

**Question for written answer E-015090/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Therese Comodini Cachia (PPE)

Subject: Mercury in Malta's coastal waters and bioaccumulation in fish

An assessment carried out by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) has revealed that the amount of potentially harmful mercury in Malta's coastal waters exceeds the levels laid down in the EU's Environmental Quality Standards Directive.

Another report issued by MEPA – related to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive – reveals that there were 'a few occasions where mercury exceeded the permissible levels' stipulated by EU directives in muscle meat of sampled fresh dogfish, chilled tuna and fresh and frozen swordfish.

Given that when ingested in seafood in large quantities, mercury can pose a threat to human health, especially to the development of the child in the womb and early in life, can the Commission confirm whether:

1. it is monitoring the situation so as to ensure full and effective compliance with EU legislation?
2. the Maltese Government has proposed alternative action plans to address this situation and bring it into line with the relevant directives?
3. it will be taking any action to ensure compliance?