

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1512/00

by Piia-Noora Kauppi (PPE-DE), Ari Vatanen (PPE-DE), Ilkka Suominen (PPE-DE), Karl von Wogau (PPE-DE), Roger Helmer (PPE-DE), Malcolm Harbour (PPE-DE), Struan Stevenson (PPE-DE), Den Dover (PPE-DE), Astrid Lulling (PPE-DE), John McCartin (PPE-DE), Dana Scallon (PPE-DE), Marjo Matikainen-Kallström (PPE-DE), Christian Rovsing (PPE-DE), James Provan (PPE-DE), James Elles (PPE-DE), Charlotte Cederschiöld (PPE-DE), Karla Peijs (PPE-DE), Elly Plooij-van Gorsel (ELDR), Bertel Haarder (ELDR), Charles Tannock (PPE-DE), Paul Rübig (PPE-DE), John Purvis (PPE-DE), Markus Ferber (PPE-DE), Christian von Boetticher (PPE-DE), Thierry Cornillet (PPE-DE), Robert Goodwill (PPE-DE), Astrid Thors (ELDR), Giles Chichester (PPE-DE), Konrad Schwaiger (PPE-DE), Bashir Khanbhai (PPE-DE), Robert Sturdy (PPE-DE), The Earl of Stockton (PPE-DE), Mikko Pesälä (ELDR), Samuli Pohjamo (ELDR), Jonathan Evans (PPE-DE), Jacqueline Foster (PPE-DE), Carmen Fraga Estévez (PPE-DE), Jan Mulder (ELDR), Encarnación Redondo Jiménez (PPE-DE), Francesco Fiori (PPE-DE), Arlindo Cunha (PPE-DE), Hedwig Keppelhoff-Wiechert (PPE-DE), Elisabeth Jeggle (PPE-DE), Joseph Daul (PPE-DE) and Reino Paasilinna (PSE) to the Commission

Subject: The position and measures taken by the Commission concerning the British fur ban

Member States had until 13 March to react to the draft UK ban on fur-farming. Five Member States (Italy, France, Finland, Spain and Denmark) voiced very serious concerns about the measure, and France submitted a detailed opinion opposing its adoption. As the Commission is aware, this proposal has no scientific basis (nor does the UK claim that it has), and the justification put forward for it by the UK authorities is public morality.

As the Commission is aware, fur-farming is a well regulated sector of agriculture governed by national and EU laws as well as by a Council of Europe Recommendation on fur animals which was adopted in June 1999 with the support of all EU Member States and the Commission. The EU is the largest producer of farmed fur, and the sector provides thousands of jobs, both directly and indirectly.

In view of this situation, does not the Commission consider it illogical and incorrect for a Member State to ignore EU laws governing a legitimate agricultural activity and ban it without full and proper justification? Is not the Commission concerned about the precedent that would be set if a ban based on unsubstantiated public morality arguments were accepted, and is it not worried that the same basis might be used to ban the keeping of other farmed animals or to introduce measures on the transport of animals that conflict with EU directives in this field?

Finally, in the light of the above, does not the Commission consider that it should take a position against the draft UK ban as a matter of urgency and join France in issuing a detailed opinion?