

**Question for written answer E-001608/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: River Almonda held to ransom by the Renova company

The Renova company established itself at the source of the Almonda river in 1940, locating some of its plant above the river bed. Despite having already relocated much of its manufacturing plant, the company drew off almost two million cubic metres of water from the Almonda in 2020. It has also erected wire fencing to prevent access to the source of the river, which was previously open to the public. In a written response to a petition from the 'Single Collective' movement seeking public access to the Almonda river source, Renova maintained that it actually owned the river water within its property.

At the same time, the Portuguese Environment Agency gave its assurance to the mayor of Torres Novas that the water of the Almonda river was 'public and not private property'. This line of argument was endorsed by the government, which has, however, failed to act upon it. As a result, the Renova company is not only preventing access to the Almonda river source but is also claiming ownership of public water on the grounds that it flows through its property.

What action will the Commission take to persuade the local and national authorities to respond to these multiple infringements of the Water Framework Directive?

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