

**Question for written answer E-000450/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: The challenge of recycling old wind turbine blades in the EU

Wind farms are an important industry and help achieve Europe's energy security and environmental strategy. In addition, wind farms bring economic benefits by providing jobs and investments in local, often rural, communities. Europe's first-generation wind farms will be reaching the end of their normal operational life of 20 years between now and 2025.

Energy producers have three options: lifetime extension, decommissioning or re-powering. Most of the producers in the industry have opted for re-powering, which involves replacing many old, inefficient wind turbines with fewer but more powerful and efficient ones.

The EU is now facing the challenge of recycling wind turbine blades, which is difficult, as the materials – glass fibres and plastic polymers – cannot be separated easily.

In addition to the cost of the recycling process itself, when the industry tries to expose this material to high temperatures in order to separate the fibres from the polymer, the plastic parts degrade and the glass fibres are damaged. These limitations lead to unsuccessful waste management, which is damaging the environment.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission planning to support actions to accelerate wind turbine blade circularity?
2. Can the Commission say what further steps it will take to collect data about waste and recycling management in the EU?

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