

**Priority question for written answer P-001419/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Request for extraordinary action to be taken to tackle Europe's water crisis

Data from the European Drought Observatory¹ indicates that more than a quarter of the EU's territory is currently experiencing drought conditions, with 8 % already in a state of alert, including areas in Italy, Greece, France and Spain. The proportion of Sicily experiencing severe drought conditions has reached 45 %.

An assessment published by the European Environment Agency (EEA)² in March 2024 confirms that Europe's current adaptation policies are not adequate enough to ensure the required supply of water.

In addition to the EUSF, LIFE, CAP, EUCPM and Horizon Europe programmes, the EU's 2021–2027 budget provides for special instruments to tackle exceptional crises:

1. the flexibility instrument – activated for the migration crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR) – activated for Italy's 2016 earthquake, the migration crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2021 floods;
3. the temporary framework on State aid.

In view of the above:

1. Will the Commission accord the most affected regions the status of 'long-term drought'?
2. Will it look into the possibility of activating special instruments and granting temporary derogations to facilitate the use of funds?
3. Will it strengthen the Water Framework Directive to allow Member States to adopt temporary and flexible measures for the management of water resources?

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¹ <https://drought.emergency.copernicus.eu/tumbo/edo/map/?id=1000>.

² <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/european-climate-risk-assessment>.