

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0467/01

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to the Commission

Subject: Protection of forests from fires and the Commission's future strategy in this area

Regulation (EEC) 2158/92¹ on protection of the Community's forests against fire is due to expire in 2001. However, at the last meeting of the standing committee on forestry which was held in France, the Commission notified the Member States that it intended to review this Regulation and that it was examining the possibility of incorporating it in the new Council Regulation (EC) 1257/99² on support for rural development.

This would mean approaching the problem of fires from an agricultural, rather than an environmental point of view, and actions so far funded under Regulation (EEC) 2158/92 would no longer be eligible.

Will the Commission say:

1. What stage has work reached on reviewing regulation (EEC) 2158/92, and, given its consequences, what purpose will this serve?
2. Given the importance of this Regulation for the Mediterranean countries, the European Parliament has already pointed out that the budget for these matters should be increased. Does the Commission intend to review the scheduled budget and increase it from EUR 50 million to EUR 77 million?

¹ OJ L 217, 31.7.1992, p.3.

² OJ L 160, 26.6.1999, p.80.