

**Question for written answer E-005015/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D), Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D), Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D) and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)

Subject: Fracking in Spain and the Water Framework Directive

Report 2011/2308(INI) on the environmental impacts of shale gas and shale oil activities recognises that there is no detailed, exhaustive and accessible legislation on the extraction of shale gas and that such legislation needs to be drawn up. The report recommends a review of the Water Framework Directive and the possible impacts that fracking could have, considering a ban on the use of toxic chemicals or, at least, that the exact composition of those chemicals should be disclosed.

Spain has granted fracking permits without carrying out any environmental impact assessments and under the false claim that it will allow for radical change in the energy sector. Fracking uses large quantities of water (10 000 – 20 000 m³), but in Spain, water scarcity is a structural problem. Therefore, the Water Framework Directive would automatically be under threat. In turn, some explorations will take place in areas protected by the Natura 2000 network, in breach of the objectives of protecting biodiversity.

Does the Commission plan to prohibit the use of chemical substances that directly harm human health during the fracking process? What is the proposed time frame for amending the Water Framework Directive with a view to determining the use of toxic chemicals and effectively protecting water from fracking accidents and operations, as stated in report 2011/2308(INI)?

Does it consider, as Parliament does, that companies carrying out fracking operations should disclose which chemical products they are going to use? How will it ensure public access to this information?

In regions with water scarcity problems (Mediterranean arc), will the Commission recommend prohibiting fracking if the sustainable use of water is not guaranteed?

Will it recommend that Spain examine and amend Law 34/1998 of 7 October on the hydrocarbons sector to prevent accidents due to fracking operations, an area not currently covered by the legislation?

Does it believe that Spain is violating the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC by allowing fracking explorations in Natura 2000 network sites?

Will it recommend prohibiting the use of fracking in rural areas which do not have the relevant industry-related services or infrastructure if it represents a risk to human health?

What actions will the Commission take to halt, at least temporarily, the projects which have already been approved, until the above conditions have been discussed?