(English version)

Question for written answer E-004236/25
to the Commission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(29 October 2025)

Subject: Impact of a calcium cyanamide fertiliser ban on the EU's strategic independence

In April 2021, the European Chemicals Agency found that calcium cyanamide ($CaCN_2$), used as a fertiliser, poses uncontrolled environmental risks. In April 2025, the Commission proposed a ban. However, $CaCN_2$ is also a key raw material for pharmaceutical and defence production, notably as a precursor of nitroguanidine, which is used in artillery propellants. A ban would jeopardise the EU's only producer and increase dependence on China.

1. Is the Commission aware of any specific cases in the past in which $CaCN_2$-based fertilisers have caused significant damage to human health and the environment, and if so, please list these specific incidents.

2. How does the Commission assess the proposed restriction with respect to the findings in its own Defence Readiness Omnibus package, which acknowledges that defence-related issues have so far not been adequately addressed under the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulation, and does the current proposal contradict the announced objectives of the upcoming simplification of the regulation, which is intended to explicitly include the defence readiness objective and ensure that defence concerns — including indirect effects on defence supply chains — are thoroughly considered?

3. How does the Commission plan to ensure that a potential ban on $CaCN_2$ as a fertiliser does not jeopardise the only European production of essential substances, particularly nitroguanidine, thereby resulting in a strategic disadvantage for the EU compared to China?

Submitted: 29.10.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(23 December 2025)

The risks to the environment posed by calcium cyanamide when used as fertiliser are detailed in the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) Annex XV restriction report ([1]) and in the opinion of ECHA's Committee for Risk Assessment ([2]), and are confirmed by scientific literature ([3]).

In line with the objectives of the Defence Readiness Omnibus, the Commission has carefully considered all impacts, including the possible indirect impacts on ammunition production, before deciding to propose a ban on calcium cyanamide as fertiliser. In its proposal, the Commission has taken into account the recommendations of ECHA and its scientific committees, as well as the changed geo-political context following ECHA's assessment, and deviated from the opinion of ECHA's Committees to avoid possible consequences for EU's defence and strategic autonomy.

The restriction proposal (i) is limited to the fertiliser use, preserving all other uses, including defence applications, and (ii) currently includes longer transitional periods than those originally recommended by ECHA, providing additional time and flexibility to the company to reorganise its production and minimise impacts.

Discussions with the Member States in the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Committee on the proposed restriction are ongoing, including on how to best preserve the EU's strategic autonomy and ensure defence readiness. In this context, additional evidence has been requested from the affected company and is being assessed to further inform the decision-making process.

([1]) https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/6c6b7b9f-20bb-85c7-ab25-ca203975e1ab.
([2]) https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/b2b4d2e8-836e-c073-155f-5ad5455e2164.
([3]) See references at page 87 of the Annex XV restriction report, and tables 34, 36 and 37 in the same document.