

**Question for written answer E-006508/2015/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Lorenzo Fontana (ENF)**

**Subject:** Poaching on the river Po Despite the efforts of local authorities to prevent the disappearance or irreversible decline of many species of fish and riverside animals, there has been a substantial decline in fish stocks. The natural habitat along many stretches of the river Po is undergoing a number of alarming changes.

In Emilia Romagna, the defence of traditions connected to the river Po has become a topical issue and is supported by all political forces.

Despite calls by the local populace for the inhabitants of Emilia-Romagna to be able to retake possession of their rivers, this has been hampered for years because criminal gangs (mostly Eastern European by all accounts) have been plundering resources, damaging fish stocks and upsetting the balance of nature.

Local residents are seeking to regain possession of the waterways as a place where people can meet, play sports, study and relax in safety with 'criminals' out of the way. Until now, however, the measures taken have not been sufficient to address, let alone eradicate the problem.

In view of the EU's concern for safeguarding the natural heritage, as reflected in a number of programmes such as the LIFE programme seeking to protect such areas, will the Commission urge the local authorities to act swiftly and effectively before the health of the river Po is permanently compromised?