

**Question for oral answer O-000042/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 115

Indrek Tarand

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Subject: The EU's strategy for the Arctic

The European Commission and EEAS joint communication of 2012 states that the EU's policy on the Arctic shall be based on knowledge, responsibility and engagement.

In May the Arctic Council will decide whether to accept the EU's application for permanent observer status. We, the draftspersons of this oral question, support the EU's aspiration to become a permanent observer and to develop a coherent Arctic policy.

The European Parliament supports a role for the EU as a responsible, committed and reliable partner to all Arctic states, peoples and relevant players from sectors such as science and business, and draws attention to the requests and proposals made in the High North Report of 2011. With regard to the 2012 Communication and in the context of the Arctic Council's Ministerial meeting in May, we ask the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. What has the Commission done to follow up on the 48 suggested actions in its 2008 communication and the requests made in the 2011 European Parliament report? What initiatives have been taken towards the members of the Arctic Council? How does the Commission plan to make use of existing or emerging Arctic-related assessment or communication tools in its strategy?
2. When will the Commission present an Action Plan to implement the objectives of its 2012 communication? How will this be linked to overall EU policies or programmes such as the 2020 Agenda, Horizon 2020, the EU's raw materials policy and the next phase of INTERREG?
3. What budget lines are envisaged to make the EU's Arctic policy operational?
4. How will Commission and the EEAS coordinate EU policy on the Arctic, and in which areas will the EEAS or the Commission take the lead?
5. How will the Commission ensure that the legitimate interests of people in the Arctic are taken into account in the policy and decision-making processes conducted in Brussels?
6. What has the Commission done towards establishing a proper international convention on protecting the fragile Arctic environment?

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Forwarded: 11.4.2013

Deadline for reply: 18.4.2013