

**Question for written answer E-002719/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Recent developments regarding methane emissions possibly not complying with EU-New Zealand free trade agreement

The Government of New Zealand (NZ) has appointed a panel to deliver an independent review of methane science and the national 2050 methane reduction target ‘for consistency with no additional warming from agricultural methane emissions’¹. However, according to scientists, adopting the concept of ‘no additional warming’ and weakening existing national methane reduction targets could undermine commitments made under the Paris Agreement². The recently adopted EU-NZ free trade agreement (FTA) aims to promote an increase in the trade of livestock and dairy products, which are a significant source of methane emissions. The Commission described the FTA as a ‘gold standard’ because it obliges the parties to effectively implement the Paris Agreement. This includes refraining from any action or omission that defeats the Agreement’s object and purpose.

1. Is the Commission following these concerning developments in NZ and has it engaged in discussions with NZ about them?
2. What actions is the Commission taking to ensure that NZ does not backtrack on its climate ambitions when it comes to methane reduction?
3. Is the Commission prepared to use all means at its disposal to enforce the FTA if NZ indeed decides to weaken its national methane reduction targets?

Submitted: 2.12.2024

¹ <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/news/Methane-Science-and-Target-Review-Terms-of-Reference.pdf>.

² <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab56e7/meta>.