The section of the guide concerning the provisions of Article 7 of Directive 79/409/CEE is already available in three languages on the following website: (http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/sustainable_hunting.htm)

Now that the judgement in this case has been delivered, the Commission is proceeding with the finalisation of the guide. This will entail completion of the technical and legal revisions of the text and its translation, initially into French and German. The Commission intends to make the guide available early in 2004 to the Parliament’s Environment Committee, the Intergroup on ‘Fieldsports, Fishing & Conservation’ and individual Members of Parliament who have requested the document.

The objective of the guide is to assist Member States and other relevant interests in the implementation of the hunting provisions of the Directive. The guide will reflect all the relevant judgements of the Court of Justice on this subject, including the latest judgement in relation to the provisions of Article 9(1)(e) of the Directive.


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WRITTEN QUESTION E-3655/03

by Ioannis Marinos (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(9 December 2003)

Subject: Counterfeiting of euro notes and coins

Information is now coming to light that forged euro notes are being detected with great frequency in Eurozone countries. In Greece, in fact, even counterfeit EUR 2 coins have been detected, while the same source alleges that there is a factory producing forged euro notes in Bulgaria and another producing counterfeit coins in Turkey. Eurobarometer's report No 58 sets out the results of a survey demonstrating that a large number of Eurozone citizens still feel psychologically attached to their former national currencies, while the euro is also seen as responsible for prices being rounded up. The European Central Bank has announced that it has formed, in partnership with the major banknote issuing authorities, the Central Bank Counterfeit Deterrence Group (CBCDG).

Does the Commission consider that the general preparation for the euro’s introduction was adequate, and that measures to prevent forgery were taken early enough?

Answer given by Mrs Schreyer on behalf of the Commission

(2 February 2004)

The fact that the euro was introduced with so little difficulty shows that the preparation was indeed adequate, not only by the Commission but by all the players. In the words of the Communication (1) from the Commission to the European Council ‘Review of the introduction of euro notes and coins’: ‘This major success is due to the quality and extremely thorough nature of the preparations made by the participating Member States, the European institutions (the European Central Bank and the European Commission), the national central banks, financial institutions, sales outlets, the police and cash-transport firms and to the active and enthusiastic participation of the public, without which this operation and the rapid distribution of euros would not have been possible’ (2).

The public perception of the euro’s introduction is taken seriously by the Commission which will, in 2004, intensify its communication on the euro and economic and monetary union. Part of the effort will be designed to dispel the erroneous perception that the euro has lead to price rises and part will concentrate on good news such as the reduction of costs for cross-border payments.

A substantial number of measures, aimed at increasing the level of the protection of the euro banknotes and coins against counterfeiting, have been taken by the Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and Europol as well as the Member States.
These include:

- Setting-up the legal framework and mechanisms for enhanced collaboration between all authorities competent for the fight against counterfeiting (law enforcement, central banks including those of acceding and third countries, Finance Ministries, etc.) at the level of Member States and European Institutions-bodies;

- Reinforcement of the penal measures against counterfeiting;

- Intense training for all those concerned, general and specialised, at national, Union and international level, for which the main vehicle is the specific programme Pericles for exchange, assistance and training, managed by the Commission;

- Continuous monitoring of the implementation of relevant legislation by the Member States; reporting and proposals, where appropriate.

Overall, the measures taken at European and at national level to prevent and repress euro counterfeiting have raised the level of protection and have increased security for the citizen.

These measures were taken prior to the introduction of the euro banknotes and coins. In particular, the Europol mandate was extended to the counterfeiting of money in 1999; increased penal protection was decided in May 2000 (1) in terms of setting minimum sanctions and extending the scope of punishable acts; and Council Regulation (EC) No 1338/2001 (2), which lays down measures for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting, was adopted in June 2001.

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(2) Europaper No 44 — April 2002.

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WRITTEN QUESTION E-3668/03
by María Sornosa Martínez (PSE) and María Valenciano Martínez-Orozco (PSE) to the Commission
(9 December 2003)

Subject: Impact of the enlargement of the port of Altea on flora and fauna

Various universities, ecological organisations and citizens' groups, along with the two authors of this question, have been alerting the Commission to the major consequences which the work on enlarging the Campomanes Port in Altea will have, particularly on the posidonia beds and the dolphin population. The Commission itself, which has directly approached the Spanish authorities in order to assess the case, knows that the autonomous government intends to transplant the 40 hectares of posidonia threatened by the building work. However, this option has been discounted as 'not viable' by most experts, given the difficulties involved in replanting posidonia, and the fact that the dolphin community currently inhabiting the area of the posidonia beds, is highly dependent on them.

The Commission's answer to Written Question P-1450/03 (1) of 23 May 2003 stated that it was continuing to study the case, and would shortly take a decision.

Could the Commission please specify what conclusions were reached in its investigation into the environmental impact of the work on extending the port of Altea?

What decisions has it taken on this issue to date?

Do the Commission's experts agree with the opinions emanating from the area's universities on the 'non-viability' of the autonomous government's solution, namely transplanting the posidonia beds?

(1) OJC78E, 27.3.2004, p. 716.