

**Question for written answer E-007948/2017  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Amendment of Directive 98/44/EC on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions.

Several farming and environmentalist organisations have been expressing grave disquiet at the fact that more and more plant and animal patents are being filed by a small number of large companies. This trend could jeopardise biodiversity and lead to a situation in which the rural world would be dependent, to an intolerable degree, on a handful of multinationals.

According to these organisations, the amendments to the regulation concerning the Convention on the Grant of European Patents put forward in June by the European Patent Office, which is seeking to rule out the possibility of patenting plants and animals produced by essentially biological means, including mutation, are not sufficient to protect farmers and biodiversity. On 3 November 2016 the Commission adopted a notice clarifying certain articles of Directive 98/44/EC to help achieve the above aim.

How does the Commission view the state of play? Given that this has long been called for, will it amend Directive 98/44/EC in order to incorporate the substance of the above-mentioned notice, thereby providing legal certainty in support of the principle that products created by biological processes or mutagenesis must not be patentable?