

Besides this co-operation between Member States which is supported by the Commission, the European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods (ECVAM) of the Joint Research Centre is successfully validating alternative test methods also in the area of batch potency testing. Furthermore, as a partner of the International Conference for Harmonisation of requirements for the development of medicinal products (ICH) the Commission promotes and accepts new alternative testing methods in order to replace tests on animals at international level (European Union, United States, Japan). International harmonisation for the development and batch testing of medicinal products such as immunobiologicals, hormones and blood products could be increased as soon as new alternative methods become available.

The development of alternative methods will be funded in the 'Sixth Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities, contributing to the creation of the European Research Area and to innovation (2002-2006)'. Two specific parts of the Framework Programme will support the development of novel alternative, non-animal testing methods: Development of new in vitro tests to replace animal experimentation (Thematic Priority 1 – Life Sciences, Genomics and Biotechnology for Health, more information is available from the following <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/lifescihealth.htm>) and Development of alternative in vitro testing methods and strategies for chemical substances (Specific activities covering a wider field of research – Policy support and anticipating scientific and technological needs, more information is available from the following <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/support.htm>)

For generic medicinal products, for which no batch testing is necessary, no additional pre-clinical animal studies are requested for a marketing authorisation in Europe.

There are no data available to which extent the different European and American test requirements increase the total number of animals used. As mentioned above, in addition to the development of alternatives methods, international harmonisation of testing requirements would significantly reduce this number.

(¹) OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

(²) established by the Council of Europe.

(2003/C 280 E/095)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0809/03

by Konstantinos Hatzidakis (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(17 March 2003)

Subject: Violation of Community environmental legislation in Greece

Could the Commission give a figure for the number of presumed violations of Community environmental legislation in Greece and say which areas are affected? In which cases has it referred Greece to the European Court of Justice and in which other cases is it preparing to do so?

Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission

(15 May 2003)

On 10 April 2003, the Commission had 94 cases open against Greece relating to suspected or confirmed violations of Community environmental legislation. Of the 94 cases, 25 related to Community legislation on waste management, 22 to nature conservation and 21 to Directive 85/337/EEC (¹), as amended by Directive 97/11/EC (²). Eleven cases related to atmospheric pollution, 10 to water protection, and 5 to other sectors of Community environmental legislation. The Commission has already initiated infringement procedures against Greece in 39 cases.

At present, the Commission has referred six cases to the Court of Justice, namely cases C-301/2001 (non-conformity of national measures transposing Directive 85/337/EEC into Greek law), C-83/2002 (failure to communicate the information required under Article 11 of Directive 96/59/EC)⁽³⁾, C-119/2002 (the absence of a collection system or a plant for the tertiary treatment of urban waste water in the Thriassio region), C-351/02 (failure to notify national measures transposing Directive 1999/31/EC)⁽⁴⁾, C-352/02 (failure to notify national measures transposing Directive 2000/14/EC)⁽⁵⁾ and C-420/02 (the operation of a landfill at Pera Galinoi).

The Commission has also decided to refer four infringement cases to the Court of Justice. The cases were still being prepared on 10 April 2003. The infringements in question relate to the incompatibility of Greek legislation on the bird hunting season, the collection and treatment of waste oils in Greece, pollution in the Thriassio Pedio region, and the operating conditions of a power station at Linoperamata on Crete.

⁽¹⁾ Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment — OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.

⁽²⁾ Council Directive 97/11/EC of 3 March 1997 amending Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment — OJ L 73, 14.3.1997.

⁽³⁾ Council Directive 96/59/EC of 16 September 1996 on the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls and polychlorinated terphenyls (PCB/PCT) — OJ L 243, 24.9.1996, p. 31.

⁽⁴⁾ Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste — OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.

⁽⁵⁾ Directive 2000/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 May 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the noise emission in the environment by equipment for use outdoors — OJ L 162, 3.7.2000.

(2003/C 280 E/096)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0812/03

**by Maurizio Turco (NI), Marco Cappato (NI),
Emma Bonino (NI), Marco Pannella (NI)
and Gianfranco Dell'Alba (NI) to the Council**

(17 March 2003)

Subject: War on drugs in Thailand

Taking into account the fact that according to information on 'UN Wire' of 4 March 2003:

- the Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra affirmed that Thailand's month-old drugs crackdown will be stepped up, despite expressions of concern by the UN rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, Asma Jahangir, and others over reports that summary executions have been committed in the context of the campaign; he notably declared: 'The crackdown will become more intense, I guarantee ... Don't worry. (The) UN isn't my father. If they want to come, come. If they want to inspect, go ahead';
- the Thai Prime Minister also affirmed that more than 1 140 have been killed in the crackdown, which began on 1 February and is to last three months; police also said that as of Friday, 29 501 suspects were arrested in the crackdown; they said officers acting in self-defence killed 31 people and that drug gangs killed the others; a Ministry spokesman furthermore affirmed that 'Nothing is above the law in this campaign';

Did the Council express EU concern to the Thai authorities about the government-sponsored massacres in the war on drugs? Did it ask the government to stop these widespread killings that are contrary to all internationally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms?

What progressive measures will be enacted by the Council if the Thai government continues the massacre and ignores international requests to stop?