

FORM FOR TABLING A QUESTION FOR WRITTEN ANSWER (Rule 130)

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SUBJECT: Forest governance in the context of climate change and property restitution in Romania
(please specify)

TEXT:

The Paris climate change conference held in December 2015 convening cross-sector participants from government, civil society, business and finance, has created an unparalleled opportunity for the EU to contribute to completing a binding framework to reduce man-made emissions for post-2020 and address global warming.

Along the critical challenge of emissions, protecting forests from being cut down is a key part of tackling climate change. UN estimates that the loss of around 12 million hectares a year is responsible for around 11% of global greenhouse gas emission. Preventing the destruction and degradation of forests, as well as reforestation and forest landscape restoration must therefore be treated as an urgent priority, because they play an essential role in protecting the planet.

In the region of Transylvania, Romania, where forests, as private property confiscated by the communist regime have been only partially restituted, illegal logging, corruption, neglect and sabotage of existing legal regulations have pushed the region to the edge of ecological and economic catastrophe.

In the context of climate change, how does the European Commission plan to strengthen forest governance in Romania, given the close link between the difficult process of private property restitution and the phenomena of deforestation?

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Signature(s):

Date:

EN
E-015389/2015
Answer given by Mr Arias Cañete
on behalf of the Commission
(23.2.2016)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-009151/2015, E-007544/2015, E-009341/2015 and E-008335/2015¹.

The EU forest strategy COM(2013) 659 provides for national authorities to make sure that their forests are protected, managed and used in compliance with the relevant national and EU legislation, while noting action at EU level is needed in case of trans-boundary threats to forest ecosystems. The Commission is responsible for ensuring an overall effective and uniform implementation of EU legislation, including environmental as well as the EU internal market, competition and trade law.

As regards the specific link between forests and climate, the Commission is assessing the best means of optimising the EU land sector's contribution to greenhouse gas mitigation and sequestration. Policy on how to include Forestry into the 2030 greenhouse gas mitigation ("climate and energy 2030") framework will be established before 2020.

Concerning the specific case of Romanian Forests, the Commission has opened an infringement case to Romania regarding the implementation of the EU Timber regulation that aims to minimise the risk of wood from illegal sources being placed on the EU market and is still investigating the situation.

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html>