

**Question for written answer E-000955/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ole Christensen (S&D)

Subject: <Titre>EU Sulphur Directive and competition between areas

The EU Sulphur Directive entered into force on 1 January 2015. The Directive introduces, inter alia, stricter sulphur limits for marine fuel in Sulphur Emission Control Areas / SECAs (1.00 % as of 1 July 2010 and 0.10 % as of 1 January 2015) as well as in sea areas outside SECAs (3.50 % as of 1 January 2012 and, in principle, 0.50% as of 1 January 2020).

These differing limits may lead to a distortion between the various areas in terms of their competitiveness. The marine transport of goods to and from Northern Europe will be more expensive, other things being equal, which will ultimately become an extra cost factor for industry here. Competition between seas in the North and the South will also become tougher, as it may be expected that more ships will put into ports that are not in SECA areas. Goods will then be carried by lorry further into Europe, harming both the environment and the road network.

In the light of the above, can the Commission please state whether there are any plans to harmonise the sulphur limits in areas inside and outside SECA areas?

Can the Commission also please state whether it plans to carry out monitoring and evaluation of the directive to see whether it has had any unintended consequences? If so, has it been decided what form such monitoring will take?