

**Question for written answer E-007421/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)

Subject: Protection of bees and the temporary ban on neonicotinoid-based pesticides

Recognising the abnormally high death rate among bees, the Commission proposed a moratorium on the use of what are considered the three most harmful pesticides, and a majority of the Member States approved the measure. That much is positive: it was not a foregone conclusion that the moratorium would be imposed and it is a step forward.

While encouraging, however, the temporary ban is inadequate in several respects. The three substances in question continue to pollute land on which they are used for years, and even the tiniest doses are deadly to bees. Secondly, the ban applies only to certain types of crop that are known to attract bees; and thirdly, it will be in force for only part of the year.

Given these limitations and recognising that a total ban would be more appropriate (in Italy, for example, after the pesticides in question were banned completely, bee mortality fell from 30% to 15%):

1. Does the Commission acknowledge the limitations of the moratorium, and particularly of its seasonal application, and is it therefore planning a further step, with more ambitious measures to afford bees real protection?
2. Given the limitations outlined, can the Commission estimate how effective the intended partial ban will be? How can it ensure that the measure it has taken will work?