

**Question for written answer E-003453/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Problems linked to sargassum seaweed and its processing in the outermost regions

As a result of global warming, the proliferation of sargassum seaweed off the coasts of the West Indies is putting additional pressure on the islands of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy: it affects tourism (beach closures) and threatens biodiversity (the algae asphyxiates aquatic fauna and flora), not to mention the toxic gases it releases, which pose health risks.

Using anaerobic digestion to process these algae could be the long-awaited solution: it would turn the expensive seaweed removal process into a profitable one, while protecting biodiversity. It would also make it possible to produce gas at a lower cost, with a view to ensuring the energy independence of these territories, as well as organic soil improvers that could be used in the agricultural sector.

However, installing anaerobic digesters requires substantial investment, which local authorities cannot afford.

In the light of positions taken recently by the Commission on energy issues, as well as the economic and environmental opportunities presented by the project outlined above, can the Commission say:

1. How will future European standards integrate the use of anaerobic digesters?
2. How will it support the financing of the anaerobic digesters?
3. What other brown algae processing projects is it supporting?

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