

**Question for written answer E-007849/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Josep-Maria Terricabras (Verts/ALE) and Ernest Maragall (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Compensation for the Castor project

At its Council of Ministers of 3 October 2014, the Spanish Government decided to close the underwater gas storage facility off the coast of Vinarós. This storage facility received funding of over EUR 500 million from the European Investment Bank. Its activity has been linked to more than 500 earth tremors.

Complaints to the Commission about the irregular activities of the Castor gas storage project were made in Written Questions E-007566/2013, E-3789/2010, E-012052/2013 and E-005051/2012.

Finally, in 2013, the Spanish Government decided to halt the storage project and later decided to indefinitely suspend its operations. Decree Law 13/2014 of 13 October was passed, adopting urgent measures relating to the gas supply system and the ownership of nuclear power plants. The government has offered EUR 1.35 billion to Escal UGS in compensation for terminating its contract to operate the Castor gas storage facility. This amount will be factored into gas bills over the next 30 years.

1. Does the Commission feel that consumers should be responsible for paying this compensation?
2. Does this compensation payment comply with EU consumer protection policy?
3. Will the Commission demand an investigation and that those responsible for setting up the Castor project be identified?