

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002182/25
to the Commission
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(30 May 2025)

Subject: Prinos, Thasos: risks posed by the Carbon Capture and Storage Plan

The plan for a permanent CO₂ storage project in an underwater area near Prinos, a village on the Greek island of Thasos, raises serious questions with regard to long-term management and responsibility.

There are environmental and legal concerns, technical and geological questions regarding the safety of storage on the site — which is located less than 10 km away from populated areas — and fierce opposition from local communities in Kavala and Thasos, as well as concerns in relation to Mount Athos, a Unesco World Heritage site and part of the European

Natura 2000 ⁽¹⁾ network. What is more, Greece is one of countries with the most seismic activity in Europe. Finally, unlike the Atlantic OSPAR Convention, which allows, following its amendment, the discharge of pollutants, the Barcelona Convention and the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources prohibit, save for an express exception ⁽²⁾, the discharge of pollutants into the sea bed.

In light of the above, can the Commission say:

1. How does it assess the compatibility of this project with the Barcelona Convention and Directive 2009/31/EC ⁽³⁾?
2. Has an environmental assessment been carried out at EU or Member State level for the project?
3. How does it ensure long-term monitoring and responsibility for leakages or effects on the marine environment?

Submitted: 30.5.2025

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(30 July 2025)

It is up to the national authorities to verify whether obligations arising from applicable EU legislation regarding the project in question have been respected, including with regard to Directive 2009/31/EC ⁽¹⁾ on the geological storage of carbon dioxide and with regard to commitments under the Barcelona Convention ⁽²⁾ which forms part of EU law.

It is also up to national authorities to check whether a given project requires an environmental assessment and, if so, whether the assessment carried out complies with EU law requirements.

The Commission may decide to take appropriate action in case a systemic issue of non-compliance with EU law can be detected, either on the basis of the various obligations Member State may have or on the basis of complaints received, for example in case Greek law does not completely and correctly implement EU law.

Under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ⁽³⁾, Greece is required to monitor the state of the marine environment including, among others, its hydrographical conditions and its seabed integrity.

Without prejudice to the Commission's role as guardian of the Treaties, it is primarily the responsibility of the national authorities to monitor the implementation of projects.

In case of doubt, as regards compliance with EU environmental legislation, national Courts are fully competent to verify the compatibility of a permit with national and EU law.

¹ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:0c8a35db-fb7d-4af8-b32e-20c47fbc0333>

² <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/who-we-are/contracting-parties/barcelona-convention>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009L0031>

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2009/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the geological storage of carbon dioxide and amending Council Directive 85/337/EEC, European Parliament and Council Directives 2000/60/EC, 2001/80/EC, 2004/35/EC, 2006/12/EC, 2008/1/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 114-135.

⁽²⁾ Convention on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution (Barcelona Convention), OJ L 240, 19.9.1977, p. 3-11.

⁽³⁾ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19-40.