

**Question for written answer E-002879/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Elsi Katainen (Renew)

Subject: Banning the use of lead shot and lead bullets

Since 2015, the Commission has been preparing to amend the REACH Regulation so as to ban the use of lead shot in wetlands. Publication of the proposal is expected soon. A possible ban may cause problems when it comes to implementation, depending on how the term 'wetland' is defined. The 'Ramsar' definition recommended by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) also defines peatland as wetlands.

Furthermore, in July 2019 the Commission asked the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to investigate and prepare for a total ban on lead in shot and bullets, including in areas other than wetlands: in hunting, shooting sports and fishing. The measures envisaged by the Commission have given rise to concern in civil society, as the unambiguous termination of the use of lead in ammunition poses a challenge. Many substitute materials for lead are problematic in terms of safe use, high price, availability and potential negative effects on forestry. In addition, the resultant higher training costs may jeopardise the ethical and safe shooting of game, as large numbers of shots are fired during training.

1. Does the Commission intend to take account of the different natural environments in Member States, so that the definition of 'wetland' in the future REACH Regulation does not, for example, result in a ban on the use of lead shot in woodlands with peat soils, where the risks to birds from the use of lead are significantly lower than in wetlands, which are the real habitats of water birds?
2. In addition, I would like to ask whether the Commission understands the practical challenges related to banning lead and how the Commission intends to ensure that its measures to prevent damage caused by lead are reasonable and fair to hunters and shooters, including competition shooters?