

**Question for written answer E-016088/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Anja Hazekamp (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Sale of live lobsters

In addition to wholesale and retail fishmongers, more and more supermarkets, including Delhaize and Jumbo, are now selling live lobsters as a Christmas delicacy. The supermarkets keep the lobsters piled on top of one another, with their claws bound tightly together, in vats of cold water. Their staff are not familiar with EU animal welfare directives, and the lobsters are kept this way so that, if they so wish, customers can cook them alive.

EU laws on animals kept for agricultural purposes and on the protection of animals during slaughter do not apply to lobsters. Invertebrates such as lobsters do feel pain^{1,2,3} and fear^{4,5}, however.

1. Can the Commission say whether it agrees that lobsters suffer when they are kept in vats of cold water in supermarkets and that being cooked alive causes them a lot of pain, fear and stress?
2. Does the Commission believe that the welfare of lobsters, as conscious, sentient creatures, must be protected and improved?
3. Can the Commission say whether it is prepared to work with the Member States to put an end the suffering experienced by lobsters, for example by banning the sale of live lobsters and by stipulating that lobsters must be stunned and killed immediately after being caught?

¹ <http://blogs.nature.com/news/2013/08/experiments-reveal-that-crabs-and-lobsters-feel-pain.html>

² http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/do-lobsters-and-other-invertebrates-feel-pain-new-research-has-some-answers/2014/03/07/f026ea9e-9e59-11e3-b8d8-94577ff66b28_story.html?hpid=z5

³ The Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness

⁴ <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/344/6189/1293>

⁵ <http://www.scientias.nl/kreeft-ervaart-wellicht-gevoelens-van-angst/>