

The Commission would remind the Honourable Member that, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, the Member State lays down the arrangements for the actual allocation of this amount among the various alternative sources of energy according to its own energy policy criteria.

(2001/C 187 E/140)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4094/00

by Jorge Hernández Mollar (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(10 January 2001)

Subject: EU action to prevent domesticated animal species from dying out

The world's population of farm animals is gradually declining. According to a report recently published by the FAO, two species of domesticated animal die out each week. One EU Member State (Spain) is in the worrying situation of having 69 species of domesticated animal at risk of dying out, 22 of which are in a critical state.

The situation is a constant cause for concern since, according to the experts, the animals in question display rich genetic diversity and the loss of genetic diversity makes species more vulnerable.

In view of this alarming situation, what action is the EU going to take in order to protect the species of domesticated animal which are under threat of extinction, bearing in mind the fact that biodiversity is an essential factor in the fight against diseases and pests?

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(16 February 2001)

From 1993 and throughout the programming period which ended in 1999 the Commission approved programmes to promote rearing farm animal breeds threatened with extinction in most Member States. The programmes were designed to contribute towards achieving one of the agri-environmental objectives referred to in Article 1(c) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2078/92 of 30 June 1992 on agricultural production methods compatible with the requirements of the protection of the environment and the maintenance of the countryside⁽¹⁾, namely to promote ways of using agricultural land which are compatible with protection and improvement of genetic diversity. The Community's effort on this matter is continuing in the 2000-2006 period under Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 of 17 May 1999 on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and amending and repealing certain Regulations⁽²⁾, which incorporates into a single regulatory instrument all rural development support measures and also the objectives of Regulation (EEC) No 2078/92.

Under Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999, and in particular the agri-environmental measures referred to in Articles 22 to 24, support is to be granted to farmers who commit themselves for at least five years to agricultural production methods designed to protect the environment and to maintain the countryside; that support is also intended to promote genetic diversity. Article 13 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1750/1999 of 23 July 1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)⁽³⁾ provides for agri-environmental support in respect of commitments to rear local farm animal breeds in danger of extinction. Most of the rural development programmes which Member States have drawn up and which the Commission has approved for the 2000-2006 programming period provide for agri-environmental premiums in respect of rearing local breeds threatened with extinction.

In view of the above, the Commission considers that it has already taken the steps needed to protect farm animal breeds which are under threat.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 215, 30.7.1992.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 160, 26.6.1999.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 214, 13.8.1999.