

**Question for written answer E-001139/2014  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Animal welfare and hunting practices

The practice of hunting with hounds or dogs is extremely detrimental to the welfare of wild animals due to the stress and suffering that it causes the hunted animal. From an ecological point of view, hunting with hounds or dogs does not offer any particular advantages with regard to species conservation objectives. From a legal point of view, although practically every European country has already prohibited it, this practice is still subject to particularly favourable conditions in certain Member States.

The Commission initiated debate on the principle of animal welfare at a European level, which is illustrated by the European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015 (COM(2012)6 final/2).

Can the Commission explain how it intends to ensure that the principle of animal welfare is observed?

Does the Commission intend to regulate hunting with hounds or dogs, or propose that the Member States ban this practice in light of how it is clearly inconsistent with respecting animal welfare?