PRESS RELEASE

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Procedural Victory for Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS at Romania's Supreme Court in the Neonicotinoid Case

The case concerning the suspension of emergency authorisations for neonicotinoids will be reheard by the Cluj Court of Appeal

On 14 October 2026, Romania's High Court of Cassation and Justice (ICCJ) upheld the appeal filed by Eco Ruralis Association and the Romanian Federation of Beekeeping Associations (ROMAPIS). The Supreme Court overturned the Cluj Court of Appeal's February 2026 judgment and referred the case back for a new hearing. This marks another victory for the organisations challenging the emergency authorisations granted by the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture for the use of neonicotinoid pesticides banned in the European Union, due to the risks they pose to bees and other pollinators.

The decision was issued as Judgment No. 4221 of 14 October 2026, in Case No. 34/33/2025*. The Supreme Court also dismissed as inadmissible the appeal filed by the Association of Professional Farmers and Processors of Romania (FAPPR). The court's written reasoning has yet to be published. The grounds for the decision will become known once the written reasoning is released.

A Case That Has Gone Through Four Rounds of Proceedings – A Fifth Is Yet to Come!

The legal proceedings initiated by Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS in January 2025 concern the suspension of three emergency authorisations, also known as derogations, issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on 5 December 2024. These authorisations permitted the treatment of maize and sunflower seeds with the pesticides Cruiser 350 FS, Nuprid AL 600 FS and Picus 600 FS, which contain neonicotinoids banned in the EU (imidacloprid and thiamethoxam). The authorisations were valid for 90 days.

The two organisations challenge the Ministry of Agriculture's abusive practice of repeatedly granting such derogations over a period of 12 years, despite EU legislation allowing them only in exceptional circumstances and under strict conditions.

Since the proceedings began, the case has gone through several stages:

1. March 2025: The Cluj Court of Appeal granted the application submitted by Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS and ordered the suspension of the three derogations. This was the first significant victory in the case.
2. October 2025: The Supreme Court quashed the March judgment and referred the case back to the Cluj Court of Appeal for reconsideration of procedural issues.

3. February 2026: The Cluj Court of Appeal dismissed the application for suspension on the grounds of lack of legal interest, considering that the expiry of the authorisations rendered further proceedings unnecessary. The court did not examine the grounds of illegality raised by Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS in support of their application. **It also ordered the NGOs to pay substantial legal costs totalling RON 18,226.12**.
4. October 2026: The Supreme Court upheld the appeal filed by Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS, overturned the February judgment and once again referred the case back for a new hearing. **The NGOs are no longer required to pay the legal costs imposed by that judgment**.

Temporary Derogations, Long-Term Consequences

This case highlights a fundamental legal issue: how can derogations valid for only 90 days be effectively challenged when court proceedings may take years?

Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS maintain that the expiry of an authorisation should not prevent judicial review. Otherwise, public authorities could continue issuing temporary derogations while courts would never reach the stage of examining the grounds on which those derogations are challenged.

The stakes extend beyond the three authorisations issued in December 2024. Eco Ruralis, which represents the interests of small-scale farmers, and ROMAPIS, which represents beekeepers, are challenging a recurring administrative practice that affects pollinators, biodiversity and citizens' right to healthy food and a healthy environment. Through these legal proceedings, the two organisations are also defending consumers' interests.

Legal Proceedings Continue

Alongside the suspension proceedings, Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS also sought the annulment of the three derogations. On 25 February 2026, the Cluj Court of Appeal delivered a judgment in favour of the organisations, annulling the contested authorisations. The annulment proceedings are separate from the suspension case.

The Supreme Court's decision of 14 October 2026 does not itself suspend the authorisations or determine their legality. It overturns the unfavourable February judgment and allows the proceedings concerning the suspension request to continue.

Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS are prepared to return to the Cluj Court of Appeal and present their arguments against the neonicotinoid derogations.

The two organisations call on the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to abandon the practice of repeatedly granting derogations and to publicly support an integrated pest management system. Such a system must prioritise preventive measures and non-chemical alternatives and, where pesticides are necessary, ensure

the responsible use of authorised products, in compliance with measures to protect pollinators, biodiversity and the environment.

Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS will continue their legal and public advocacy efforts to ensure compliance with EU legislation and hold the authorities responsible for pesticide authorisations accountable.

Acknowledgements

Eco Ruralis and ROMAPIS would like to thank lawyer Dumitru Dobrev, who represented both organisations in court, for his professionalism, perseverance and dedication throughout these complex legal proceedings.

We would also like to thank PAN Europe and Civique Forum for their support in our legal efforts to challenge neonicotinoid derogations. We are equally encouraged by the solidarity of a growing number of civil society organisations in Romania, which have supported us throughout these proceedings and contributed to our collective efforts to uphold EU legislation and protect pollinators and the environment.

Legal reference: High Court of Cassation and Justice, Administrative and Fiscal Litigation Division, Case No. 34/33/2025*, Judgment No. 4221/14.10.2026.

Read the decision published by the Supreme Court:

https://www.scj.ro/1094/Detalii-dosar?customQuery%5B0%5D.Key=id&customQuery%5B0%5D.Value=330000000080791