

Question for written answer E-010883/2014
to the Commission
Rule 130
Reimer Böge (PPE)

Subject: Maritime paraffin pollution

Paraffin is transported in bulk in tankers. It is also a component of crude oil and can build up against the walls of the tanks and in the pump hoses of the vessels used to transport oil. Paraffin and detergent residues are sometimes washed overboard when ships and port facilities are cleaned. Over the past decade, the North and Baltic Sea coastlines have been affected by paraffin pollution on numerous occasions and each time the clean-up process has been incredibly laborious. Many sea birds have fallen victim to paraffin pollution.

At present, there is no ban on discharging paraffin outside the 12 nautical-mile zone. This is a questionable arrangement, given the environmental implications outlined above.

1. Does the Commission agree that the issue of maritime paraffin pollution is one which concerns Europe as a whole?
2. Does it intend to submit proposals for legislation to govern the disposal of paraffin and other oil-based compounds and to ban the discharge of harmful liquids into Europe's seas?
3. Will it call for a revision of the International Maritime Organisation's MARPOL Convention in an effort to have paraffin reclassified as a substance which must not under normal circumstances be discharged into the sea (Category X)?