

**Question for written answer E-002045/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Clarification of EU Directive 2009/128 (Article 12)

Various European cities, villages and regions are trying to become completely pesticide-free (both in agriculture and non-agriculture) in order to protect their environment and the health of their citizens. To achieve this, they want to ban all active substances in pesticides allowed at EU level and all products based on these active substances at Member State level.

According to Article 12 of EU Directive 2009/128, Member States shall 'ensure that the use of pesticides is minimised or prohibited in certain specific areas'. Depending on the ratification process in the Member States and their National Action Plans, these certain specific areas are defined differently.

According to European legal experts, cities, villages or regions can become pesticide-free if they are able to prove that special and local conditions or regional particularities justify a complete ban.

1. Can an entire city, village or region be considered as a 'specific area', as mentioned in Article 12 of EU Directive 2009/128?
2. What 'special and local conditions or regional particularities' are accepted to justify the complete ban on pesticides?
3. What concrete steps (and what form of risk assessment) need to be taken by a city, village or region in order to be allowed to prohibit pesticides?