

**Question for written answer E-002090/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Thawing permafrost

Permafrost covers 25% (25 million km²) of the world's landmass, and is primarily found in the Arctic region. Permafrost soils remain below 0°C for at least two consecutive years.

Thawing permafrost will activate bacteria capable of breaking down organic matter trapped underground since the last glacial period, 12 000 years ago. Consequently, this process will release carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. Methane is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide in trapping infra-red rays and thus contributing to the greenhouse effect.

Mercury stored in these soils will also be released by thawing permafrost and thus contaminate the oceans and affect the entire food chain. Mercury is a powerful neurotoxin and reprotoxin (induces fertility alterations).

In light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the pressing need to drastically reduce imported emissions – emissions linked to goods and services produced abroad, yet purchased and consumed in the EU?
2. Does it intend to introduce a policy on reindustrialisation, with a view to reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the EU's domestic consumption?

Supporters¹

¹ This question is supported by Members other than the authors: Jean-Paul Garraud (ID), Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)