

**Question for written answer E-002667/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Vicent Marzà Ibáñez (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Need to update the EU regulatory framework on phytosanitary treatments to include precision technologies such as drone use

Directive 2009/128/EC prohibits, with certain exceptions, the aerial spraying of plant protection products. In 2017, the European Commission judged that drone treatments should be considered aerial, and did not make a distinction between them and conventional aerial techniques, despite the fact that drone spraying is often carried out at a lower height than some land-based treatments. This interpretation, based solely on their ability to fly, prevents drones from being used, even when they increase precision, reduce drift and enable a smaller dose to be used, which means they align with the objectives of the European Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy and digital agriculture. Many Member States have expressed interest in reviewing this classification.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission intend to review the interpretation of Article 9 of Directive 2009/128/EC to allow the use of drones when their lower environmental impact is proven?
2. Does it consider it necessary to define a specific category for drones based on technical criteria – such as low height and drift – and not only on their ability to fly?
3. What action does the Commission propose to take to adapt the regulatory framework and avoid the uptake of precision agriculture technologies being held back?

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