

**Question for written answer E-004868/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Mireille D'Ornano (EFDD)

Subject: The decline of bird populations in the European Union

In France, the Natural History Museum and the National Scientific Research Centre (CNRS) have recently sounded the alarm about declining bird populations. Bird numbers in France's agricultural areas have fallen by a third. Other studies have shown the same trend in most European countries. The causes of this decline are known, chief among them being the widespread use of neonicotinoids.

A recent study found a 75% drop in insect numbers in Germany in the space of 30 years. And insects are essential for birds, even seed-eaters, to feed on.

1. Have any assessments been made of the effectiveness of the Action Plan for nature, people and the economy, which seeks to strengthen the 'Habitats' and 'Birds' Directives?
2. What action does the Commission intend to take to significantly reduce the use of neonicotinoids, if it does not intend to ban them completely?