

**Question for written answer E-002718/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Risks arising from desertification in Italy

The Italian Association of Consortia for the Management and Protection of Land and Irrigation Water (*Associazione italiana dei consorzi per la gestione e la tutela del territorio e delle acque irrigue*) states that according to statistics from the Italian National Research Council (CNR), the percentage of land at risk of desertification now stands at 70% in Sicily, 58% in Molise and 57% in Apulia. In Sardinia, Marche, Emilia-Romagna, Umbria, Abruzzo and Campania the figure ranges between 30% and 50% of usable land. Desertification is a form of land degradation that occurs in dry zones and engenders serious problems such as reduced food production, soil infertility, lower natural soil resilience and declining drinking water quality. It is a growing threat in many parts of Italy and Europe and is liable to have an extremely adverse impact both demographically and economically.

1) Is there is an EU-wide strategy on tackling desertification and land degradation? What concrete measures does it comprise?

2) What EU instruments and funds can be harnessed by those Italian regions at risk of desertification?