

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6063/07

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Subject: Combating eutrophication of the Baltic: CAP health check

On 20 November 2007 the Commission issued a communication (COM(2007)0722) on the CAP health check. The communication deals comprehensively with the development of agricultural policy, and the proper responses to the challenges of environmental protection are mentioned as a subject in their own right.

The communication says nothing, however, about the ways in which the development of agricultural policy might help to reduce the nutrients discharged into the world's most polluted sea, the Baltic Sea. The worst environmental problem for the Baltic Sea is the eutrophication caused by nutrients, and agriculture is the biggest source of eutrophication nutrient releases in the Baltic region. Whether the state of the Baltic Sea deteriorates or improves depends to a large extent on the EU: as the EU has expanded, so has the Baltic practically become an EU inland sea. That is why it would be a disgrace if the EU failed to take effective action to remedy the situation in the Baltic.

Parliament has repeatedly called for nutrient releases into the Baltic to be reduced and for this to be made a goal of the EU's common agricultural policy, for instance in the following:

- European Parliament resolution on a Baltic Sea Region Strategy for the Northern Dimension (P6_TA(2006)0494, adopted on 16 November 2006)¹,
- European Parliament resolution on the future of the Northern Dimension (P6_TA(2005)0430, adopted on 16 November 2005)²,
- report entitled 'Towards a future maritime policy for the Union: a European vision for the oceans and seas' (A6-0235/2007).

Why has the Commission not taken these EP resolutions into account in the common agricultural policy health check? Will it take steps to reduce agricultural nutrient releases in the Baltic catchment area?

¹ OJ C 314 E, 21.12.2006, p. 330.

² OJ C 280 E, 18.11.2006, p. 113.