

Question for written answer E-002233/2024

to the Commission

Rule 144

Sebastian Everding (The Left), Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE), Krzysztof Śmiszek (S&D), Cristina Guarda (Verts/ALE), Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left), Lynn Boylan (The Left), Maria Noichl (S&D), Anja Hazekamp (The Left), Tomáš Kubín (Pfe), Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Drastic decline of the European hedgehog and the need for urgent measures for its protection

The hedgehog¹ plays a vital role in preserving the biodiversity and balance of green spaces. However, experts warn that its population is expected to decrease by up to 50 % in the span of a decade as a result of the destruction of its natural habitats by human activity.

The hedgehog is under serious threat because of habitat loss and food scarcity. This has caused its reproduction rates to decline and has led to it being added to a range of endangered species lists. In Germany, for instance, the hedgehog, which is also the wild animal of the year 2024, is now on the early warning list of endangered species. Unfortunately, there is no precise estimate of the hedgehog population in Europe.

1. What concrete measures does the Commission plan to take for the preservation and conservation of *Erinaceus europaeus*?
2. Does the Commission plan to propose a scientific review of the conservation status of the hedgehog population across the EU, and if so, when exactly?
3. The North African hedgehog is listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive, yet it remains a popular pet. Are there any measures the Commission believes should be taken regarding this protected species being kept as a pet?

Submitted: 23.10.2024

¹ *Erinaceus europaeus*.