

**Question for written answer E-012977/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Merja Kyllönen (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Incorporation of the Finnish State's Metsähallitus (Forestry Board), which operates as a commercial enterprise

The Finnish State's Metsähallitus (Forestry Board), which operates as a commercial enterprise, administers one third of the forests in Finland, taking responsibility in this way for 12.6 million hectares. This represents a substantial national asset, which it has been possible to manage well and in a balanced manner using a commercial enterprise model.

In the Forestry Board's forestry operations, all other operations, such as short- and long-distance transport and logging, have been put out to tender, with the exception of planning of logging. There has been no criticism of the existing system on the market, nor has it been suggested that it distorts competition or competitive neutrality. The Forestry Board's organisations, operating on competitive markets, have already been incorporated previously.

Now, however, Finland's national legislation is being amended on the alleged grounds that the EU compels the State to carry out forestry operations in company form. As a commercial enterprise, the Finnish Forestry Board can administer natural resources taking various objectives into account. The Board is in the best position to reconcile the diverse uses to which areas are put, together with various user groups, while also taking into account the requirements of industry. In addition, the Board has succeeded in safeguarding the environment by means of participatory planning.

Do EU legislation or the Commission's previous decisions require the Finnish Forestry Board to be transformed precisely into a company if competitive neutrality can be maintained in a different way, or are other EU countries amending their national legislation on account of Commission requirements in such a way that only the form of a company is possible for forestry operations administered by the State?