

EN
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Answer given by Mr Sinkevičius
on behalf of the European Commission
(28.9.2022)

The Commission was informed about the ecological disaster in the Oder River on 13 August 2022 through direct contact between the Commissioner responsible for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries and the Polish Minister of Environment.

The Commission has provided both Member States concerned, Poland and Germany, with information about potential support from the EU funding instruments but has not received any specific request from Poland for the moment. Polish authorities continue their investigation into the cause. The Commission has offered its expertise in this regard and is monitoring the situation, in close cooperation with Member States that are affected.

The transboundary river Oder is a very important element of the Natura 2000 network (70 sites have been designated along this river) and a crucial migration corridor for many species protected under EU law. Pursuant to Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive¹, it is for Member States to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species in the Natura 2000 sites.

¹ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.