

**Question for written answer E-010648/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Pollution of waste water with medical residues

On 12 December 2013 the Commission published a report¹ on the basis of Regulation (EU) No 1235/2010² on the environmental problems caused by the pollution of water and soil with residues of certain medicinal products (e.g. antibiotics). Directive 2013/39/EU (Article 8c)³ specifies that "the Commission shall, as far as possible within two years from 13 September 2013 develop a strategic approach to pollution of water by pharmaceutical substances". Since then, there has been growing concern about the problem in scientific circles (see, for example⁴) and academics have shown that pollution of our waste water with these products can easily be dealt with⁵.

1. What progress has been made on the strategic approach currently being developed by the Commission for contamination of water with pharmaceutical substances, as specified in Directive 2013/39/EU?
2. Is the Commission aware of existing methods which can be used to remove certain medicinal residues from waste water?
3. In view of the 'polluter pays' principle⁶, is the Commission prepared to take concrete steps in its strategic approach to oblige the pharmaceutical industry to bear the cost of removing medicinal residues from waste water?

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/environment/study_environment.pdf

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32010R1235>

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013L003>

⁴ <http://www.chemtrust.org.uk/medicines-in-the-environment-a-growing-threat-to-wildlife-and-drinking-water>

⁵ <http://www.ugent.be/nl/agenda/doctoraten/20140528-LA11>

⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/NL/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32004L0035>