

**Question for written answer E-013412/2015  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**José Blanco López (S&D)**

Subject: Contamination of cockles in Galicia

The cockle banks in the estuaries of Pontevedra, Vigo and particularly Arousa in Galicia have been contaminated since 2012 by the deadly 'Marteilia cochillia' parasite. It is the most highly prized cockle variety, 'Cerastoderma edule', that is affected, not the much less abundant and far less sought-after varieties such 'Cerastoderma glaucum'. There have also been cases of this parasite in other areas on the Spanish coastline, and in France, but the Galician case is by far the most serious.

This is decimating one of the most important productive sectors in the region. This cockle variety provides 40 % to 50 % of the income of shellfish harvesters in these areas where the wealth of shellfish on the south coast of Galicia provides a living for over 6 000 families. Four generations of this cockle variety have now succumbed to the parasite and neither the shellfish harvesters nor the scientists from the various bodies that are studying the situation have any real hope that new generations can stand up against it.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Have the Galician authorities contacted the Commission in order to analyse the problem and solve it?

How can the Commission help overcome this situation?