

**Priority question for written answer P-004184/2022/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR)

Subject: Clarifying the report on the meeting between ministers from the Netherlands and Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius to discuss the nitrogen crisis in the Netherlands

On 31 May 2022 a ministerial delegation from the Netherlands visited the Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius. The topic for discussion was nitrogen policy in the Netherlands, which has stalled.

In connection with a recently released report on the meeting, I have the following questions for the Commission:

1. In connection with reducing nitrogen oxide emissions, could the Commission explain what Commissioner Sinkevičius means when he states that the Commission 'is ready to support the NL (Netherlands) with "technical solutions"', what technical solutions are being referred to and what specific support would be involved?
2. Commissioner Sinkevičius drew the ministers' attention to the 'flexibility mechanisms in the Habitats Directive'. What does that flexibility involve, does the directive also provide scope for changes to Dutch legislation and, if it does, what changes are possible?
3. Does the Commission see scope for the Netherlands to introduce a nitrogen threshold of 1 to 10 mol per hectare per year, including a downwards trend? The Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) has advocated this threshold framework, following on from scientific research, in order to safeguard the obligation to conserve Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the provisions of the Habitats Directive.¹²

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¹ <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/downloads/document?id=2022D31915>

² <https://boerburgerbeweging.nl/fractienieuws/snel-weg-uit-de-stikstofcrisis/>