



Standby Statement

Only on request

Crop protection is essential to modern day sustainable agriculture practices

Monheim, April 9, 2015 – Bayer CropScience has reviewed the EASAC report and is disappointed that the biodiversity decline again is addressed through a single-issue approach (crop protection) and by extension to a single chemical class. What is needed in moving forward is to give sufficient credit to the highly interconnected ecosystems relationships and to the extensive risk assessment in place to assess crop protection products.

The EASAC report is a literature study hypothesizing potential connections between crop protection use including neonicotinoids and effects on the ecosystem while clearly stating there is no proof of causality.

The authors emphasize the alleged decline in beneficial insect, wild pollinators and birds since decades, without clearly demonstrating these declines are attributed to neonicotinoids as unique or key factor and without seriously considering other factors or even the potential effects of other classes of chemicals. As the alleged declines often predate the arrival of neonicotinoids on the market, the report puts an overemphasis on neonicotinoids overestimating the scale of an alleged environmental impact underestimating the potential influence of other factors in agriculture.

In the literature evaluation, a lot of reference is made to publications from organizations well known for their opposition to neonicotinoids, and strongly rely on many of their assertions (For example the recent series of papers from the Task Force on Systemic Pesticides, which media reports have revealed to be part of a deliberate anti-neonicotinoid campaign).

The EASAC review also refers to sublethal effects of neonicotinoids and reflects therewith the existing bias of the recent scientific literature toward toxicity tests based on highly theoretical and unrealistic exposure scenario rather than real-world field studies.

In the European Union there is already since a long time a sophisticated risk assessment system for these so-called non-target beneficial insects in place which is thoroughly assessing the potential impact of any products on these important organisms, before a registration can be granted. Meanwhile, the only effect of the restriction on neonicotinoids in Europe so far has been a steady stream of reports from farmers that their crops are suffering serious losses.

Bayer CropScience is calling for a holistic and balanced societal debate on all aspects of biodiversity decline.

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