

**Question for written answer E-006090/2020  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Sergio Berlato** (ECR)

Subject: The role of hunters and foresters in combating the spread of avian influenza

On 4 November 2020, the Italian regional authorities received a note from the Ministry of Health Directorate-General for Animal Health and Veterinary Medicines, informing them of a highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak in the Netherlands. In the same note, the Directorate-General requested that authorisation be suspended for the use of live decoys in the hunting of birds belonging to the orders Anseriformes and Charadriiformes. Member States in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health have recognised that hunters and foresters play an important role in combating the spread of avian influenza.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Does it not agree that it would be more efficient to include hunters as key players in the land monitoring operation to help with the early detection of the virus in wildlife, both by providing the authorities with a sample of the birds shot down and by carrying out regular veterinary checks on their live decoys in order to ascertain their health status and whether or not they may have contracted the virus from wildlife?
2. Does the Commission not agree that collaboration with hunters could be a useful way of monitoring the territory and detecting the avian influenza virus in good time?

**Supporters<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> This question is supported by Members other than the author: Raffaele Fitto (ECR), Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Raffaele Stancanelli (ECR), Nicola Procaccini (ECR)