

**Question for written answer E-009696/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)

Subject: Oil prospecting in the Canary Islands

The Spanish Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism has announced that Repsol has been given permission to begin oil prospecting off the coasts of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura in the second half of 2014. The Ministry says that drilling will start as soon as the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment has approved the Environmental Impact Statement, which is currently out for public consultation until 25 September 2013. It has also stated that should the exploratory drilling strike oil or gas, then extraction could begin in the first half of 2015.

In its answer of 5 July 2013, the Commission said that its services were clarifying with the Spanish authorities some of the decisions in relation to obligations under Directive 94/22/EC on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospecting, exploration and production of hydrocarbons, both as regards the general implementation of that legislation in Spain as well as, specifically, its application for the licences granted.

Has the Commission taken any decisions in this regard? Is it examining the possibility that this may breach EU environmental laws on the protection of the marine environment?