

**Question for written answer P-004925/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Carl Haglund (ALDE)

Subject: High phosphorus emissions into the Baltic Sea from the River Luga, close to the EuroChem Phosphorit mining, factory and deposit area in Kingisepp, Russia

In late 2011, the Helsinki Commission for Baltic Marine Environment Protection (HELCOM) discovered extremely high amounts of phosphorus, the greatest contributor to eutrophication in the Baltic Sea, being emitted into the Gulf of Finland from the River Luga in Russia. The annual amounts of phosphorus from this single source are the largest ever identified, estimated to be in excess of 1 000 tonnes, a figure corresponding to one-third of Finland's annual phosphorus discharge into the Baltic Sea. The phosphorus in the River Luga is likely to originate from the EuroChem fertilizer factory in the town of Kingisepp, Russia.

The Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO) undertook a fact-finding mission to the EuroChem plant in February 2012, and has signed a memorandum of understanding with the municipality of Kingisepp to finance the modernisation of the latter's water distribution and wastewater treatment facilities. However, in April a Finnish researcher was arrested by the Russian security service, the FSB, during an authorised water sampling exercise around the EuroChem factory, and his samples, computer and other equipment were confiscated. Despite requests from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there has been no official explanation for the arrest by the Russian authorities, nor has his equipment been returned.

- What tools (diplomatic, legal or financial) does the Commission have at its disposal to assist national authorities and non-governmental organisations in Russia and the EU in establishing good working relations in order to quickly identify the source of the phosphorus emissions and to prevent them from reaching the Baltic Sea?
- What plans does the Commission currently have to help achieve this aim?