

**Question for oral answer O-0191/2010
to the Commission**

Rule 115

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Subject: Support for the Yasuni-ITT proposal as part of the fight against climate change

The Yasuni-ITT initiative was launched by the government of Ecuador. Its aim is to provide funding to ensure that the oil reserves under the Yasuni forest – a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve and one of the world's most biologically diverse areas – remain untouched. The area is also home to a number of indigenous communities, including the Tagaeri and the Taromenane, who live in voluntary isolation.

Ecuador's oil accounts for 22.2% of its GDP and 63.1% of its exports. The reserves in the Yasuni National Park run to some 850 million barrels, which is 20% of Ecuador's total oil reserves, with an export value of USD 7.2 billion. A UNDP-managed international trust fund was set up on 3 August 2010 with the aim of raising those USD 7.2 billion, with half coming from Ecuador's government and half from the international community. The money will be used to fund renewable energy and jobs in the renewable energy sector. In the light of the UN's principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' (Rio Declaration on Climate Change, 1992), this project has to be seen as an innovative attempt to change our approach to development.

Declarations of support for the Yasuni-ITT initiative have come from far and wide: Benita Ferrero-Waldner, then European Commissioner for External Relations, on 6 March 2009, the Andean Community on 5 February 2010, the Heads of State and Government of the Latin American and Caribbean countries on 23 February 2010, and the European Council in its Declaration on the EU-Andean Community Summit of 19 May 2010. With this in mind, is the Commission willing to back the Yasuni-ITT initiative politically and, of course, financially? Is the Commission prepared to encourage the Member States, Europe's major cities, the OECD and the international community as a whole to do so too? Is it now prepared to consider promoting and setting up projects like the Yasuni-ITT initiative within the EU and elsewhere in the world?

What steps can the Commission propose to support developing countries in preserving forests whilst respecting the needs of indigenous communities? What kind of international, flexible mechanism based on project originality could the Commission bring forward, outside the spheres of development aid, clean development mechanisms, REDD and REDD+?

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