

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4236/09

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to the Commission

Subject: Community funding for areas devastated by the 2007 fires and rehabilitation plans

The second anniversary of the catastrophic fires of 2007, together with the recent fires in Attica, have put a spotlight on Greece's special forest protection needs which involve the implementation of Community policy.

Bearing in mind the special needs of the areas devastated by fires, the Commission had granted an extension of the final deadline for the eligibility of expenditure under Greek operational programmes in the third CSF (2000-2006), and had committed itself to using NSRF funds for the rehabilitation of areas devastated by fires. Bearing in mind the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware to what extent the abovementioned extension has contributed to the execution of projects in respect of the areas damaged by fires? Have new projects been included under, and funded by, the third CSF relating to the restoration of the damage inflicted in the summer of 2007? Does a list of such projects exist?
2. Does it know whether the Greek authorities have drawn up plans to restore the areas of Ilia, Arkadia, Euboea and Attica damaged by fires? Have these plans been submitted to the Commission? Do any special rehabilitation plans exist for specially protected areas and sites of Community environmental interest (for example Kaifas Lake, the Chelmos-Vouraikos region, Achaia and other regions which burnt in 2007)?
3. What measures has the Commission taken to implement Resolution P6_TA(2007)0362 on natural disasters adopted by the European Parliament on 4 September 2007, calling, inter alia, on the Commission to collaborate with national authorities to develop policies that minimise the environmental impact of fires; and also reforestation policies by gathering and publishing data relating to the natural resources of each Member State? How does it judge cooperation with the Greek authorities in providing such data with a view to the development of the policies in question?