COMMISSION DECISION (EU) 2019/1566

of 4 September 2019

on the proposed citizens' initiative entitled 'Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment'

(notified under document C(2019) 6389)

(Only the English text is authentic)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative [1], and in particular Article 4 thereof,

Whereas:

(1) The subject matter of the proposed citizens' initiative entitled 'Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment' refers to the following: 'To protect bees and people's health, we call on the Commission to propose legal acts to phase out synthetic pesticides by 2035, to restore biodiversity, and to support farmers in the transition'.

(2) The objectives of the proposed citizens' initiative refer to the following: 'Phase out synthetic pesticides in EU agriculture by 80 % by 2030, starting with the most hazardous, to become free of synthetic by 2035; restore natural ecosystems in agricultural areas so that farming becomes a vector of biodiversity recovery; reform agriculture by prioritising small scale, diverse and sustainable farming, supporting a rapid increase in agro-ecological and organic practice, and enabling independent farmer-based training and research into pesticide- and GMO-free farming.'

(3) The Treaty on European Union (TEU) reinforces citizenship of the Union and enhances further the democratic functioning of the Union by providing, inter alia, that every citizen is to have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union by way of a European citizens' initiative.

(4) To this end, the procedures and conditions required for the citizens' initiative should be clear, simple, user-friendly and proportionate to the nature of the citizens' initiative so as to encourage participation by citizens and to make the Union more accessible.

(5) Legal acts of the Union for the purpose of implementing the Treaties can be adopted:

— for the establishment of the common organisation of agricultural markets and the other provisions necessary for the pursuit of the objectives of the common agricultural policy, on the basis of Article 43(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU);

— for approximation of the provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States which have as their object the establishment and functioning of the internal market, on the basis of Article 114 TFEU;

— for measures in the veterinary and phytosanitary fields which have as their direct objective the protection of public health, on the basis of Article 168(4)(b) TFEU.

(6) For these reasons, the proposed citizens' initiative does not manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act of the Union for the purpose of implementing the Treaties in accordance with Article 4(2)(b) of the Regulation.

(7) Furthermore, the citizens' committee has been formed and the contact persons have been designated in accordance with Article 3(2) of the Regulation and the proposed citizens' initiative is neither manifestly abusive, frivolous or vexatious nor manifestly contrary to the values of the Union as set out in Article 2 TEU.

[1] OJ L 65, 11.3.2011, p. 1.

(8) The proposed citizens' initiative entitled 'Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment' should therefore be registered,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The proposed citizens' initiative entitled 'Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment' is hereby registered.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on 30 September 2019.

Article 3

This Decision is addressed to the organisers (members of the citizens' committee) of the proposed citizens' initiative entitled 'Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment', represented by Mr Karl BÄR and Mr Helmut BURTSCHER-SCHADEN acting as contact persons.

Done at Brussels, 4 September 2019.

For the Commission
Frans TIMMERMANS
First Vice-President