

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2916/04
by Fernando Fernández Martín (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Discharge of urban waste-water in the Canaries

The rapid growth of tourism in the coastal areas of the Canary islands has led to the proliferation of offshore sewage outfalls, which make a major contribution to sea pollution, as reported in the media on several occasions. The author of this question has in his possession a number of photographs providing clear evidence of waste-water being discharged directly into the sea. Article 4 of Directive 91/271/EC¹ concerning urban waste-water treatment stipulates that urban waste-water should, before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment and Annex I lays down the requirements for such water and the plant needed for its treatment. In the Canaries there are cases where no kind of depuration is carried out before this kind of water is discharged into the sea, as mentioned above.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? Can it say what measures should be considered in order to ensure the application of Community legislation in the Canaries and hence completion of all the depuration cycles before urban waste-water is discharged into the sea?

¹ OJ L 135, 30.5.1991, p. 40.