

**Question for written answer E-006019/2016  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Hannu Takkula (ALDE)**

Subject: Temporary grasslands and climate action

Temporary grasslands are typical for Nordic conditions and an essential part of livestock nutrition. In terms of agriculture, grasslands are a crucial part of crop rotation which secures soil health in Nordic food production.

Whereas CH<sub>4</sub> (methane) and N<sub>2</sub>O (nitrous oxide) emissions in agriculture have limited mitigation potential, land-based CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) emissions do not. The soil organic carbon data on soil maps is underestimated and covers too shallow a soil depth. Key mitigation measures for agriculture consist in maintaining long-term soil productivity and closing yield gaps by enhancing soil care and ecosystem services via diverse rotation of crops such as temporary grasslands and leguminous plants.

A productive grassland area can produce 10-20 tonnes/hectares of biomass including roots, which amounts to over 15-30 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Forests can barely reach the same annual carbon dioxide removal rate from the atmosphere.

How will the Commission take into account the potential of these temporary, well-managed grasslands in their climate action measures?