



PRESS RELEASE

European Bee Award 2020: 'Let it Bee' by NFGWS and 'StopVespa' by Università degli Studi di Torino get top prizes

With an online award ceremony, hosted yesterday by **MEP Franc Bogovič**, the VII edition of the European Bee Award recognized the work and commitment put in place through innovative ideas and practices to protect bees and pollinators in European farmed landscapes.

Brussels 9th December 2020 – For years, the **European Bee Award** has been promoting bees and pollinators' wellbeing, essential to preserve and restore biodiversity in farming environments in Europe. The prize was established by the **European Landowners' Organization (ELO)** and the **European Agricultural Machinery Industry Association (CEMA)** in 2014 as a way to acknowledge innovative, efficient and scalable projects that protect bees and pollinators in Europe. This year the traditional awarding ceremony took place online. The winners of the 2020 European Bee Award are:

- Land management practices prize: **'Let it Bee' by NFGWS**. The National Federation of Group Water Schemes put in place a comprehensive project to promote sustainable farming practices that lead to improved water quality at sources, increased biodiversity, and enhancement of climate awareness. The project includes a pilot programme providing farmers with honey bees, hives, suits, necessary equipment and training & mentoring, and encouraging them to act as ambassadors for biodiversity enhancement. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for more information.
- Application of innovative technological solutions prize: **'StopVespa' by Università degli Studi di Torino**. The Life StopVespa project developed an innovative harmonic radar technology for tracking flying hornets of the Asian yellow-legged hornet (*Vespa velutina*), an invasive species that threatens honeybees and wild pollinators of Europe. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

The **'Copenhagen City Bee Association (Bybi)'** was awarded the Jury Special mention prize for their impressive work of promotion of apiaries and honey making in a urban collaborative environment. Their website is [here](#).

Host of the ceremony and Member of the European Parliament Franc Bogovič commented: *"The European Bee Award is a necessary recognition to very valuable projects which year-on-year show there is a shared commitment to protecting pollinators in European agriculture. The award also goes in line with the World Bee Day, adopted by the United Nations in 2017, and has this year already been celebrated for the third year in a row, although in very modest form. The protection of bees and other pollinators and supporting pollinator-friendly practices has never been so high on the political agenda of the EU."*

Thierry de l'Escaille, Secretary General of ELO highlighted that *"Protecting pollinators goes hand in hand with protecting our environment and food system. With climate change on the horizon we cannot be passive, we must take control as soon as possible. This is an unavoidable responsibility that we must uphold and in doing so, we will be rewarded."*

Gilles Dryancour, Chairman of the CEMA Strategic Committee and member of the Bee Award Jury acknowledged that *"The European Bee Award remains a crucial tool for identifying and demonstrating good projects aiming at protecting European pollinators' health. Upon its creation in December 2013 Walter Haefeker (chairman of the European Professional Beekeepers Association) and I did not know we were anticipating the Biodiversity Strategy Goals laid down by the European Commission in May this year, and the specific goal of halting and reversing the decline of pollinators. It is an objective CEMA members fully share as we strongly believe that sustainable farming is the only way*



to keep EU strong and competitive. In our mind, there is no doubt that the new precision technologies our industry puts on the market will help to reach these challenging goals.”

Dr Michael Garratt, from the University of Reading, President of the European bee Award Jury which includes also international experts, members of the European Institutions and NGOs, said: *“Research is showing how important bees and other pollinators are in terms of food security and production but also for maintaining the functioning of the wild ecosystems. Yet they face many threats including climate change, disease, habitat loss. We need to work to protect these important components of our biodiversity, mitigating the threats they face and boost their populations. The European Bee Award is a really important initiative because it supports and showcases projects which look to develop effective tools for protecting bees and other pollinators, generating primary evidence to understand these systems better. Events like this inspire others to work towards protecting bees and pollinators”.*

The event also saw the intervention of **Humberto Delgado Rosa, Director for Natural Capital of the European Commission’s DG Environment**. The Commission is currently reviewing progress in the implementation of the EU Pollinators Initiative, launched 2,5 years ago, which brought about the creation of key processes to ensure action to reverse the dramatic decline of pollinating insects in the EU is more effective. *“We acknowledge and appreciate the work of land managers and other stakeholders who tirelessly work across landscapes to make them hospitable for pollinators. We look forward to discussing with them how to better support their work with a view to scale up best practices”.* Mr. Delgado Rosa congratulated all winners and all contenders for this year’s European Bee Award, thanking them wholeheartedly for their work.

In 2020, the European Bee Award competition received 21 applications from 12 different countries. The online event was followed by over 250 participants, connected to exchange ideas, celebrate pollinators’ wellbeing and support bee-friendly farming practices.

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To learn more about the winners:

- ❖ www.europeanlandowners.org
- ❖ www.cema-agri.org
- ❖ #EUBeeAward

About European Landowners’ Organization

ELO is committed to promoting a sustainable and prosperous countryside and to increasing awareness relating to environmental and agricultural issues. Engaging various stakeholders, ELO develops policy recommendations and programmes of action. ELO organises interdisciplinary meetings gathering together key actors from the rural sector and policy makers at the local, regional, national and European level. Its ability to do all of this assures ELO its unique position among the think tanks in the agricultural, environmental and rural activities’ sectors.

About CEMA

CEMA aisbl is the association representing the European agricultural machinery industry. With 11 national member associations, the CEMA network represents both large multinational companies and numerous SMEs active in this sector. The industry comprises about 7,000 manufacturers, producing more than 450 different types of machines with an annual turnover of about €40 billion (EU28 – 2016) and 150,000 direct employees. CEMA companies produce a large range of machines that cover any activity in the field from seeding to harvesting, as well as equipment for livestock management.