and imidacloprid were finalised in October 2016 and identified further risks for bees related to the use of these substances. The data submitted for thiamethoxam was considered insufficient to perform such a review. Therefore, for all three substances, the proposals, suggesting to further restrict the conditions of approval, are currently being discussed with the Member States. However, the formal decision making process is still ongoing.

In the same Regulation a review of all new available scientific information related to risks from the use of the three substances within two years from the date of entry into force of the Regulation was also foreseen. Due to the large amount of data received, the EFSA postponed publication of these reports until 28 February 2018. They confirmed the already identified risks to bees for outdoor uses and therefore the proposals for further restrictions from 2017 remain. The EFSA conclusions have been presented at the Standing Committee meeting of 22-23 March 2018 where the discussions on the conclusions as well as the proposals have continued. Due to the short time between the publication of the EFSA conclusions and the date of the Standing Committee meeting, and given the need for an in-depth analysis of the EFSA conclusions by the Member States, the Member States were not able to present their official position as regards the draft texts at the meeting.

Mr Jorgo Riss
 Director, Greenpeace European Unit
 On behalf of 59 NGO's

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A vote on the proposals (which will not change in content) is foreseen for the next Standing Committee meeting in May.

I would like to underline that the Commission pays the highest attention to the protection of bees considering their important role as pollinators not only in nature but also for many cultivated crops.

Yours sincerely,



Sabine Jülicher