

**Question for written answer E-003501/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Oil spill in the Arctic Circle

Russia has declared a state of emergency after 20 000 tonnes of diesel oil leaked into a river within the Arctic Circle. The leaked diesel oil drifted some 12 km from the site of the accident. While the accident occurred thousands of kilometres away from the Barents Sea on which Finland has a coastline, the whole region is likely to be affected, especially wildlife.

Through its resolution of 16 March 2017 on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic, Parliament 'calls for the development of oiled wildlife response plans, in accordance with defined good practice, in all Arctic states, including an effective assessment of vulnerable species at risk, as well as feasible prevention and response strategies to ensure their protection'. It recognises the risks posed by spills. It also 'stresses the importance of continued engagement and dialogue with Russia within the framework of Arctic regional cooperation' and underlines the need for the EU (...) to seek progress on issues of common concern where there is ground for global solutions to common challenges and threats'.

How is the Commission liaising with the Russian Government to minimise the effects of this oil spill which is spreading across the whole Arctic Circle with negative consequences, including the endangerment of wildlife and biodiversity, and potential threats to artisanal fishing communities, among other things?