

**Question for written answer E-001800/2015
to the Council**

Rule 130

Norbert Erdős (PPE)

Subject: Council plans to enforce the abolition of the prohibition of planting clearly non-indigenous species

In my opinion, the European Commission has committed a serious infringement, as Delegated Regulation (EU) No 639/2014 supplements Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 establishing rules for direct payments with a new element of fundamental importance.

According to Article 4(1)(k) and (2)(c) of the regulation establishing rules for direct payments, the Member States alone shall be responsible for defining the species of trees that may be planted for short rotation coppice. However, in Article 45(8) of Regulation (EU) No 639/2014 the Commission stipulates that 'Member States shall establish a list of species that can be used for this purpose, (...) thereby excluding species that are clearly not indigenous.'

The planting prohibition for species that are clearly not indigenous is not only in breach of Article (4) of the regulation establishing rules for direct payments, it is also a substantial obstacle for European farmers wanting to establish short rotation coppices on their ecological focus areas with suitable species of trees that are not indigenous but have been present in Europe for centuries (for example locust-trees and poplars). This way the farmers are not provided with a suitable incentive – which was a particularly important objective of EU energy policy – to decrease their costs with renewable energy produced from biomass.

Will the Council therefore please answer the following questions:

- How does the Council plan to enforce the abolition of the unlawful planting prohibition regarding clearly not indigenous species?
- What are the plans of the Council to properly adjust Regulation (EU) No 639/2014?