

EU stops short of insecticide ban

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The European Commission said Monday it would draw up "stringent" measures to protect bees from dangers attributed to certain pesticides, but pulled back from an anticipated ban.

The European Union executive "will propose a series of ambitious but proportionate legislative measures," said Health and Consumer Affairs Commissioner Tonio Borg.

The official said "rapid and decisive" action would be taken to limit the damage caused by three types of insecticides said by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) earlier this month to pose "disturbing" risks.

But Borg underlined that "a total ban would not be justified."

Bees and other pollinating insects are hugely important for food production, especially of fruit, and "their protection is essential," EFSA said on January 16.

It said the so-called neonicotinoid insecticides in question attack the central nervous system of insects, causing paralysis and death.

The Commission said it was writing to manufacturers Bayer, Syngenta and Cruiser OSR seeking action, otherwise it would "take the necessary measures," according to Borg's spokesman at the time.

SOURCE AFP

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