

(1999/C 289/120)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3797/98****by Laura González Álvarez (GUE/NGL) and Pedro Marset Campos (GUE/NGL) to the Commission***(22 December 1998)**Subject:* Location of the airport at Ciudad Real (Spain)

At the beginning of September, details appeared in the media regarding the exact location of the future Ciudad Real airport, which is being promoted by the Aeropuerto de Ciudad Real S.A. private company and the Ciudad Real Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

1. Is the Commission aware of the exact location of the future airport?
2. Is the Commission aware that the area selected is a place of Community importance with the status of special environmental protection area within the meaning of the directives on habitats and birds?
3. Is the Commission aware that, in the area selected for the siting of the airport, Regulation (EEC) 2078/92 <sup>(1)</sup> on environmental measures is being applied and has been used for the purpose of establishing an aid scheme for the adoption of agricultural practices which are compatible with the habitats of steppe birds?
4. In the Commission's view, is the location of the airport compatible with environmental law and, in particular, the following directives:
  - (a) 85/337/EEC <sup>(2)</sup> on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment;
  - (b) 92/43/EEC <sup>(3)</sup> on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora?
5. Can the Commission provide any information regarding the monitoring of this situation?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 215, 30.7.1992, p. 85.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 175, 5.7.1985, p. 40.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

**Answer given by Mrs Bjerregaard on behalf of the Commission***(5 February 1999)*

The Commission was not aware of the situation to which the Honourable Member refers. It will request detailed information from the Spanish authorities.

In the absence of more precise information on the proposed location of the airport, the Commission cannot confirm whether the project is situated within a special protection area for birds, classified under Article 4 of Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds <sup>(1)</sup>, or within a site proposed for the Natura 2000 network provided for by Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Neither can it confirm whether the area in question benefits from aid granted under Council Regulation (EEC) 2078/92 of 30 June 1992 on agricultural production methods compatible with the requirements of the protection of the environment and the maintenance of the countryside.

Article 2 of Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1987 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment provides that projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location shall be made subject to an assessment with regard to their effects before authorisation is granted. This provision applies to the projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Directive. Annex I, point 7 includes the construction of airports with a runway length of 2 100 metres or more. Under the terms of Article 4 (1), projects listed in Annex I must be made subject to an environmental impact assessment before authorisation is granted.

The Commission believes that a project such as that referred to by the Honourable Member could be compatible with the protection of an area proposed for the Natura 2000 network provided that the conditions laid down in Article 6 (3) and (4) of Directive 92/43/EEC are fulfilled.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 103, 25.4.1979.