

**Question for written answer E-006534/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Therese Comodini Cachia (PPE)

Subject: Slime and sludge

Several media reports show evidence of an increasing concentration of slime and sludge in Malta's sea water which is the result of residue from fish farms and is spilling into bathing areas, thereby polluting the marine environment as well as affecting the quality of bathing sea water in Malta. The same reports claim that there is a direct link between the fish farming industry and the pollution in question. The national authorities have not handled the situation effectively despite being aware of the environmental hazard, and have not effectively implemented rules safeguarding the marine environment and the quality of bathing sea water.

1. Has the Commission initiated an analysis of this situation with a view to ensuring that the highest environmental standards are implemented by Malta?
2. Has the Commission sought information from the Maltese Government in this respect?
3. What process will the Commission initiate to ensure that Malta actively works towards achieving the standards set by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and specifically towards obtaining Good Environmental Status (GES) for EU marine waters by 2020?