

WRITTEN QUESTION P-6135/08  
by Bogdan Golik (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject:           Assessment of the impact of the regulation on plant protection products

The review of the legislation governing the authorisation and use of plant protection products represents a major contribution on the part of the Commission to ensuring food safety for European citizens. The European rules implemented since 1991 needed to be consolidated in the light of the growth in the number of Member States and of scientific progress. Furthermore, it is important, for food safety reasons, for the rules to be implemented in a uniform manner in all Member States.

During its initial discussions on the above rules, the European Parliament acknowledged that the Commission proposal takes due account of biodiversity within Europe and of the fact that different techniques are used to grow what are often the same species of plant in countries from Poland to Spain. In view of the different pathogens existing in different climate zones and soil types, farmers are obliged to take very different approaches and use very different methods to protect their crops against pests, diseases and weeds.

Assessments of the impact of the regulation on the authorisation of plant protection products have been carried out in a few Member States. For instance, research has been conducted in the Netherlands into the impact the proposed regulation will have on the growing of tulip bulbs. The Nomisma institute and the UK Pesticides Safety Directorate have made a number of alarming predictions regarding the impact of implementing the new rules.

Given the above, would the Commission not agree that, for the good of European agriculture and with a view to safeguarding its productivity and competitiveness, a detailed assessment should be made of the impact of introducing the new rules, not least from a social point of view (as regards future food prices, for example)? It is absolutely essential for the Members of the European Parliament to be able to vote in full possession of the facts, in the interests of Europe's farmers.