

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1430/03
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to the Commission

Subject: Environmental threats in Algeciras Bay

On 20 January 2003, Greenpeace conducted a protest action in Algeciras Bay against the single-hull tanker 'Vemamagna', which was built in 1978 and shows many similarities with the 'Prestige'. This vessel, which is owned by the company Vemaoil, flies a flag of convenience. Its presence in the bay constitutes a risk in itself, and it is also used in highly polluting activities as a floating fuel depot.

On 17 March 2003, the tanker slipped its anchor, started to drift with 70 000 tonnes of fuel on board, and could have triggered the same kind of catastrophe as the 'Prestige'.

On 6 December 2002, the Transport Council adopted additional measures to improve safety at sea and decided that these should be implemented immediately, along the lines suggested by the Commission and the European Parliament when adopting the Erika I and II packages.

What action will the Commission take to ensure that existing EU measures regarding safety at sea are applied immediately and in full in the case of this tanker?