

adopted a proposal for a Council directive ⁽¹⁾ in order to amend existing Community legislation and improve the free movement of persons and vehicles. In the case of transfers of residence from one Member State to another, it proposed that Member States should not impose registration taxes on vehicles brought into their territory.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 108, 7.4.1998.

(1999/C 96/109)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2336/98

by Angela Sierra González (GUE/NGL) to the Commission

(27 July 1998)

Subject: Destruction of the habitat of the Bubulcus ibis in Arrecife (Lanzarote)

In May of this year the Arrecife (Lanzarote, Canary Islands) local council lopped some branches off trees which constitutes virtually the entire nesting area for a colony of cattle egrets (Bubulcus ibis) which had established themselves in one of the city's parks. According to the Spanish Ornithology Society (SEO-Birdlife) there were approximately 100 nests in the area but as a result of the tree lopping operation the number of examples of the species may have been reduced by half.

The Bubulcus ibis is protected under various Spanish and Canary Island laws (Law 4/89 of 27 March 1989 on the conservation of natural areas and of wild flora and fauna; Royal Decree 439/1990 relating to the National Catalogue of Threatened Species, Annex II of which includes the species in question as being one of 'special interest'; the Order issued on 14 September 1997 by the Canary Islands Government) and also falls within the scope of Directive 79/409/EEC ⁽¹⁾ on the protection of wild birds.

Is the Commission aware of the above facts?

Will the Commission seek relevant information from the appropriate Spanish authorities in order to establish whether or not the birds directive has been contravened?

What other measures will the Commission adopt in order to ensure compliance with the above directive and to provide protection for the bird population in question?

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 103, 25.4.1979, p. 1.

Answer given by Mrs Bjerregaard on behalf of the Commission

(16 September 1998)

The Commission is unaware of the circumstances referred to by the Honourable Member. It will make the necessary contacts to establish all the facts and will certainly inform the Honourable Member of the results of its enquires.

Until further details are known about the problem referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission is unable to say what measures, if any, it will adopt to ensure compliance, in this case, with Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds.

(1999/C 96/110)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2347/98

by Graham Mather (PPE) to the Commission

(27 July 1998)

Subject: Euro coins — Ecofin meeting of 6 July 1998

The press release issued following the meeting of the Ecofin Council referred to above states that: 'Ministers were also informed by Commissioner de Silguy of problems raised by the European associations of the visually handicapped and of the industry of vending machines concerning the technical specifications of the 50 and 10 euro coins (difficulties distinguishing these coins from others). In the light of these concerns Ministers invited the Commission to present a proposal to modify the regulation of 2 May 1998 on the technical specifications of euro coins accordingly'.