

**Question for written answer E-001695/2011  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Riikka Manner (ALDE)**

Subject: The life cycle concept in construction

Legislation on the building trade provides emphatic guidance for construction and the use of buildings. For instance, the current energy efficiency requirements, based inter alia on heat retention, do not promote the use of environmentally sound building materials such as timber. Accordingly, in defining energy efficiency, account should be taken of the whole four-stage life cycle of building materials: obtaining the materials, construction, use and demolition. If, in addition to the actual ultimate use for which material is intended, account were to be taken of its production process, this would improve the environmental performance of the building trade. Wood, for example, binds carbon as it grows, and thinning of trees to maximise their growth rate produces raw materials for bioenergy production.

How will the Commission promote the possibility of broadening the definition of energy efficiency to cover the whole life cycle of a material? Has the possibility of establishing a European public environmental certification system for construction been debated?