

The Spanish authorities have indicated that as regards inadequate facilities they are making the necessary modifications or planning new facilities. In the case of deficiencies in the procedures carried out at the border posts, immediate administrative action has been taken to improve matters.

Recommendations for change to the listing of border inspection posts from either the FVO or by Member States are considered regularly several times each year by the Commission, with a view to amending the published list of border posts (Commission Decision 97/0778/EC of 22 July 1997 drawing up a list of border inspection posts (BIPs) agreed for veterinary checks on products and animals from third countries, laying down detailed rules concerning the checks to be carried out by the experts of the Commission and repealing Decision 96/0742/EC⁽¹⁾). The list of border inspection posts was recently amended by Commission Decision 1999/0577/EC of 20 July 1999⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 315, 19.11.1997.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 219, 19.8.1999.

(2000/C 170 E/132)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1841/99

by Konstantinos Hatzidakis (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(13 October 1999)

Subject: Construction of a solar thermal power plant at Frangokastello in the Sfakia region of Crete, Greece

I have received complaints from residents of Frangokastello in the Sfakia region of Crete about plans to construct a solar thermal power plant in the area, which will, however, be powered by liquid gas as an alternative during periods of reduced sunlight. According to these complaints, finance for the construction of the plant is also to be provided by the European Union under the Thermie programme.

Will the Commission say whether, in fact, it plans to fund this project? If so, to what extent has an environmental impact assessment been carried out, both from the environmental viewpoint — the region has been designated an area of exceptional natural beauty and is covered by the Natura 2000 programme — and from the economic and cultural points of view as the plant is to be built in the vicinity of an archaeological site and villages and towns with a thriving tourist industry, which provides the basic source of income for the population?

Answer given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission

(17 November 1999)

Within the Thermie programme, the project TE-235-96 (thermal solar European power station at Frangokastello, Crete-Theseus) has received support for its first phase, which regards the design of the plant.

Implementation of the project will be fully dependent on the national (Greek) legislation and procedure as far as permissions and authorisations are needed for the land use, spatial planning, environmental impact, building, operation, and connection to the grid. If such authorisations are not granted, the project will not be eligible for further support. In particular, the Frangokastello area is located within a site included in the list of sites of Community importance proposed by the Hellenic authorities by virtue of Council Directive 92/0043/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora⁽¹⁾ for the Natura 2000 network. The relevant environmental impact studies carried out for the development should therefore take proper account of the conservation value of that site so that its deterioration can be avoided.

When permissions are given by national or local authorities, the Commission can only assume that environmental considerations have been taken into account. It is not the responsibility of the Commission to interfere with local issues. However the Commission may intervene should evidence of a potential breach of Community legislation be brought to its attention.

(¹) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(2000/C 170 E/133)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1863/99

by Glyn Ford (PSE) to the Commission

(14 October 1999)

Subject: Parity of qualifications within the European Union

Is the Commission aware that Barcelona University is demanding from a British student who already has a degree from a British University 156 credits over and above those demanded from Spanish students?

Does the Commission not feel that this is in breach of European law which does not allow discrimination on the grounds of nationality between citizens of the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission

(4 November 1999)

The information supplied by the Honourable Member does not allow for a thorough examination of the situation. The Commission has specified in a fax to the Honourable Member what details are needed. As soon as the information becomes available, the Commission will look into this case.

(2000/C 170 E/134)

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1875/99

by Alexander de Roo (Verts/ALE) to the Commission

(12 October 1999)

Subject: Imminent infringement of the Habitat Directive

Is the Commission aware that the Governments of Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany are developing plans for the revival of the 'Iron Rhine'?

Is the Commission aware that the historical route of this rail freight line passes through the De Meineweg National Park?

Is the Commission aware that De Meineweg has been designated as a sanctuary and special protection area within the framework of Natura 2000?

Is the Commission aware that the Directive 92/0043/EEC (¹) (the Habitat Directive) has a special bearing on the presence — unique in the Netherlands — of adders (*vipera berus*)?

Does the Commission agree that the revival of a rail freight line in this area is inconsistent with the European Habitat Directive, under which the adder, great crested newt, common spadefoot and crane are protected?

What steps is the Commission contemplating to ensure that the Netherlands complies totally with the Habitat Directive in respect of De Meineweg?