

**Question for written answer E-000508/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Backward steps in Colombia's environmental law: repercussions for its trade agreement with the EU

Article 277 of the Trade Agreement between the European Union, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador states that 'No Party shall encourage trade or investment by reducing the levels of protection afforded in its environmental ... laws'.

However, on 11 October 2018, Colombia's Constitutional Court ruled that public consultations were not empowered to take decisions on the use of the subsoil and non-renewable natural resources. This is a further setback, and comes in the wake of those outlined in the study by the European Parliament's Research Service of June 2018¹, such as problems in the implementation of prior consultations. The study concludes that: 'With respect to ... environmental aspects, there are serious concerns about the impact of the Agreement related to, among other things, the lack of guarantees that environmental standards will be met and that those standards will be relaxed to facilitate investment in extractive industries'.

(1) What measures has the Commission taken to monitor compliance with Article 277 by the parties to this trade agreement?

(2) Why do the Commission's reports, notably that of 11 October 2018, not mention the backwards steps Colombia has taken in its environmental law?

¹ <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2e5823e2-ba23-11e8-99ee-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF>