

**Question for written answer E-000870/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Seismic research for oil exploration in Hellenic trench threatens marine mammals and sea turtles

Greece recently granted permission for seismic research in marine areas adjacent to the Gulf of Kyparissia, a Natura 2000 protected area, as well as overlapping areas recognised as Important Marine Mammal Areas for sperm whales and Cuvier's beaked whales and a critical habitat for sperm whales under the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area. It is also a habitat for other strictly protected species, such as numerous dolphin species and the monk seal, and is an important spawning ground for loggerhead turtles.

There is evidence that the limits of the Natura 2000 marine area are being violated and that acoustic explosions, potentially exceeding 250 dB, are being generated inside this critical cetacean habitat, which could result in habitat displacement, disturbance or even lethal injuries.

1. Is the Commission aware that Greece has granted an exemption from the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive to an oil company for seismic research and does it share our concerns that no independent scientific committee has been established to assess the impact of seismic research on marine species?
2. What action will it take regarding Greece's incorrect transposition of Directive 2014/52/EU concerning appropriate assessments of hydrocarbon exploration projects, and to ensure the proper application of Directive 92/43/EEC? If the application of this directive is not compatible, will infringement proceedings be initiated?