



Business and nature working together: action by the agri-food and beverage sector to protect wild pollinators

What about pollinators?

Pollinators – such as bees, hoverflies, moths, butterflies and beetles – are declining dramatically around the world, and Europe is no exception. With pollinator populations being essential in underpinning the stability of pollinator services over time, this decline of pollinators puts managed and natural ecosystems functioning at risk.



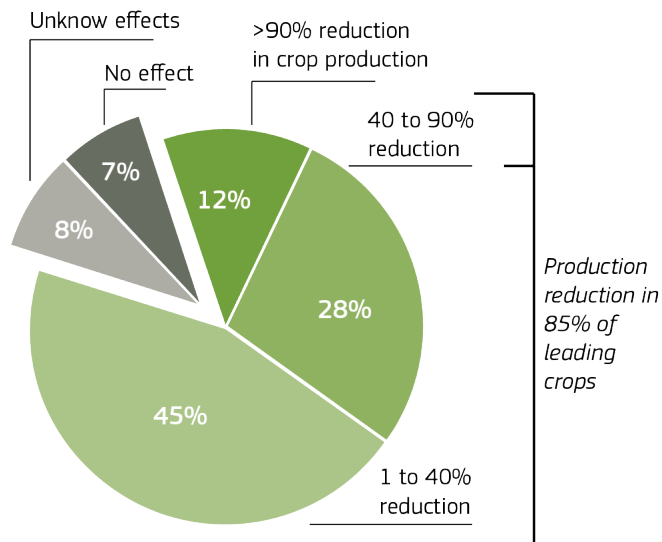


Figure 1. Percentage dependence on animal-mediated pollination of leading global crops that are directly consumed by humans and traded on the global market.

Why should your business care?

More than three quarters of the leading types of global food crops rely to some extent on animal pollination for yield and/or quality. With businesses facing possible shortages of raw materials, a decline in crop quality and challenges with the security of supply, it's no overstatement that pollinator decline calls for urgent conservation action.

However, the agri-food and beverage sector can turn this problem into an opportunity. Restoring pollinator populations to healthy levels will help prevent economic losses, provide other environmental and social benefits and assist the company in building/maintaining a good rapport with the public.

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What can your business do?

The agri-food and beverage sector is well placed to contribute towards stopping the decline of wild pollinators. The sector can lead by example showing how food and raw materials are produced and which producing practices should be rewarded.

It is recommended for the sector to take action to protect wild pollinators. These actions include:

- promote actions to maintain healthy pollinator populations within the value chain;
- convince its suppliers (incl. farmers) to take action directly on farmland, such as the creation of multifunctional field margins, installing patches of flower rich habitat, the reduction of pesticide use etc.;
- encourage its suppliers to take action by offering long-term contracts tied to commitments to deliver richer biodiversity on their land and greater diversity of habitats for pollinators;
- raise awareness of the role of pollinators to its stakeholders and encourage them to partake in actions that promote pollinator conservation;
- monitor and evaluate the impacts of actions on wild pollinators;
- partner up with NGOs, local nature authorities and/or academics when drafting, implementing and evaluating actions for pollinators, whether they focus on company's site or the supply chain.

