

# When cuddly bees influence the rules

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It may be easier to show concern about cuddly animals like bees than about some of the millions of indigenous insect and microorganisms found in the European biodiversity.

Bees are perceived as cuddly animals. They appear in cartoons as friendly species. Any harm on them—whether it is potential or actual—makes people rather emotional. And because of that bees have the power to make people change. In particular, this is the case with policy makers in Brussels, who just imposed a two-year precautionary ban on a type of pesticide called neonicotinoids, until more is known on its effect on bees.

Bees clearly play a crucial role in the ecosystem, as a pollinator species. But it would be difficult to imagine that other [pollinators](#), such as certain types of flies or beetles, or any less cuddly [insects](#), have the same influence on policy makers as bees. Would you imagine death of droves of, say, spiders triggering the same response as bees? Unlikely. Nor would it be easily conceivable that microscopic bugs trigger the same response, even though they may play an important role in the ecosystem.

Yet, there are numerous insects and [microscopic organisms](#) entering Europe, that may increasingly need to attract the interest of policy makers. In some cases, both local biodiversity, as well as humans may be at risk. For example, as recently reported on youris.com, Europe may need more refined policies to anticipate the threat posed by invasive alien [insect species](#). These are entering Europe through international trade. We also reported on the need to watch out for microbial

stowaways bugs brought into the EU through illegally imported food. We may need policy to be strengthened to protect local biodiversity and public health from diseases they may be harbouring diseases.

All these threats are current and ongoing. Unlike the policy change related to [bees](#), policies related to these insects and bugs may not become front page news. The interest of EU policy makers towards [neonicotinoids](#) is the demonstration that policy makers too are truly and deeply humans. They may find it easier to care about cuddly animals than about some of the millions of indigenous insect biodiversity found in Europe. In exactly the same way as most people do.

Some policy makers were quicker to realise the need to be cautious than others. For example, Individual countries in Europe, such as Italy had already imposed their own ban since 2008. And that more research is needed, that may yet yield a wider ban on other pesticides.

So time will tell whether the EU will adopt a more sustainable way of using pesticides. Thus, leaving time for policy makers to worry about the less glamorous species, which are part of the European biodiversity.

Provided by Youris.com

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