

**Question for written answer E-001674/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurélia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Sargassum: scourge of brown algae in Guadeloupe and Martinique

Sargassum is a brown macroalgae that is naturally buoyant, meaning that it can live and reproduce on the surface of the sea. It can inundate dozens of kilometres of coastline. The effects of Sargassum washing up on the coastlines of the West Indies and Guyana are very serious¹.

Sargassum also affects human health², accumulating on coastlines and making beaches and ports dirty and sometimes impossible for boats to enter. Furthermore, as the seaweed dries it releases hydrogen sulphide and ammonia, which can cause headaches, nausea and vomiting. While offshore, Sargassum can be broken up by passing motor boats, and this helps it spread. Lastly, tourists choose not to visit the seaweed-filled beaches, heading for non-polluted areas instead³.

In light of the above, could the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. What is it intending to do to help overseas territories that are bearing the brunt of the problems caused by this seaweed?
2. Will a structured action plan be introduced, and if so, what will the timeframe be?

¹ https://www.francetvinfo.fr/sante/environnement-et-sante/c-est-quoi-le-probleme-avec-les-sargasses-ces-algues-toxiques-qui-prolifere-dans-les-antilles_2962815.html

² <https://www.martinique.ars.sante.fr/les-algues-sargasses-un-phenomene-sanitaire>

³ <https://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/guadeloupe/desirade/les-sargasses-perturbent-une-nouvelle-fois-la-desserte-maritime-entre-la-desirade-et-saint-francois-1276208.html>