



Food security and ecosystem resilience: Commission boosts action on pollinators

Brussels, 24 January 2023

Today, the Commission is presenting '[A New Deal for Pollinators](#)' to tackle the alarming decline in wild pollinating insects in Europe, revising the [2018 EU Pollinators Initiative](#). Citizens have been increasingly calling for decisive action against pollinator loss, also through the recent successful European Citizens' Initiative '[Save Bees and Farmers](#)'. The renewed initiative sets out actions to be taken by the EU and the Member States to reverse the decline of pollinators by 2030 as today, one in three bee, butterfly and hoverfly species are disappearing in the EU. It complements the Commission's proposal for a [Nature Restoration Law](#) of June 2022 and is a key part of the [Biodiversity Strategy 2030](#), the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) and the [European Green Deal](#).

Reversing decline of pollinators by 2030

The revised EU Pollinators Initiative sets objectives for 2030 and actions under three priorities. The key priority is **improving pollinator conservation and tackling the causes of their decline**. This will be done through:

- **Better conservation of species and habitats** – for example, the Commission will finalise conservation plans for threatened pollinator species; it will identify pollinators typical of habitats protected under the Habitats Directive which Member States should protect; and the Commission jointly with Member States will prepare blueprint for a network of ecological corridors for pollinators, or 'Buzz Lines'.
- **Restoring habitats in agricultural landscapes** – notably through more support for pollinator-friendly farming under the Common Agricultural Policy.
- **Mitigating the impact of pesticide use** on pollinators – for example through legal requirements to implement integrated pest management or through additional test methods for determining the toxicity of pesticides for pollinators, including sub-lethal and chronic effects. As the excessive use of pesticides is a key driver of pollinator loss, reducing the risk and use of pesticides as per the Commission's Sustainable Use of Pesticides [proposal](#) will be critical.
- **Enhancing pollinator habitats in urban areas.**
- Tackling the impacts on pollinators of **climate change, invasive alien species and other threats** such as biocides or light pollution.

The initiative will also focus on **improving knowledge** of pollinator decline, its causes and consequences. Actions include establishing a **comprehensive monitoring system**, supporting research and assessment for example by mapping **Key Pollinator Areas** by 2025, and targeted actions to promote capacity-building and dissemination of knowledge.

A final priority is **mobilising society and promoting strategic planning and cooperation**. The Commission will support Member States to develop **national pollinator strategies**. The Commission and Member States shall also **help citizens and business to act**, for example by raising public awareness and supporting citizen science.

The full list of actions can be found in the [Annex to the Communication 'A New Deal for Pollinators'](#).

Next steps

The Commission invites the European Parliament and the Council to endorse the new actions and to be actively engaged in its implementation, in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders. The new actions will complement forthcoming National Restoration Plans (under the proposed Nature Restoration Law) where Member States will identify the measures to achieve the legally binding target of reversing the decline of pollinator populations by 2030.

Later this year, the Commission will respond to the Citizens' Initiative 'Save Bees and Farmers' through a dedicated communication.

Background

Pollinators are an integral part of healthy ecosystems. Without them, many plant species would decline and eventually disappear along with the organisms that depend on them, which would have serious ecological, social and economic implications. With around 80% of crop and wild-flowering plants depending on animal pollination, pollinator loss is one of the largest threats to EU nature, human wellbeing and food security, as it compromises sustainable [long-term agricultural production](#). Today's geopolitical context has further strengthened the need to make our food system more resilient, including through protecting and restoring pollinating insects.

The initiative builds on comprehensive [stakeholder consultations and institutional feedback](#) from the European Parliament, the Council, the Committee of the Regions, and the European Court of Auditors. It is also in line with the recently adopted [Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) which includes a global target to reduce the risk from pesticides by at least 50% by 2030.

For More Information

[Q&A on Revised EU Pollinators Initiative](#)

[Communication on 'A New Deal for Pollinators' and Annex](#)

[EU Pollinators Initiative - Environment - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Commission Staff Working Document – Drivers of food security](#)

[EU Pollinator Information Hive](#)

[Pollinator Park \(europa.eu\)](#)

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Quotes:

Small things can drive big changes in our world. In the case of pollinators, these small insects will define the future of nature and long-term food security. We need immediate, targeted actions to save pollinators because they are invaluable for our ecosystems, societies, and economies. This New Deal for EU Pollinators is a decisive step forward not only for the EU, and can inspire similar action in the entire world. Let's make it happen before it's too late.
Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries - 24/01/2023

To preserve our biodiversity and our planet for future generations, protecting our pollinators is crucial. Our citizens continuously call for decisive action at EU level. We know that the overuse of, and overreliance on, pesticides present a threat to our food security, to farm profitability, to biodiversity and to our environment. We will continue to work hard to reduce pesticide use and minimise pollinator loss in the future.
Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety - 24/01/2023

European citizens have been loud and clear in their demand for action to protect pollinators. Already, half of crops in the EU that depend on pollination face a deficit. Reducing and replacing chemical pesticides is absolutely necessary. Bees and butterflies must thrive again if we want European farmers to be prosperous in a healthy environment.
Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal - 24/01/2023

Farmers experience first-hand the impact of climate change and the loss of biodiversity. We know that the decline of pollinators is a direct risk for agricultural productivity. There cannot be long-term food security without greater sustainability. I acknowledge and praise the daily hard work from farmers that strive to feed us while complying with the most ambitious environmental requirements in the world. CAP Strategic Plans will support them in their transition to greener practices.
Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner for Agriculture - 24/01/2023

Press contacts:

[Adalbert JAHNZ](#) (+ 32 2 295 31 56)

[Daniela STOYCHEVA](#) (+32 2 295 36 64)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

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