

**Question for written answer E-008771/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)**

Subject: Mass extinction of bees

The mass extinction of bees is becoming an increasingly alarming problem. One of the reasons why these insects are dying is the use of pesticides from the neonicotinoid group, which are found in seed treatment insecticides. In January 2013, the European Food Safety Authority decided that these pesticides exceeded the maximum acceptable level of harm to bees. It appears that the research originally carried out by the manufacturers of these plant protection products was wrong. I would therefore like to ask the following questions:

- What is the likely end date for the research being carried out into this group of pesticides, which includes clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam? What progress has been made with research into their harmfulness to bees?
- Why has it been proposed that the EU should wait so long – until 1 December 2013 – before banning the use of these pesticides?
- Does the Commission intend to look into the issue of monitoring beekeeping, including reliable research into bee populations and bee health?
- Does the Commission intend to increase its future budget for promoting the expansion of bee populations? The drastic drop in bee numbers has resulted in lower pollination levels, which in turn means reduced crop yields and higher prices.
- Does the Commission intend to hold consultations in the near future with the relevant beekeepers' organisations in order to discuss the current situation as regards bees?