

**Question for written answer E-010959/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Call for an immediate ban on diclofenac and review of risk assessment

Veterinary diclofenac kills vultures¹. The appearance of this drug in Europe (Spain and Italy) represents a significant threat to the European vulture populations. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) recently confirmed this risk². New evidence suggests that other anti-inflammatory drugs, such as Flunixin³, also pose a serious threat to vultures. Cheap and safe alternatives exist.

1. Bearing in mind the scientific evidence on the harmful effects of diclofenac and the recent scientific opinion of the EMA on this issue, which shows that a ban on diclofenac for veterinary use is the only option that will result in a negligible risk to vultures, when will the Commission initiate a ban on the drug for veterinary use using the Veterinary Medicines Directive (2001/82/EC)?
2. The fact that the scientific proof of the harmful effects of diclofenac on vultures was not considered at all during the risk assessment procedure proves that the EU risk assessment is flawed. Will the Commission initiate a review of the EU risk assessment on pharmaceutical products before the end of February 2015, taking into account the precautionary principle (Article 191, TFEU)?
3. How will the Commission ensure that no further drugs that are a risk to vultures are authorised on the market in the Member States?

¹ <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v427/n6975/full/nature02317.html>

² http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2014/12/news_detail_002233.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1

³ <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cobi.12417/abstract>