

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3321/09
by Georgios Georgiou (IND/DEM)
to the Commission

Subject: Biomass boilers and stoves

EU Member States currently receive subsidies from the Commission for the purchase of biomass boilers and stoves, and bonuses are available for producing electricity from biomass. This allows resources to be used rationally and the burning method still practised in some EU countries, such as Greece, to be replaced. In particular, thousands of tonnes of cotton and maize stalks and tree and vine pruning products are burned every day in fields, instead of being used for the production of industrial pellets. Thousands of tonnes of timber waste also remain unused in the forests, posing a fire risk. Waste from saw-mills and carpenters' workshops (sawdust and shavings) is commonly buried in landfill sites.

While pellet consumption is increasing by almost 20% a year in Europe as a whole, in Greece, in particular in the prefectures of Attica and Thessaloniki, boilers using pellets (a renewal energy source) are banned (Ministerial Decision 103/93, Greek Government Official Journal; second series 369/1993).

Is the above decision by Greece banning pellet boilers compatible with EU legislation?