

**Question for written answer E-003815/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)

Subject: Objection to construction of biomass-fuelled combustion plants in Vasilika, Thermis

Residents of Vasilika and of the Prefecture of Thermis in Central Macedonia as a whole are up in arms about plans to construct two biomass-fuelled combustion/gasification plants in their area.

The two 498 kW plants, which will generate electricity from gasified biomass, are to be constructed on highly-productive farmland and in a residential area. The combustion plants form part of the policy of the EU and individual governments to liberalise/privatise the energy market, at the expense of grassroots households, and poses a threat to the environment, to the health of local residents and to agricultural production in the area, which is used to supplement their dwindling income. Scientists are arguing that there are extensive gaps in the technical design and anti-pollution technology in the plans prepared and doctors have highlighted the very real risk of carcinogens in the area as a whole. The regional administration of Central Macedonia in general and the City Council of Thessaloniki in particular are stalling in order to avoid pressure from grassroots protests in the area, and the present SYRIZA/ANEL coalition is carefully avoiding any stance.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

- What its position is on the reasonable request of local residents that the aforementioned combustion plants should not be constructed in their area, as they will have devastating effects on public health, the environment and production from small and medium-sized arable and livestock farms?