

**Question for written answer E-008148/2011  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**

Subject: Whales and dolphins kept in captivity in the EU

Council Directive 1999/22/EC relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos seeks to strengthen the role of zoos in preserving biological diversity while allowing them to display the animals to the public.

Recently, various animal protection organisations have drawn my attention to the alarming situation of whales and dolphins in European dolphinariums, the vast majority of which establishments are recognised as zoos by the relevant national authorities. The animal protection organisations report that the conditions laid down in the Directive are not respected, i.e. that there is no involvement in research aimed at preserving the species displayed or work being done to raise public awareness with regard to biological diversity, and the conditions in which the animals are kept do not meet their biological needs.

Zoos on European Union territory are apparently displaying whales and dolphins which violate the European ban on importing dolphins caught in the wild for primarily commercial purposes and on catching dolphins in European waters.

Does the Commission intend to ask that the above claims be verified?

If the claims are shown to be true, what steps would the Commission consider taking?