

**Question for written answer E-001671/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Lefteris Christoforou (PPE)

Subject: Combating plastic pollution in the Mediterranean Sea

The concentration of plastic and microplastics in the sea has now become a serious issue worldwide. Studies show that 80 % of plastic waste comes from the land whilst 20% derives from ships or offshore installations. It is estimated that 50 000 to 120 000 tonnes of plastic end up in European waters. The Mediterranean Sea is a typical example of this trend because it accounts for 7 % of the world's microplastic waste, yet only 1 % of its water. Today there are thousands of tonnes of plastic in the Mediterranean Sea, with 94% of that plastic on the seafloor. The bulk of plastics in the Western Mediterranean comes from Spain and in the Eastern Mediterranean from Turkey. Finally, it is estimated that this phenomenon is having a negative effect on important economic sectors in the Mediterranean such as tourism and fisheries, with resulting costs to the EU fishing fleet from reduced catches and damage to vessels being estimated at EUR 62 million annually.

In light of this:

- (1) What information does the Commission have concerning the scale of plastic and microplastic pollution in the Mediterranean Sea?
- (2) In what ways can it financially support the Member States? Would Greece and Cyprus be able to seek assistance?

Supporter¹

¹ This question is supported by a Member other than the author: Theodoros Zagorakis (PPE)