

APITOX Task Force (TF)

Internal operation guidelines

The COLOSS Task Force (TF) APITOX is a group of independent scientists with interest on bee toxicology. It was created in 2013 among a group of scientists present at a scientific workshop organized at Louvain la Neuve (Belgium) in the framework of the European Beekeeping Congress Beecome. The initial mission of the group was to support the EFSA Guidance Document on Risk Assessment of pesticides on Bees, identifying possible gaps (e.g. homing flight, honeydew) and proposing improvements. This mission continues.

Objective

APITOX members aim to:

- ≡ investigate the effects of environmental toxicants and routes of exposure of chemicals on bees
- ≡ design methodology for the study of these effects
- ≡ promote risks assessment protocols that are effective in protecting bees and bee colonies
- ≡ fund raising at public level (national, international ...)
- ≡ specifically with regards to EFSA Guidance document:
 - analyze EFSA guidelines in order to find lacks and propose improvements
 - individuate most important tests that need to be validated
 - organize international working groups for new OECD TG development and for ring-testing

Thematic

The main topics dealt with within the TF are:

- ≡ Bee ecotoxicology
- ≡ Exposure to environmental toxicants
- ≡ Methodology development

Philosophy

The philosophy of the group can be summarized with the following terms: scientific-rigor, constructiveness, independence, democracy, objectivity.

Given the controversy around the subject we deal with and following our will to continue a free unbiased discussion on the subject of bee toxicology, the members are requested to declare their independency and the absence of Conflict of Interest with industries producing plant protection products.

Members

Provided that APITOX Task Force operates under the umbrella of COLOSS, all members of the Task Force need to be COLOSS members.

Acceptance of new members to the TF

New member candidatures are presented to the assembly of members who evaluate each candidature on a case by case basis. This is done on the basis of the information provided by the candidate:

- ≡ interest to become a member
- ≡ *Curriculum Vitae* (incl. affiliation, presentation of his/her work, list of relevant publications)
- ≡ Declaration of Interest (DOI, for the identification of potential Conflict of Interest)

The decision on the acceptance or rejection of the candidature is done on the basis of a vote of the TF members, based on the simple majority. When an evidence of Conflict of Interest is proven, the candidature will be rejected. The [EFSA criteria for DOI will be applied](#). People present at the meeting in Louvain la Neuve (Belgium) in 2013 are automatically considered members of APITOX if they meet the requirements requested by the COLOSS membership.

The future member enlargement of the APITOX TF envisages two types of recruitment:

- (1) active proposal of candidates by the members of the TF: in which case no more than 2 proposals per member can be done by the end of 2014. Should individual members consider adequate and interesting the participation in the TF of a specific person expert in the domain the member will propose this person to the TF, including the information listed above. Members are not obliged to propose candidates.
- (2) passive reception of candidates: in the COLOSS website it will be stated the procedure to become APITOX member. A part of the information stated above, any candidate applying to become a member of the TF needs a reference (i.e. reference letter, supportive e-mail, ...) of the already members. This means that at least one member of the TF knows this person and will operate as Godfather/Godmother of the new-comer. This Godfather/Godmother knows the new-comer (previous contacts have been held) and supports the candidates membership in front of the other members of the TF.