

**Question for written answer E-009622/2014  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Ricardo Serrão Santos (S&D)**

Subject: Deep-Sea Research under Horizon 2020

As part of the strategic planning for the Commission's Horizon 2020 programme, a call for funding is being prepared for the 'Societal Challenges 2' area (2016–2017). At the same time, the European Marine Board Deep-Sea Working Group, together with other interested parties, including industry, has pointed out the need for investment in basic deep-sea research to underpin both environmental impact studies for future drilling activities and monitoring work.

The working group regards research into the deep seas – and their ecosystems in particular – as an urgent priority since it is an essential pillar of blue growth in Europe. The race to exploit deep-sea assets, particularly geological and biological resources, is expected to intensify in the years to come. The blue growth that we are striving for cannot come about unless we ensure that it is based on the best scientific research and is geared towards sustainability and ecosystem conservation.

1. In view of the above, can the Commission say how basic deep-sea research will be safeguarded under Horizon 2020 SC2 for 2016–2017?
2. More specifically, what balance will be struck between investment in basic science and investment in applied industrial research?