CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FARMERS

LIFE 4 POLLINATORS

INVOLVING PEOPLE TO PROTECT WILD BEES AND OTHER POLLINATORS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

This code of conduct has been drafted during the implementation of the LIFE18 GIE/IT/000755 co-financed by the LIFE Program of the European Union.

www.life4pollinators.eu

INTRODUCTION

Wild insect pollinators, which include bumblebees and other bees (around 2000 different species of bees live in the Mediterranean region), butterflies and moths, hoverflies and other dipterans, beetles and wasps, help to pollinate both wild and cultivated plants. Insect pollination is of high economic importance, and without it, we would not be able to grow a large part of the plants we eat, such as apples, strawberries, tomatoes, zucchini, melons, etc.

Wild pollinators are in trouble; numerous species are endangered, and populations are declining.

Major factors responsible for this decline include habitat loss, intensive agriculture and climate changes.

Farmers can play a key role in biodiversity conservation of these insects. Thus, within LIFE4Pollinators project, a Code of Conduct presented in the following pages has been developed. Its purpose is the implementation of agricultural practices and measures that benefit pollinators.

Adoption of the Code of Conduct allows to obtain the "Pollinator friendly Farm" certification. The possibility of making this certification a registered label, that farmers will be able to place on their products, is under investigation and needs further analysis.

Farms wishing to adopt the Code of Conduct should fill in the form found at the end of this document, after starting to implement the indicated measures in their fields. The verification of the effective fulfillment of the measures will be carried out through documentary checks and/or possible site visits by LIFE4Pollinators. Following this phase, farms will obtain the "Pollinator friendly farm" certificate effective for the current year. The audits aim to guarantee that farmers are correctly implementing the declared actions and therefore really contributing to support wild pollinators.

Furthermore, visibility will be given to certificated farms on our project website where a list of certified farms and a map showing their location will be published.

1. REDUCING PESTICIDE EXPOSURE

1.1 Field monitoring of pests

1.2 Use non-agrochemical pest management:

1.2.1 agricultural practices (e.g. rotations, intercropping, cover crops, green manure, conservative practices);
1.2.2 physical practices (e.g. soil solarization, flame weeding);
1.2.3 mechanical practices (e.g. protective netting);
1.2.4 biological and microbiological control;
1.2.5 other low-impact control methods (e.g. mating disruption).

1.3 When it is not possible to avoid chemical control (e.g. when the economic threshold is exceeded or for mandatory control):

1.3.1 select compounds with low toxicity for bees and avoid pesticides labelled "highly toxic for bees";
1.3.2 apply pesticides when pollinators are not foraging, e.g. at dusk or when plants are not in flower;
1.3.3 when highly persistent pesticides are used, avoid sowing pollinator-attractive crops the following year to avoid exposing pollinators to toxic residues;
1.3.4 avoid insecticides, acaricides and other pesticides highly toxic for bees and other pollinators when plants are flowering or producing extrafloral compounds (e.g. honeydew);
1.3.5 avoid pesticide use before wild plants that are flowering among crops or in contiguous vegetation have been buried, chopped or mowed (disposing of all plant residues) or until wildflowers attractive to pollinators have wilted;
1.3.6 refrain from pesticide application and from sowing coated seeds under windy conditions to avoid contamination of surrounding flowers;

1.3.7 protect border vegetation by avoiding pesticide drift with an anti-drift nozzle;
1.3.8 turn off the atomiser when approaching field borders;
1.3.9 avoid tank mixtures with pesticides that can interact synergistically or generally avoid insecticide and fungicide mixtures, especially with triazole (e.g. propiconazole and carboxamide (e.g. boscalid) fungicides;
1.3.10 clean pesticide spraying equipment so as not to leave residues;
1.3.11 add deflectors when pneumatic vacuum sowing machines are used so that exhaust air is released close to the ground (for crops requiring treated seed);
1.3.12 notify neighbouring beekeepers sufficiently in advance when pesticides dangerous for bees are applied;
1.3.13 when a pollination contract is stipulated, be sure to define beekeeper's and grower's rights and duties.

2. PROVIDING AND INCREASING FORAGING HABITATS FOR POLLINATORS

2.1 Sow flower resources or maintain field margin vegetation and spontaneous flower strips in unproductive and less accessible areas;

2.2 diversify crop species to ensure different flowering periods;

2.3 carry out selective mowing, sparing nectariferous and polleniferous flora and less virulent weeds;

2.4 use entomophilous plants as green manure between crops (e.g. Berseem clover or fava bean between wheat and rapeseed);

2.5 prefer autochthonous crop varieties;

2.6 prefer crop cultivars with high pollen and nectar production

3. PROVIDING APPROPRIATE NESTING HABITAT & INCREASING ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS

3.1 Provide artificial nesting-sites (e.g. bee hotels) for wild bees and other natural pest enemies;

3.2 maintain ecological infrastructures at farm and landscape level: hedgerows, woody vegetation, roadsides, dykes, field boundaries, windbreaks and ditches can be good foraging and nesting habitats for pollinators;

3.3 create and/or maintain bare ground in sunny dry locations for solitary underground-nesting bees. When possible, practice no-tillage to avoid destruction of bee nests.

4. ENHANCING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH CONSUMER CHOICES

4.1 Choose organic products;

4.2 choose local and seasonal products;

4.3 read product labels to check product origin, quality certifications, designations of origin and Life4pollinators label;

4.4 reduce and reuse food waste (as compost).

ADHERENCE TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE YEAR 20.....

[_____*]

- is committed to encourage the conservation of wild pollinators.
- will protect and increase the quality and quantity of suitable habitats for pollinators and manage his/her fields to ensure the greatest benefits for pollinators.

Our commitment

Target 1: REDUCING EXPOSURE TO PESTICIDES

- commitment to implement action 1.1.
- commitment to implement the actions 1.2… and 1.2…. at least in the main crop field(s).
- commitment to implement action 1.3.1 if the farm context permits and the recommendations 1.3._°, 1.3._°, 1.3._°, 1.3._° and 1.3._° in case of chemical interventions on any crop, including the main crop field(s).

Target 2: PROVIDING AND INCREASING FORAGING HABITATS FOR POLLINATORS

- commitment to implement action 2.1.
- commitment to implement action 2._°.

Target 3: PROVIDING APPROPRIATE NESTING HABITAT & INCREASING ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS

- commitment to implement action 3._°.

Sincerely,

Date _____

Signature _____

20..... Enter the year
* Enter the name of the farm
° Enter the number of the specific action that will be implemented

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