

**Question for written answer E-000861/2018  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Jørn Dohrmann (ECR)**

Subject: Disappearance of insects and birds in Europe

In recent years, alarming reports and studies have been published on the situation as regards insects in the countryside and on farmland in Europe. A German study has shown that over the last 27 years, insect numbers have fallen by almost 70%. This should be seen in the light of the fact that a dearth of pollinators such as wild bees can adversely affect farm yields, because pollination is not only essential for yields, but also for flowers and plants in general.

Many species of birds are also under pressure. Denmark's ornithological association estimates that over the last 40 years some 3 million birds have disappeared in Denmark alone.

There is still no evidence as to why insects and birds are declining in this way, but preliminary studies show that one possible cause could be the use of pesticides.

It has been suggested that the use of pesticides by private households could be banned, as that would create oases for insects. Strips of flowers on farmland might also be beneficial in halting the decline in insects and birds.

Does the Commission agree that the decline in insects and birds is a growing problem?

Does the Commission agree that alternatives ought to be sought, such as banning the use of pesticides by private households?

Does the Commission have any initiatives in the pipeline that are geared towards reversing this trend?