

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002594/26
to the Commission
Catarina Martins (The Left), Ana Miranda Paz (Verts/ALE)
(24 June 2026)**

Subject: Pollutants in the River Lima

New outbreaks of cyanobacterial blooms and eutrophication in the Lindoso (Portugal) and As Conchas (Galicia) reservoirs on the River Lima pose serious risks to public health and ecosystems, affecting the Peneda-Gerês National Park.

The Spanish Supreme Court recently upheld a landmark ruling finding the Regional Government of Galicia (Xunta de Galicia) and the Minho-Sil River Basin Authority guilty of failure to act, holding these public bodies responsible for infringing the public's rights to health and to a healthy environment.

This international river basin is regulated by the Albufeira Convention, which requires Portugal and Spain to coordinate measures to prevent pollution and achieve 'good status' for the waters, in line with the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC). In view of the continuing cross-border environmental degradation, the following questions arise:

1. Is the Commission aware of these incidents of pollution and of the court rulings finding the Spanish authorities guilty of failing to act to protect this ecosystem?
2. Does the Commission consider that this situation constitutes a continuing failure by the Member States concerned to fulfil their obligations under the Water Framework Directive and the Nitrates Directive?
3. What steps or requests for clarification does the Commission intend to take or submit with regard to Portugal and Spain to ensure the effective implementation of European Union environmental law in this cross-border body of water?

Submitted: 24.6.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(1 September 2026)**

The Commission is aware of cyanobacterial blooms affecting the Lindoso and As Conchas reservoirs, as well as of the rulings of the High Court of Justice of Galicia and — subsequently — of the Spanish Supreme Court, concerning the failure of the competent authorities to act.

Under the Water Framework Directive ⁽¹⁾, Member States must prevent deterioration and achieve good status of water bodies, including through proper identification of pressures and appropriate programmes of measures.

Under the Nitrates Directive ⁽²⁾, Member States must designate as Nitrates Vulnerable Zones all land which drains into the waters identified as polluted and reinforce action programmes where pollution from diffuse agricultural sources persists.

Determining whether a particular situation constitutes a continuing failure to fulfil these obligations requires an assessment in accordance with the applicable procedures and on the basis of sufficient evidence.

The Commission will continue to closely monitor developments, notably in the context of the upcoming fourth River Basin Management Plans (due by December 2027) and the 2024-2027 reporting cycle under the Nitrates Directive.

The Commission will also follow the action (or lack thereof) undertaken by the competent authorities in response to the rulings of the High Court of Justice of Galicia and the Spanish Supreme Court and decide on any appropriate follow-up in its role as guardian of the Treaties.

Moreover, to address the growing risk of toxic algal blooms, the Commission's Joint Research Centre, is presently conducting a pilot study, commissioned by the European Parliament, on a near-real-time monitoring system for harmful algal blooms across European waters.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1-73.

⁽²⁾ Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, OJ L 375, 31.12.1991, p. 1-8.