

Question for written answer E-004267/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Dariusz Rosati (PPE)

Subject: Support for offshore mining

In the face of dwindling land-based deposits and the risk of supplies of some raw materials drying up, attention is turning to offshore multi-metal deposits containing many of the metals that are regarded as strategic raw materials. The Commission has identified 20 raw materials that are of critical importance to the development of highly advanced technologies. The risk of supplies of those materials drying up is being heightened by the limited use being made of recycled materials and the small scale of substitution efforts. Mineral scarcity is a real cause of concern for the EU. Although the EU is self-sufficient in construction minerals, of which it is a major producer, it accounts for only 3% of world production of metallic minerals. The EU as a whole is dependent on imports of metallic minerals and the metals needed for high-tech products. In many cases (doping metals being a prime example), all of the EU's needs are met by imports, and in the case of metals required for high-tech products the EU's dependency on imports may be regarded as critical, in view of those metals' economic value and the high supply risks associated with them.

1. What support does the Commission plan to provide over the coming years for seabed and ocean floor mineral exploration and exploitation?
2. Does the Commission intend to draw up a roadmap for the development of marine and ocean areas that will reap the benefits of innovative forms of exploitation of natural resources and raw materials?