

(1999/C 341/095)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0216/99**by Alexandros Alavanos (GUE/NGL) to the Commission**

(12 February 1999)

Subject: Disposal of waste in the Thriassian Plain — infringement of Directive 91/156 and 75/442

A site has been chosen, by Ministerial decision, in the Thriassian Plain — where 5 % of the population of the Athens region lives — for the disposal of all the solid household waste in the Athens region (3 500 tonnes per day), the incineration of all contaminated hospital waste from the same area (30 tonnes per day), the disposal of sludge from primary biological treatment of urban sewage (150 tonnes per day) and toxic industrial waste with no safeguards or deactivating measures taken (150 tonnes per day).

This decision — which in fact is contrary to the position of the Provincial Council of Western Attica in terms of the quantities and categories of waste — is in breach of Directives 91/156 ⁽¹⁾ and 75/442 ⁽²⁾ concerning the disposal of solid waste in that the site has been selected without reference to planning and environmental criteria and studies of at least two sites should have been carried out. The decision is also in breach of Directives 84/360 ⁽³⁾ and 85/337 ⁽⁴⁾ in that no land-use report or environmental impact assessment have been carried out beforehand.

How will the Commission intervene to enforce proper and full implementation of Community legislation, especially in the case of a region such as the Thriassian Plain which is particularly polluted?

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 78, 26.3.1991, p. 32.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 194, 25.7.1975, p. 39.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 188, 16.7.1984, p. 20.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 175, 5.7.1985, p. 40.

Answer given by Mrs Bjerregaard on behalf of the Commission

(31 March 1999)

According to the information in the Commission's possession, the following projects in the Thriassian plain region, which are intended to improve waste management in Attica, have been scheduled and are currently being implemented by the Greek authorities, namely: a new tip at Ano-Liossia and the building of a hospital-waste incinerator.

These projects are jointly financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the operational multi-fund programme for Attica and the operational multi-fund programme for the environment. According to the information supplied by the Member State in question, the impact of these projects on the environment has been assessed in accordance with Greek legislation, which transposes Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the impact of certain public and private projects on the environment, Council Directive 84/360/EEC of 28 June 1984 on the fight against atmospheric pollution by industrial installations; Council Directive 75/442/EEC of 15 July 1975 on waste; while Council Directive 91/156/EEC of 18 March 1991 amending Directive 75/442/EEC does not apply here.

According to the same information, hazardous waste will not be accepted at the facilities referred to above, whereas disposing of sewage-treatment sludge by means of dumping is acceptable under environment law.

In addition the Cohesion Fund is financing the reclamation projects relating to the former tips at Schistos and Ano Liossia as part of the same improvements to waste management in Attica.

The Greek authorities have included other projects (including, in particular, new tips) in a waste management plan for Attica put to the Commission earlier. This would also apparently be implemented in other parts of Attica once the administrative and legal procedures have been completed.