

(98/C 174/211)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3830/97****by María Sornosa Martínez (GUE/NGL) to the Commission***(28 November 1997)*

*Subject:* Urban development in the wetlands of Gandía — Xeresa — Xeraco

These Gandía — Xeresa — Xeraco Wetlands (Inventory of Wetlands in the Community of Valencia) are currently being threatened by the development project being promoted by Rusticas, S.A. under Article 20 of Law 4/92, of 5 June, on land deemed not for development. The project involves the construction of a hotel complex and a golf course.

The petition (EXPE.662/97) sent to COPUT (Department of Public Works, Urban Development and Transport) was considered by the Municipal Council in Gandía which, in a letter dated 12 September 1997, asked this Department to suspend temporarily the hearing to enable the claims to be put forward regarding the lack of necessary documentation in this case.

Despite the irregularities of the case, the project infringes Articles 6 and 9 of Law 4/92 mentioned above, which establish, respectively, the authority and duties of the owners of land deemed not for development subject to special protection, and the regulation of construction, development and exploitation carried out. It also infringes Law 11/94, of 27 December, on the Protected Natural Areas of the Valencian Generalitat and Directive 92/43/EEC <sup>(1)</sup> on the conservation of natural habitats, and, specifically, wetlands.

1. Can the Commission ask the COPUT for the case file and, subject to its findings, ask that the project be cancelled if it infringes Directive 92/43/EEC?
2. Can the Commission, within its powers, and taking into account the problems caused by declassifying a number of wetlands of major ecological importance, ask the Valencian Department of the Environment to complete a list of wetlands for special protection areas, as provided for in the Community of Valencia's own legislation, in Law 11/94?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

**Answer given by Mrs Bjerregaard on behalf of the Commission***(16 December 1997)*

1. Given that the Xeraco Wetlands is one of the areas included in the 'Conservation of wetlands and creation of a reserve network for Valencia hispanica' project, which receives Community funding within the framework of the Life Nature programme, the Commission has approached the Valencian Generalitat administration, beneficiaries of the contract, requesting more information on this subject.

The Department of the Environment informed the Commission that it only had official news on the subject. Final approval of this project must be preceded by a positive assessment of its impact by that Department. This procedure has not yet begun.

2. The Commission does not have the authority to request the Valencian Department of the Environment to compile a list of wetlands.

The Department of the Environment has, however, informed the Commission that the procedure for approving this list, by the Valencian administration, is to begin shortly.

(98/C 174/212)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3838/97****by Nikitas Kaklamanis (UPE) to the Commission***(28 November 1997)*

*Subject:* Seismic protection in Greece and the high cost of new projects

Greece is known to be the country most prone to earthquakes in the European Union. Accordingly the new Greek Seismic Protection Regulation (NEAK) drawn up by the Greek Ministry of Regional Planning, Housing