

**Question for written answer E-014037/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)**

Subject: Environmental disaster in Pentadaktylos

The Pentadaktylos is an elongated limestone ridge extending along the north coast of Cyprus, which is under Turkish occupation. The predominant rocks in the Pentadaktylos ridge are sedimentary and deformed and they date back to the Triassic geological period (220 million years ago). They were pushed into their current position 10 million years ago, when the range rose up from the sea bed. The Pentadaktylos includes large forest areas, with numerous rare species of trees, bushes and herbaceous plants. The fauna of Pentadaktylos includes many species protected by European legislation. For example, the area has beaches providing hatcheries for sea turtles and habitat for Mediterranean seals. It has recently been discovered that an unprecedented environmental and ecological disaster is taking place through the uncontrolled and thoughtless operation of 39 illegal quarries by the Turkish occupying authorities. The extensive and unregulated quarry works and the daily traffic involving heavy machinery are levelling the peaks and valleys of the mountain range by removing the rocks and, at the same time, wiping out the flora and fauna of the region.

In 2006, the European Union granted EUR 1.7 billion to the occupying authorities for the protection of these areas.

Does the Commission intend to examine these new criminal activities of the pseudo-state, and to take the necessary steps to halt this major environmental disaster?

Does the Commission intend to intervene and immediately suspend all quarrying activities, as well as implement restoration programmes for the natural environment? Does the Commission intend to intervene to ensure that practices complying with European legislation on quarrying are adopted?