

**Question for written answer E-002482/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Fires in the Evros region

The Commission's official statement of 29 August 2023 states that the wildfire, which has been raging for 12 days now in the Evros region, is the largest ever recorded in the EU. Using satellite data, the Copernicus rapid mapping service calculates that as of 28 August, over 81 000 hectares had been consumed by the fire.

The situation in the south of the EU is grim: the tragic losses of human life, the incalculable ecological, environmental and economic disasters, in combination with the ominous scientific predictions that in the next few years the situation will get worse and that the disasters that have already taken place are practically impossible to remedy, even over the course of centuries, are cause for justifiable pessimism.

Commissioner Lenarčič has referred, in this regard, to '(the Commission's) commitment to swift and effective collective action in times of crisis', adding that 'the EU's unity and cooperation are our strongest assets in overcoming these challenges'.

Nevertheless, fine words are no substitute for:

1. the lack of resources and EU tools for the effective prevention and combating of wildfires, and natural disasters in general,
 2. the absence of a strong central body to plan and coordinate actions and a robust permanent economic mechanism to support relevant initiatives and the Member States affected.
1. What specific actions will the Commission take, right now, as indicated above? How will it ensure the mandatory intensive restoration of the natural environment in the areas affected?

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