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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B6-0480/2008

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Neil Parish

on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

on the situation in the beekeeping sector

European Parliament resolution on the situation in the beekeeping sector

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the beekeeping sector throughout the world, and more particularly in Europe, is encountering very serious difficulties,
- B. whereas apiculture has a beneficial impact on the ecosystem as a whole and the agricultural ecosystem in particular,
- C. whereas it is essential to preserve biodiversity, to which apiculture makes a significant contribution through cross-pollination activities,
- D. whereas beekeeping has been practised in Europe for thousands of years and forms an integral part of its cultural and agriculture heritage,
- E. noting the nutritional and medicinal benefits of apiculture products,
- F. bearing in mind the variety and high quality of honey and other apiculture products such as royal jelly, propolis, venom and beeswax produced by the European beekeeping sector due to its expertise and the diversity of its climate,
- G. whereas the sector suffers unfair competition from products originating in third countries and imported into the Community market,
- H. whereas honey may be imported from various regions of the world, but only bees, in sufficient numbers, can guarantee pollination,
- I. noting the serious threat of a decline in bee colonies due to the significant reduction in the supply of pollen and nectar,
- J. having regard to the drastic decline in the number of bee colonies in the world,
- K. whereas the continued presence in hives of *Varroa* spp. parasites, colony collapse disorder and the spread of *Nosema ceranae* are among the causes of the crisis in bee health,
- L. whereas 76% of the production of food for human consumption is dependent on the beekeeping sector,
- M. whereas 84% of vegetable species cultivated in Europe depend on pollination,
- N. whereas the instructions and good practice applicable to the use of biocides are too often ignored,

- O. recalling that no methods exist as yet to eradicate certain bee diseases resulting in a reduction in their resistance capacity and the loss of hives,
1. Considers that it is essential to respond without delay to the crisis in bee health in an appropriate manner and with effective weapons;
 2. Considers that action should be taken to tackle unfair competition from apiculture products originating in third countries, which is partly the result of lower production costs, particularly as regards the price of sugar and labour;
 3. Calls on the Commission to immediately step up further research into the parasites and diseases decimating the bee population and their causes, while making additional budgetary resources available for this research;
 4. Considers it vital to make it compulsory to indicate the country of origin of bee honey on labels;
 5. Calls on the Commission, in the context of the CAP health check, to introduce measures to encourage the setting up of ecological recovery zones (such as apicultural set-aside areas), especially in major arable crop regions; 4. Calls on the Commission to put in place measures within the CAP Health Check encouraging the creation of ecological compensation zones (such as apicultural set-aside areas) especially in large areas of arable cultivation; calls for such zones to be situated in those parts of fields which are difficult to cultivate, where plants such as phacelia, borage, charlock and wild white clover could be grown, providing rich sources of nectar in bees' gathering areas;
 6. Calls on the Commission to promote the necessary measures to limit the risk of insufficient pollination both for beekeepers and for farmers, whose production could increase considerably;
 7. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the quality of surface water is monitored and controlled, as bees are highly sensitive to any deterioration in their environment;
 8. Calls on the Commission to undertake research into the link which exists between bee mortality and the use of pesticides such as thiamethoxam, imidacloprid, clothianidin and fipronil so that it can take whatever appropriate measures are necessary as regards authorisation of such products;
 9. Calls on the Commission to coordinate all information pertaining to this situation that is presently available in each Member State; believes that the Commission should cooperate with recognised organisations with a view to exchanging scientific information they have concerning the impact of pesticides on bees;
 10. Considers it vital to introduce a requirement that imported honey be analysed to detect the possible presence of American foulbrood bacteria;
 11. Urges the Commission to propose a financial aid mechanism for apiaries which are in difficulties due to bee mortality;

12. Calls for the Commission to incorporate into its veterinary policy research into, and action to tackle, bee diseases;
13. Calls on the Commission to urge all Member States to bring forward immediate support for the beekeeping sector;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.