

**Question for written answer E-000645/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Merja Kyllönen (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Climate benefits of natural gas

Natural gas and LNG are marketed as environmentally friendly fuels, although leakages of methane at the various stages of the production and use of gas cancel out the benefits to the climate.

In the short term, natural gas warms the planet in a similar way to coal. If gas replaces other fossil fuels, the climate does not benefit. The situation is worse still if gas replaces low-emission energy sources, which is happening around the world.

The main component of natural gas, methane, is a greenhouse gas 86 times more powerful than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period. The slightest methane leakage at any stage of gas use is sufficient to destroy the climate benefits of natural gas.

Leakages during primary production are of such magnitude that their warming effect is equivalent to that of carbon dioxide emissions from gas combustion. The situation is even worse with LNG, because of the energy consumption involved in its liquefaction.

From the point of view of air quality, LNG burns cleanly, with virtually zero emissions of particulates. This is desirable in the vicinity of densely populated areas, but the situation is different, for example, in sea areas. Changing to a fuel that is even worse than oil in terms of its greenhouse effect accelerates global warming, because at the same time the cooling effect of particulates is lost.

According to the latest estimates, cleaning up emissions of particulates of human origin (e.g. from industry, energy production or shipping) would accelerate global warming and, if fully implemented, would result in additional warming of 0.5-1°C. In the Arctic region, emissions of particulates from shipping are expected to prevent around 1.0°C of warming between now and the end of this century.

How does the Commission take into account the latest studies on the relationship between LNG and greenhouse gases? How will the Commission promote alternatives such as availability of LBG?