

**Question for written answer E-005686/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Mireille D'Ornano (EFDD)

Subject: Risks associated with metam sodium

Metam sodium is a powerful pesticide, herbicide and fungicide. It is corrosive and causes skin, eye and respiratory irritations, as well as being potentially carcinogenic, toxic to reproduction and an endocrine disruptor. However, the active substance is authorised by the Union up until 2022 and used in around 15 countries. The association Générations Futures already spoke out against these dispensations in 2011 and a report issued to the French government in 2017 qualified this substance as one of 'the most frequently used and identified as the most troubling'. The police headquarters in the French department Maine-et-Loire has temporarily banned metam sodium from being used for 15 days. The grounds for this was three incidents of many people being poisoned: 70 people affected, 17 of which were hospitalised. The explanation was abnormally high temperatures in which the liquid converted into gas on contact with the ground, allowing metam sodium to be released into the air. Please note that the French National Agency for Food, Environment and Occupational Health Safety (ANSES) has announced a ban on derivatives of this pesticide.

1. What conclusions does the Commission draw from these facts?
2. Does the Commission wish to backtrack on the aforementioned dispensations?