

**Question for written answer E-003596/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Marek Belka (S&D)

Subject: Monitoring and action in the event of natural disasters relating to the Vistula dam

Europe has been hit by an increasing number of natural disasters in recent years. In addition to sudden phenomena, such as storms or forest fires, there are also risks that we can anticipate. One of these is the failure of the only dam on the Vistula River. Expert studies point to the real possibility of such a scenario. Such an incident would contaminate the lower Vistula valley and the Baltic Sea with thousands of tonnes of arsenic, cadmium, cobalt, chromium, nickel, lead and other bottom sediments deposited in front of the dam. Nitrogen plants producing artificial fertilisers are located a few kilometres from the dam. If the dam bursts, they would be inundated with water from the river, increasing the scale of the potential disaster.

During the construction of the dam between 1962 and 1970, it was assumed that it would operate for 10 to 15 years. In 2015, a three-year refurbishment of the facility was completed, which did not eliminate the threat posed by the dam.

In this context, I would like to ask:

1. Are facilities/phenomena/activities in the Member States that could cause a future disaster being monitored within the scope of the activities carried out by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)? If not, are there plans to launch such activities?
2. Does the Commission have plans for a rapid and effective disaster response capability on such a large scale as described above?

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