

Scientists skeptical EU neonicotinoid ban would help bees

As the EU prepares to rule on extending a ban on neonicotinoid pesticides, a large-scale study opened the door for industry to argue the chemicals can be used without harm to bees — and scientists are lending their support to the campaign.

The European Commission [will decide later this year](#) [2017] whether to widen an existing ban on three neonicotinoid chemicals, and scientific opinion will weigh heavily in its assessment. Scientists in the U.K. released the results of a [study](#) late June in the [journal Science](#), concluding that pesticide treatments actually increased the population of bees in fields in Germany, despite declines in the number of bees in both the U.K. and Hungary.

Lead author Ben Woodcock from the Natural Environment Research Council's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology said ... that while neonicotinoids can cause harm to bees, an outright ban may not be advised.

"Don't give up on neonicotinoids," he wrote on the academic news site [The Conversation](#).

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A spokesperson for Swiss seed giant Syngenta, which manufactures one of the chemicals tested in the experiment, told POLITICO that the variation observed by Woodcock's study shows that extending the neonicotinoid ban is unnecessary. With good beekeeping practices and the planting of wild flower margins, the impact of neonicotinoids on bee populations can be minimized, the company said.

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[The scientists interviewed for this article] say further research is needed to determine if neonicotinoids should continue to be used across Europe, or banned to protect the region's struggling pollinators.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [New study reignites opposition to EU pesticides ban](#)