



Parliamentary questions

30 September 2014

E-007377-14

Question for written answer
to the Commission
Rule 130
Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE)

► **Subject:** Storm drain pipe from Spain polluting Western Beach in Gibraltar

Answer(s)

Following the construction and opening of a storm drain pipe in Spain which flows into the basin of the Western Beach in Gibraltar, the pollution levels in Western Beach have started to increase.

The results of the pollution levels since 2010 when the storm drain was opened reveal that in 2010 they failed to meet the mandatory requirements in 13.9% of cases as regards coliforms and 21.3% of cases as regards E. coli, and failed to comply with the guideline in 40% of cases as regards faecal streptococcus.

Results for 2014 show that they failed to meet the mandatory requirements in 30.8% of cases as regards coliforms, 40.8% of cases as regards E. coli and failed to comply with the guideline 56.5% of the time as regards streptococcus.

This has had negative consequences on marine life as well as on locals' and tourists' enjoyment of the beach.

Given this increase in pollution levels, can the Commission state whether it is now in a position to instruct Spain to divert the storm drain away from the beach?



Parliamentary questions

2 December 2014

E-007377/2014

Answer given by Mr Vella on behalf of the Commission

Under EU pilot 3164/12/ENVI, the Commission asked the Spanish authorities to provide updated information on spills from the collecting systems in La Línea de la Concepción, Cádiz (Andalucía), which might be linked to the pollution problems in Western Beach, Gibraltar.

In their last reply received in April 2014 the Spanish authorities recognised that there had been polluting spills (overflows), in 2013, some of them during the bathing season.

According to the Spanish authorities, the main reasons for the polluted spills may be inadequate maintenance of the collecting system and the pumping stations, together with some 'uncontrolled' inputs of waste water from households in La Línea to the rain water collecting system.

The Spanish authorities also stated that the municipalities in Campo de Gibraltar (amongst them 'La Línea'), had recently signed an agreement with a public company which is a subsidiary of the Spanish Public Works Ministry (Ministerio de Fomento) to, *inter alia*, find and remove any waste water from the rain water collecting systems and ensure regular monitoring at the discharge points. The aforementioned project foresees an initial investment of EUR 6.5 million.

The Commission will closely follow up the efforts by the Spanish authorities to solve the abovementioned problems.