

**Question for written answer E-005569/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurélia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Decline in coral reefs

Coral reefs account for less than 0.25 % of the marine environment but are among the most valuable ecosystems in the world, supporting one quarter of all marine species. However, they are disappearing at an increasingly rapid rate. Between 2009 and 2018, 14 % of coral on the world's coral reefs died¹.

They are threatened by natural events that are occurring ever more rapidly, such as anthropogenic pressure through mass tourism, overfishing, pollution of various kinds and acidification of the oceans.

With its 55 000 km² of reefs, most of them in its overseas territories (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Saint-Martin, Saint-Barthélemy, Wallis and Futuna and the Éparses Islands), France hosts 10 % of the world's coral reefs, placing it fourth in global rankings. France is present in all the world's oceans and hence has a major responsibility to preserve this ecosystem that is so essential to ocean life, with the oceans, in turn, being vital to the air we breathe.

In France, 29 % of the coral reefs monitored are losing their coral cover, 60 % are staying stable and 11 % are seeing new growth.

In view of all that reefs contribute to the environment and life on earth, does the Commission envisage a long-term policy on safeguarding coral in partnership with France?

¹ Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020 Report, Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)