

**Question for written answer E-5733/2010  
to the Commission  
Rule 117  
Pascale Gruny (PPE)**

Subject: Biofuels

Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources<sup>1</sup> (the Renewable Energy Directive) sets out the various targets of the climate and energy package. The targets set as regards renewable energy in final consumption in the transport sector (10% by 2020) are accompanied by specific requirements on the 'sustainability' of biofuels, in response to the debate on their true energy efficiency and with regard to the consequences that developing them might have on the surge in food prices and on biodiversity loss.

Biofuels that do not fulfil these sustainability criteria will not be taken into account for the targets and will receive no public funding. The criteria fall into two categories. The first relates to greenhouse gas emissions. The second consists of a set of conditions on protecting biodiversity, maintaining carbon levels in soil, cross-compliance under the common agricultural policy, measures taken to protect soil, water, air and degraded land, and compliance with international conventions on labour law, biosafety and the protection of endangered species.

A report entitled *Biofuels: Handle with care* was published by a consortium of environmental NGOs in November 2009. It claims that biofuels are not a sustainable alternative to fossil fuels and that a change to current policy is needed. It also suggests that there is a substantial risk that this new alternative will cause more harm than good.

1. The report strongly criticises the Renewable Energy Directive, which was adopted in 2008 and which includes many amendments passed by the European Parliament. The most astonishing thing is that the authors indicate that they had received funding from the Commission to publish the report: is this true?
2. If so, which Commission service contributed financially to the publication of the report?
3. How can a Commission service provide support for a report published by NGOs whose objective is to criticise legislation adopted unanimously by the European institutions?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 16.