

**Question for written answer E-014178/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Water management in the EU - chemical status and pollution

In November 2013, the groups Ecologistas en Acción, Aigua és Vida, Som lo que Sembrem, Grup de Defensa del Ter, Plataforma de Defensa del Ebro, Marea Azul del Sur, Red Agua Pública and Ingenieros sin Fronteras presented the document entitled 'Proposals for improved water management in the EU'.

According to the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources, there is inadequate and insufficient knowledge about the chemical status and quality of EU waters, and the chemical status of 40 % of bodies of water in the EU is unknown. This lack of information on chemical status and pollutants stands in the way of the public having an opinion on the subject. The presence of pollutants constitutes a serious risk to public health, and the lack of knowledge about these pollutants significantly increases such risks.

The Blueprint states that full compliance with the pre-Water Framework Directive directives relating to the chemical status of water has not been achieved. It also states that there is significant pressure from diffuse pollution, affecting 38 % of EU water bodies, and from point-source pollution, affecting 22 % of EU water bodies. Although point sources of pollution have been reduced, diffuse pollution, primarily originating from agriculture, continues to increase, and can only be resolved through changes in agricultural management.

Does the Commission believe that EU legislation should include provisions requiring that:

1. standardised mandatory protocols be laid down for networks to monitor the chemical status of water based on the uses and functions of each body of water and the type and nature of pollutants in them?
2. data on the chemical status of and pollutants in water bodies be made public?
3. the list of priority hazardous substances subject to strict timetables for gradual reduction and total banning, and prohibition on release, be extended?
4. compliance with the Water Framework Directive, together with the other directives on water quality, be expressly included in EU legislation in the conditionality mechanisms for any type of aid from the common agricultural policy?
5. pursuant to the polluter pays principle, charges be applied for pollution caused by the use of fertilisers and pesticides?
6. it be mandatory to provide buffer zones that are free from pesticides and fertilisers along watercourses?