

**Question for written answer E-003085/2014
to the Commission
Rule 117
Franco Bonanini (NI)**

Subject: Sea farm in Lavagna (Genoa)

A sea farm is currently operational in Lavagna (province of Genoa), Italy, which is at the heart of an area of great natural beauty that is valuable for its environment and tourism.

Lavagna is located in an international marine area known as the 'International Ligurian Sea Cetacean Sanctuary', which was established in 1993 by the governments of Italy, France and Monaco. The stretch of sea covered by the Sanctuary is a part of the Mediterranean that is extremely rich in pelagic species, and is certainly the most important part of the entire sea because of the whales and dolphins that populate it.

The area has numerous sites of Community importance (SCI) provided for by Council Directive 92/43/EEC ('Habitats Directive'), including the 'Fondale Golfo di Rapallo' (IT1332673) and the 'Fondali Punta Sestri' (IT1333372), which are in the immediate vicinity of the sea farm and characterised by a meadow of *Posidonia oceanica*.

As has now been evidenced by numerous international studies and as stated in the environmental report of the 2007-2013 Operational Programme for Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, drawn up in compliance with Directive 2001/42/EC, mariculture (sea farming) can pose a genuine risk to the environment. It can have many possible negative effects on both aquatic ecosystems and the surrounding environment (such as polluting residues from the farm itself, pathological contamination, the release of huge amounts of pharmaceutical drugs into the environment and biological imbalances caused by farmed fish escaping, as is always possible, into natural aquatic communities).

Mariculture can also have a negative impact on the well-being and health of fish (both on the farmed fish and those living freely in the surrounding sea).

Given the above, does the Commission think the existence of such a sea farm in Lavagna is compatible with the principles of Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive), Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006, in addition to the provisions of the UN Convention on Biodiversity and other initiatives also recently promoted by the Commission relating to biodiversity and aquaculture (including the General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 and the Biodiversity Strategy to 2020)?