

**Question for written answer E-001765/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Isabella Adinolfi (EFDD)

Subject: Amendment of Directive 91/676/EEC, better known as the Nitrates Directive

The aim of Directive 91/76/EEC concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources is to reduce pollution of water by agricultural nitrates and prevent further such pollution.

In the Commission's most recent report on implementation of Directive 91/676/EEC for the period 2012-2015 it says: 'Good monitoring of water quality is the starting point for a proper implementation of the Nitrates Directive as it is key for the detection of polluted waters and the designation of NVZ as well as for taking adequate measures in the Action Programmes. While the Nitrates Directive sets certain general provisions on monitoring, the definition of the monitoring programme and strategy (location of stations, network density, frequency and timing of sampling, etc.) is the responsibility of Member States. The data reported show uneven efforts being deployed in water monitoring by Member States (...)' . Furthermore, the kind of nitrates involved, i.e. whether they come from farms, zootechnics or urban sources, has not been considered.

This being so, does the Commission believe it should amend the Directive and lay down specific monitoring criteria that include also the origin of nitrates, in order to ensure that the measures employed in the action programmes are justified, proportionate and appropriate to the objective being pursued, while stipulating at the same time that said measures should preferably be ones that are the least burdensome for companies?