

**Question for written answer
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Written question on the threats to heritage sites because of climate change and environmental degradation

Numerous UNESCO World Heritage Sites as well as European Heritage Label Sites, that have played a significant role in the history and culture of Europe and symbolise our common past, and, hence, our common future, are situated on the Mediterranean coast, for example Venetian Lagoon, Delos archaeological site, Old City of Dubrovnik, Gorham's Cave Complex, Knights' Fortifications around Malta's harbours, Ventonene.

The recent IPCC report describes Mediterranean as a climate-risk 'hotspot', one of the most vulnerable areas of the world, facing accelerating risks because of the climate change¹. Moreover, a research on UNESCO World Heritage Sites situated in low-lying coastal areas of the Mediterranean realised by Kiel University² showed that the following years these sites will be increasingly jeopardized by coastal erosion due to sea-level rise and by storm surges. Already today forty-two of them suffer from coastal erosion.

Will the Commission consider the idea of creating a special fund for financing works that could protect the heritage sites on the Mediterranean coast that run flood and erosion risks because of climate change and/or environmental degradation?

Does it plan to form a group of experts to propose solutions to this problem?

¹ IPCC, 2022: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Lösschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, B. Rama (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. In Press.

² Reimann, L., Vafeidis, A.T., Brown, S. et al. Mediterranean UNESCO World Heritage at risk from coastal flooding and erosion due to sea-level rise. *Nat Commun* 9, 4161 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-018-06645-9>.