

**Question for written answer E-003753/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Laura Ferrara (EFDD)

Subject: Misappropriation of EU funding for the 'LIFE Caretta Calabria' project

Within the last few days, following *carabinieri* investigations (Compagnia di Bianco) in an operation called 'Affare Comune' (Everybody's business), the Mayor of Palizzi and some members of the municipal council have been arrested. The charges that they are facing are serious: embezzlement, corruption, bribery, abuse of office, and attempted fraud against the State.

One of the lines of inquiry relates to an EU project, 'LIFE Caretta Calabria'.

The project, headed by the municipality of Palizzi, was set in motion after the Brancaleone-based 'Tartanet' Centre had been set up to rescue loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*); turtles are treated at the centre's surgery and then released back into the sea.

According to press and police reports, the funding intended for the centre, approximately EUR 83 000, has almost all been stolen. What is more, the remainder has apparently even been misappropriated to pay for events organised by the municipality of Palizzi that had nothing whatsoever to do with the 'LIFE Caretta' project.

1. Is the Commission aware of this case and does it intend to recover the sums misappropriated?
2. Will it inform OLAF to enable the matter to be investigated more thoroughly?
3. How will it safeguard the LIFE Caretta Calabria project and ensure that it can continue?