Decline of pollinators

COLOSS – currently 710 members from 89 countries

Causes of pollinator decline:-

• Land use changes
• Pests and diseases
• Poor beekeeping techniques
• Environmental factors including:-
  o pesticides
Pesticides and bees...

Carreck & Ratnieks, 2014. Data from MAFF / Defra.
Oilseed rape and bees...

• By far the most commonly reported nectar source by beekeepers (Williams et al, 1993; Carreck et al, 1997).

• By far the crop to which members of the Bee Farmers Association move honey bee colonies (Carreck et al, 1997).

• “CSI Pollen” project – in progress.

• Honey bee colonies tend to “build up” on winter sown rape and produce honey from spring sown rape.

• Rape honey is bland, but plentiful.
Consequences of neonicotinoid moratorium on bees...

Growers will use alternative compounds.
• Are these more or less harmful for bees?
• We don’t know.

Growers will reduce area of oilseed rape?
• What will the consequence of this be?
• We don’t know.