

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-002287/24  
to the Commission  
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)  
(28 October 2024)**

*Subject:* Forest land, declassification and change of forest use

Given that forests are the atmosphere's primary filters, it is unacceptable that deforestation remains a reality.

The municipality of Ermionida in Greece has given the green light for the construction of a tourist accommodation complex with a total capacity of 607 beds, comprising a 5-star hotel, two rehabilitation centres built specifically for tourists and furnished tourist accommodation. The development will cover an area of 641 966.16 m<sup>2</sup>, including 185 582.67 m<sup>2</sup> of private forest land outside the 'Chinitsa' area of the municipal plans.

The use of private forest land is a cause for concern, despite the assurances of the project developer that 'no interference is taking place' on the land in question and that 'the land will be developed at the lowest construction rate for the development of tourist accommodation, i.e. 0.07 (compared to the maximum permitted, which is 0.20)'.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission intend to coordinate the adoption of legislation by the Member States in order to tackle deforestation?
2. Does it intend to survey forest land across the European Union with a view to ensuring that deforestation and reforestation are balanced and fully monitored?
3. What studies does it plan to carry out to ensure that burnt areas are sensibly replaced with an equal area of forestation, as a prerequisite of improving the environment in which EU citizens live and helping nature to reduce unwanted greenhouse gases?

Submitted: 29.10.2024

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission**  
(10 January 2025)

1. Land use choices are the primary prerogative of Member States. Where applicable, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive <sup>(1)</sup> ensures that environmental concerns are considered prior to development consent for projects. If significant effect on a Natura 2000 site is likely, project approval requires an impact assessment that demonstrates no adverse effects on site integrity <sup>(2)</sup>. The EU Regulation on deforestation free products <sup>(3)</sup> (EUDR) aims to eliminate deforestation driven by EU consumption and production of certain agricultural and industrial commodities by setting mandatory due diligence rules for placing commodities and products on the EU market or to export such products from the EU.
2. Member States are currently responsible for monitoring forest land and may use the Copernicus service <sup>(4)</sup>, which collects tree cover density and tree cover change data. The Forest Information System for Europe <sup>(5)</sup> translates the data into maps and statistics that can be publicly accessed. The Commission proposal for a regulation on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests <sup>(6)</sup> aims to improve forest information further.
3. There are currently no studies planned on the issue of reforestation of areas affected by forest fires. The Commission provides funding for reforestation through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) <sup>(7)</sup>. Greece has used funds for reforestation and fire prevention measures in its Rural Development Programme <sup>(8)</sup> and Recovery and Resilience Plan <sup>(9)</sup>. In addition, Cohesion policy allocates EUR 421 million in 2021-2027 through national <sup>(10)</sup> and regional <sup>(11)</sup> programs to support forest fire prevention, risk and disaster management measures across Greece.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1-21.

<sup>(2)</sup> Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7-50.

<sup>(3)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010, OJ L 150, 9.6.2023, p. 206-247.

<sup>(4)</sup> <https://www.copernicus.eu/en/copernicus-services>

<sup>(5)</sup> <https://forest.eea.europa.eu/>

<sup>(6)</sup> Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests, COM/2023/728 final.

<sup>(7)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-fund-rural-development-eafnd\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-fund-rural-development-eafnd_en)

<sup>(8)</sup> Measure 8 (sub-measures 8.3 and 8.4) — Investments in forest area development and improving forest sustainability: Μέτρο 8 — Επενδύσεις στην ανάπτυξη δασικών περιοχών και στη βελτίωση της βιωσιμότητας των δασών — ΑΓΡΟΤΙΚΗ ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ

<sup>(9)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en)

<sup>(10)</sup> <https://peka-program.gr/>, <https://civilprotection-program.gr/>.

<sup>(11)</sup> <https://www.pepattikis.gr/>, <https://www.eydamth.gr/>, <https://www.e-pepba.gr/>, <https://dytikiellada.gr/>, <https://www.espa-epirus.gr/>, <https://www.thessalia-espa.gr/>, <https://peponia.gr/>, <https://eydpelop2127.gr/>.