

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002459/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(18 June 2025)**

Subject: Toxic cloud in Kefalonia — Public health risk and need for immediate European support

A few days ago, a fire broke out at an illegal landfill in the Langada area of Kefalonia, causing the release of a toxic cloud which has affected the island's capital (Argostoli), Lixouri and the surrounding areas. The event is causing serious concerns regarding the health of residents and the impact on the local environment.

In addition to the dangerous nature of the phenomenon, there are complaints regarding the competent authorities' inability to prevent it and their delayed response, as well as earlier warnings that were allegedly ignored.

This is a serious incident of environmental degradation with potential cross-border impacts (due to the atmospheric transport of pollutants) and serious risks to public health.

Accordingly:

1. Has the Commission received official information from the Greek authorities regarding the fire in Langada, Kefalonia, and its environmental impact?
2. Does the Commission intend to mobilise EU technical assistance and/or take scientific steps to measure pollution and assess the risks to the health of residents?

Submitted: 18.6.2025

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(26 August 2025)**

The Commission has not received any official information from the Greek authorities regarding the fire in Langada, Kefalonia, and its environmental impact.

The Waste Framework Directive ⁽¹⁾ lays down the principles of the waste hierarchy Member States shall follow. Waste that cannot be prevented should be prepared for reuse or recycled and only as a last resort sent to landfills or incineration ⁽²⁾.

The Commission monitors and verifies Member State compliance with the applicable waste management targets. The Early Warning Reports published in 2023 concluded that Greece relies heavily on landfilling and significant illegal dumping rates and insufficient biowaste treatment capacity ⁽³⁾.

The Commission has been working to support Greece in tackling these issues on two different strands: it has provided technical support and advice; and where this fails, it has taken enforcement actions where it established that the problem was systemic.

On 2 December 2014 ⁽⁴⁾ the Court of Justice of the EU condemned Greece for not having executed its first judgment in *Commission v Greece* on illegal landfills ⁽⁵⁾.

The Commission envisages to continue applying this compliance strategy in order to minimise illegal landfilling and its negative impacts on human health and the environment.

In parallel, Greece has allocated under the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 EUR 911 million ⁽⁶⁾ to improve waste management practices and reduce landfill dependency, with a particular focus on waste prevention, recycling and the circular economy.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3-30, as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May, OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 109-140.

⁽²⁾ Article 4 of Directive 2008/98/EC.

⁽³⁾ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b7434520-0350-11ee-87ec-01aa75ed71a1/language-el>.

⁽⁴⁾ ruling C-378/13;

text=&docid=157398&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=38646.

⁽⁵⁾ C 502/03, EU:C:2005:592.

⁽⁶⁾ https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/2021-2027-Categorisation/2021-2027-Planned-finances-detailed-categorisation/hgyj-gyin/about_data.