

**Question for written answer E-002760/2021  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Ignazio Corrao** (Verts/ALE)

**Subject:** Arson in Sicily and failure by Italian institutions to take relevant action

Fires started deliberately in Sicily are having a drastic effect on its biodiversity. In 2017 Sicily was the Italian region with the largest burnt area in total: 34 221 hectares, of which 15 785 hectares were forests (2017 JRC Technical Report). For the 2020 season, the European Forest Fires Information System (EFFIS) estimates that in total an area of 35 900 hectares was burnt between 1 June and 30 October 2020. And already this year, between March 2021 and May 2021 there have been over 20 cases of fires started deliberately in Sicily, including in protected IBA, SPA and wetland areas.

These fires are jeopardising both the implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), which Italy adopted through Law No 66/2006 but has never enforced, and the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy.

In view of the inertia displayed by local and regional institutions:

1. Will the Commission examine whether the Sicily regional executive has been negligent or effective in its work to prevent fires, in relation both to Directive 2008/99/EC (Law No 68/2015) and the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy?
2. Can Sicily ask for the Solidarity Fund to be triggered, as damages over recent years come in total to a figure that is well above the threshold of three billion euro?
3. Will the Commission promote the use of technology (drones and thermal imaging cameras) to manage forest fires?

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

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<sup>1</sup> This question is supported by Members other than the author: Rosa D'Amato (Verts/ALE), Eleonora Evi (Verts/ALE)