

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1771/03
by Jean-Pierre Bébéar (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: IOPC Fund - marine pollution

The derisory offer of compensation issued by the IOPC Fund following the 'Prestige' disaster has led me, and many others, to question whether this compensation fund is of any real use.

The Commission has expressed the wish to remedy the shortcomings of the IOPC Fund by setting up a €1 billion compensation fund for the benefit of the various victims affected when oil tankers go down.

If it proves impossible to set up this fund at international level, does the Commission intend to propose a European organisation modelled on the efforts the United States has already made to protect its coastline?

In that event, what arrangements are envisaged, what funding is proposed, what timetable will be laid down and what will be the responsibilities of the Member States in relation to setting up this fund and ensuring its effective operation?