

**Question for written answer E-001232/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Environmental destruction in Halkidiki

The Hellenic Mining Watch recently published the findings of the Environmental Inspectors (Doc. No. 4152/18.05.2019, Infringement Decision)¹, which confirmed that the mining activities of Ellinikos Chrysos (Hellas Gold) have resulted in massive environmental destruction.

In their report, the Environmental Inspectors mention how effluent from Ellinikos Chrysos' mine in Olympiada has systematically polluted and degraded the river Mavrolakkas in Halkidiki.

The report also highlights serious violations of national and European laws that include: (i) not meeting qualitative regulations on effluents and surface water; and (ii) releasing effluent containing unlawful levels of Zinc (Zn), Cadmium (Cd), Lead (Pb) and Arsenic (As).

What is more, the concentration of lead in the surface water of the River Mavrolakkas exceeded legal levels by 985%.

Given that Ellinikos Chrysos is exerting a lot of political pressure in Greece to allow it to continue its commercial activities, can the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the violations of European and Greek environmental law mentioned in the Environmental Inspectors' report?
2. Who will have to pay to reverse this environmental damage: Ellinikos Chrysos or the Greek State?
3. Has it ascertained whether the Greek authorities have been slow to respond to the aforementioned environmental disaster and bring it under control?

¹ <https://antigoldgr.org/blog/2019/03/04/epitheorites-perivallontos-985-pano-apo-to-orio-o-molyvdos-sto-potami-tis-olympiadas-apo-ta-apovlita-tis-ellinikos-chrysos-skouries-olympias/>