

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2418/03  
by Dominique Souchet (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Sustainable use of pesticides and aerial spraying

Paragraph seven of the European Parliament's resolution on a thematic strategy on the sustainable use of pesticides (P5\_TA-PROV(2003)0128) states that Parliament 'fully supports the recommendation for a ban on aerial spraying and the possibility to designate pesticide free zones'. This resolution forms part of the Van Brempt Report, which was adopted by Parliament at its plenary sitting of 27 March 2003 in Brussels.

Helicopter spraying accounts for only 1% of the plant health treatments employed in Europe. However, some pesticide products can only be applied from the air, for a variety of reasons: the location of the parasite or the scale of the crop (cercosporiosis in bananas, the pine processionary caterpillar, last generation European corn borer, the corn root beetle), the geographical relief of the crop area (sloping vineyards), the type of climatic aberration (vine or potato mildew) or problems of access to the crop (rice fields).

In this case, how does the Commission intend to reconcile the ban on aerial spraying with the need for a consistent approach to combating plant diseases that sometimes can also affect man?