

**Question for written answer E-003171/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Massimo Casanova (ID)**

**Subject:** Widespread anomalous mussel mortalities in the Adriatic Sea

Since the end of July, reports have been coming in indicating that mussels have been dying off en masse since the spring. The latest recorded mortality event occurred in Molise, where local stakeholders believe that around 80 % of all mussels have perished. In addition, over the last two years, the mussels' natural reproduction rates have shrunk to almost insignificant levels. In order not to jeopardise the future of the sector, local fishers agreed to work fewer days. By the end of August, they had only worked 16 days since the beginning of 2023. After observing the two-month (unpaid) closure period mandated by law, fishers agreed to an additional one-month stoppage, downing tools from 15 September to 15 October. However the situation remains unchanged, and the die-offs show no signs of abating.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of this phenomenon, and has it received similar reports from other Mediterranean regions?
2. What urgent solutions and economic measures will it put in place to prevent mass mortalities from further aggravating the plight of the already struggling mussel industry?

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