

**Question for written answer E-000835/2014
to the Commission
Rule 117
Astrid Lulling (PPE)**

Subject: Colony Collapse Disorder: the need for a new approach based on breeding swarms

On 8 January 2014, researchers from the University of Reading published a set of results.

It was revealed that Europe is short of two thirds of the honeybee colonies it needs to properly pollinate its crops – a process which is vital to crop yield.

This equates to a deficit of 13.4 million beehives, or 7 billion honeybees.

This phenomenon, which is known under the name Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), has been known about since the late 1990s and is becoming more prevalent year on year. What is more, scientists have observed that intensive pollination greatly enhances crop quality and productivity.

1. Does the Commission not think that it is time to supplement the action that is already being taken with a new approach based on breeding swarms in order to combat the problem of the 13.4 million missing colonies in Europe?
2. Does the Commission believe that it is advisable to provide financial support for the specific action currently being taken to encourage swarm reproduction?
3. Is the Commission prepared to subsidise the installation of beehives on farms, which would not only increase productivity but also reduce subsidies to compensate for the current level of losses in productivity?
4. Is the Commission prepared to provide financial support to set up young beekeepers specialising in breeding swarms?