

**Question for written answer E-002506/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Mara Bizzotto (ID)

Subject: Productive capacity of agricultural holdings threatened by new EU regulation on plant protection products – the Commission proposal needs to be reviewed

On 22 June the Commission published its Communication 305/2022¹ proposing a new regulation under the farm to fork strategy that would require farmers to cut their use of plant protection products by half by 2030. No valid alternatives to this were proposed.

The proposal for a regulation takes no account at all of the steep increases in energy and production costs that are hitting both farmers and consumers hard.

The 'Revision of the sustainable use of pesticides Directive' impact study states that 'Stricter rules on the distribution and use of pesticides introduced in the EU could affect crop yield and food production in the EU (with associated possible trade implications), and have consequent effects on rural communities'.²

A good many of the substances that have already been banned in the EU are still used in non-EU countries. Were use of plant protection products to rise again this would put the EU at a clear competitive disadvantage, jeopardising the EU's food self-sufficiency and encouraging an influx of goods from countries outside the EU which do not guarantee compliance with EU sustainability standards.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission plan to review its proposal given the current economic and geopolitical crises?
2. How will it ensure agricultural holdings have sufficient productive capacity?
3. When will it present a legislative proposal on the new sustainable biotechnologies, which offer the only alternative to cutting use of chemicals?

¹ https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/pesticides_sud_eval_2022_reg_2022-305_en.pdf

² [1]https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12413-Pesticides-sustainable-use-updated-EU-rules-_en