

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4319/08  
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to the Commission

Subject: Biofuels and their future in the European Union

In recent months, the situation on world markets dealing in the main food commodities has been characterised by massive price increases. Analysts and international organisations such as the UN, the OECD and the FAO agree that one of the main reasons for rises in food prices is the increasing use of agricultural land to grow crops for biofuel production.

The European Union is playing a significant role in this regard because it has adopted a policy of compulsory addition of biofuels to petroleum fuels. This policy is generating considerable demand and is contributing to food price rises. Also of concern are the findings of the latest scientific research, which show that biofuels have no positive impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

In view of the above and of the fact that the EU has set a binding target for the compulsory addition of biofuels by 2020, I put the following questions concerning European biofuel policy to the Commission:

1. In the Commission's view, to what extent is the European policy of supporting biofuels contributing to world food price rises?
2. Has an independent analysis of biofuels' impact on food prices and on the environment, based on the latest scientific findings, been conducted at the Commission's request?
3. Is the Commission preparing to propose a rethink of the European policy of supporting biofuels? If so, how? If not, why not?
4. In the Commission's view, is a 10% share of biofuels in petroleum fuels by 2020 a proper and realistic target and one that is not harmful to food prices and the environment?
5. In the Commission's view, what impact would further increasing the share of biofuels have on food prices and the environment?