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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Sustainable Crop protection  
- information from the Netherlands delegations

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Delegations will find attached an information note from the Netherlands delegation on the above mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 13 July 2015.

## **Sustainable Crop protection**

The Netherlands would like to draw the attention of the Agrifish Council of 13 July 2015 to the issue of sustainable crop protection. The recent study of the EASAC on the effects of neonicotinoids on biodiversity generated a lot of publicity. The Netherlands recognizes with appreciation the work that has already been done by all of us and the Commission, but the mentioned study in our view stresses the importance of the need to further reduce the use of risky pesticides and to move faster with the transition towards sustainable crop protection. To this end, The Netherlands will propose a general action plan this autumn that can be implemented on expert level, but is interested in the opinion and possible input of certain elements to this plan of other Member States and the Commission.

### **Background**

The Sustainable Use Directive states that the (only) way forward is a more sustainable use of pesticides through integrated pest management. Risks and impacts of pesticide use need to be reduced in order to keep our farmland and ecosystems healthy for future generations. At the same time, the current level of protection needs to be maintained against diseases, pests and weeds, and against new threats like the Suzuki fruit fly.

The Netherlands is in favour of accelerating the promotion of integrated pest management. This means stepping up prevention and the use of non-chemical methods and lower-risk products. In practice this means emphasizing the use of healthy crops and healthy soils and stepping up the use of precision techniques for disease detection and pesticide application and, finally, the use of lower risk products.

To achieve this, we believe that, together, we need to promote a broader, greener range of measures and authorised substances, including alternative lower-risk crop protection methods and techniques, basic substances and low-risk products. At the same time the use of more risky products should be minimized.

This transition requires help of various stakeholders: from scientists and manufacturers of crop protection products to retailers and farmers. At the EU level, for instance, research could be encouraged into non-chemical alternatives and low-risk products. And their authorisation could be promoted.

The Netherlands will include such elements into the action plan it will propose this autumn, but is eager to receive the input of other Member States and the Commission.

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