

**Priority question for written answer P-003884/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Vincenzo Sofo (ECR)

Subject: Activation of the European civil protection mechanism to combat fires in the south of Italy

Southern Italy has been brought to its knees in recent days by the very many fires breaking out all across the region.

The situation is particularly critical in Sicily and Calabria, where many people have had to be evacuated and many businesses have been seriously damaged. Regrettably some deaths have also been recorded.

Fighting the fires is proving particularly complicated because most of them are in areas that are difficult to reach, making it almost impossible to tackle them on the ground.

Despite all the ceaseless efforts of the civil defence forces, firefighters and the police, the situation is still not yet under control, and the Prefecture of Reggio Calabria has had to call for the army to be brought in to try to contain the flames that still continue to devour innumerable hectares of land.

We are facing an unprecedented environmental disaster and southern Italy cannot be left to tackle this alone.

The aid deployed so far through the EU's civil protection mechanism has been completely insufficient to tackle this emergency situation.

In light of the above, what action will the Commission take to help southern Italy grapple with the aftermath of this environmental disaster and to prevent such situations occurring again in the future?