

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2184/06
by Caroline Lucas (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Concentration limits for contamination by marine biotoxins

With regard to permissible levels of marine biotoxins that may be present in shellfish destined for human consumption, would the Commission provide details of the concentration limits at which contamination by marine biotoxins of the DSP/lipophilic toxin groups (okadaic acid, dinophysin toxin, yessotoxin, pectenotoxin and azaspiracid) is deemed to be permissible, and the scientific basis and risk assessment in favour of those levels?

Would the Commission confirm that it has received advice to reduce the permissible levels of these biotoxins? Would the Commission also comment on the concentration limits identified in the report of the Joint FAO/IOC/WHO Ad Hoc Expert Consultation on Biotoxins and Bivalve Molluscs (Oslo, September 2004) as necessary for ensuring adequate protection of human health? Is it the case that the concentration limits set out in the FAO/IOC/WHO report are lower than those currently permitted in the EU?

Does the Commission have plans to review the concentration limits at which contamination by these biotoxins is deemed to be acceptable, so that EU limits are brought into line with those set out by the FAO/IOC/WHO Ad Hoc Expert Consultation mentioned above?