

**Question for written answer E-003407/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: A step backwards for environmental protection in Spain: reform of the forestry law

On 9 February 2015 the Spanish Cabinet approved the forestry law reform, which is to be debated in the Spanish Parliament over the next few weeks.

The reform, which has been rejected by a majority of political groups, as well as by various organisations and the major environmental NGOs, could mean a step backwards for environmental improvement and protection. For example, it contains provisions that make it possible for land affected by fire to be reclassified without a 30-year moratorium, and for forest rangers to be prevented from investigating offences that affect the environment.

Environmental conservation and protection, and improving the quality of the environment, is one of the priority objectives of EU policy. With this in mind:

1. Given that the 27% of Spanish territory is covered by the Natura 2000 Network, is the Commission going to take a close look at the ways in which the aforementioned law might put environmental protection at risk and breach EU legislation (Directive 2004/35/EC)?
2. Does the Commission think that the Spanish Government's proposed new forestry law will make the aim of reducing deforestation by 2020 – as established in the new EU forest strategy for forests and the forest-based sector – difficult to attain?