

**Question for written answer E-004071/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Ignazio Corrao** (Verts/ALE)

**Subject:** Alcantara river in Sicily is drying up owing to climate change and the impact of the hydroelectric power plants run by Siciliacque

Over the past few weeks, large tracts of Sicily's second largest river by rate of flow and length, the Alcantara (SAC 030036), have been running so dry that fish have been surfacing, marine animals dying, the water level in the gorges has gone down and the ecosystem has been seriously disrupted.

Aside from the persistent droughts afflicting Sicily as a result of climate change, much of the blame lies with Siciliacque, a company jointly owned by the Sicily Region and Idrosicilia S.p.A. (owned, in turn, by Enel and Veolia), which manages 1 800 km of aqueducts across Sicily under a concession agreement that will last until 2044 and that also covers the gorges of Alcantara.

As exposed by the Alcantara River Park, the two hydroelectric power plants run by Siciliacque that are located along the river draw off water to generate electricity in an entirely unsustainable manner, without adequately measuring the volume of water captured or duly pumping that water back into circulation.

Can the Commission say:

1. Does the above constitute a violation of the Habitats Directive?
2. How does it intend to ensure that rivers are not overexploited through the use of concession agreements in a bid to guarantee the minimum flow rate?
3. Does it intend to regulate hydroelectric power plants so that that the water captured is duly pumped back into circulation?

**Supporter<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> This question is supported by a Member other than the author: Rosa D'Amato (Verts/ALE)