

**Question for written answer E-000547/2014/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Whaling by Japanese fleets

One of my constituents has recently contacted me concerning whaling. Despite a worldwide moratorium on commercial whaling, as decided by the International Whaling Commission, the Fisheries Agency of Japan's whaling fleet sails thousands of miles every year to the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary to hunt for a self-determined, ever-increasing quota of hundreds of whales. The Japanese are taking advantage of a loophole in the law that permits the killing of whales for scientific research. In January 2014, a Japanese whale poaching fleet was sighted in Antarctic waters; one of the vessels was filmed carrying four dead minke whales on deck. Australian anti-whaling activists say that the whales were killed within an internationally recognised whale sanctuary but the Japanese argue that it is for scientific research.

The moratorium on commercial whaling was put in place to allow whale stocks to recover. It is vital that the moratorium is respected to protect whales and to ensure that past mistakes are not repeated.

1. Does the Commission agree that the moratorium on commercial whaling is necessary in order to protect whale stocks?
2. Does the Commission condemn the whaling that is being carried out by the Japanese?
3. Does the Commission intend to publicly comment on the fact that Japanese fleets are whaling in an internationally recognised whale sanctuary?
4. What steps will the Commission take in order to protect healthy whale stocks and to prevent countries from whaling?