

(2001/C 350 E/059)

**WRITTEN QUESTION P-1200/01**  
**by Arlindo Cunha (PPE-DE) to the Commission**

(4 April 2001)

*Subject:* Authorising a vaccine for wild rabbits

The wild rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) is on the verge of extinction in the Iberian peninsula, thanks to two terrible diseases, viral haemorrhagic disease and myxomatosis.

There is an ecological recombinant vaccine which can cure these diseases, namely Lapinvac-FI, which is awaiting approval by the European Medicines Evaluation Agency.

Given the extremely urgent need to avert a potential catastrophe, will the Commission state what stage the approval process has reached?

**Joint answer**  
**to Written Questions E-0916/01 and P-1200/01**  
**given by Mr Liikanen on behalf of the Commission**

(11 May 2001)

The two rabbit diseases mentioned by the Honourable Member are not compulsory notifiable by the Member States to the Commission and the wild rabbit is not an endangered species.

The scientific evaluation of any individual application for marketing authorisation of a veterinary medicinal product submitted to the European Medicines Evaluation Agency in accordance with Council Regulation (EEC) No 2309/93 of 22 July 1993 laying down Community procedures for the authorization and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products<sup>(1)</sup> is the responsibility of the Committee for Veterinary Medicinal Products. The Commission thereafter receives an opinion of the Committee on the quality, safety and efficacy of the product within a specific time frame and proceeds on the basis of this opinion, to draw up a draft decision to be adopted in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 73 in the aforementioned Regulation. However, the Commission may in no way interfere in the scientific evaluation process.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 214, 24.8.1993.

(2001/C 350 E/060)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-0925/01**  
**by Jonas Sjöstedt (GUE/NGL) to the Commission**

(28 March 2001)

*Subject:* Funding of the Alquera Dam project

The Alquera dam project in Portugal is being co-financed by contributions from the EU. However there have been criticisms of the project as there may not enough water to fill the lake. Nor will the farmers necessarily be able to pay to transport the water to their fields. The pumping stations and pipelines to transport the water to the growing areas will also have to be constructed and who will pay for them?

The Commission document expressed some doubt about the success of the project, but we have carried on funding it. Does the Commission believe that the problems mentioned can be solved, and does it intend to take part in the further funding required for the items mentioned above?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**

(7 June 2001)

The decision to part-finance the Alqueva project was adopted on 28 July 1997<sup>(1)</sup> following a number of studies on the basins of the rivers common to both Portugal and Spain which had concluded that the Guadiana contained enough water for the project to be viable.

The Spanish authorities have given assurances regarding the quantity and quality of the water supply from the dam. They undertook to abide by the requirements of Directives 91/271/EEC<sup>(2)</sup> and 91/676/EEC<sup>(3)</sup> as well as reaffirming their commitment to the relevant international or bilateral treaties, in particular the Spanish-Portuguese agreement (the Convention between Portugal and Spain on regularising the use of water from cross-border rivers), under which the use of the Guadiana river (between Caia and Cuncos) and its waters is reserved for Portugal.

The Portuguese authorities also reaffirmed their commitment to the Community directives and the international and bilateral treaties, especially the Spanish-Portuguese Convention.

The Community part-financing laid down in the Commission Decision of July 1997 on the specific integrated development programme for the Alqueva area was intended mainly to fund the construction of the dam and the irrigation systems for conducting the water to the farms. Small dams and pumping stations within this network will be also eligible for Community part-financing.

Measures to complete these irrigation systems are contained in the operational programme for the 2000-2006 Community Support Framework for Alentejo<sup>(4)</sup>.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> Decision C (97) 2350.

<sup>(2)</sup> Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment (OJ L 135, 30.5.1991).

<sup>(3)</sup> Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources (OJ L 375, 31.12.1991).

<sup>(4)</sup> Decision C (2000) 1777 of 28 July 2000.

(2001/C 350 E/061)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-0927/01****by Jonas Sjöstedt (GUE/NGL) to the Commission**

(28 March 2001)

*Subject:* Recovery of EU contributions in the event of irregularities

Media reports have revealed that 90% of the money claimed back by the Community when fraud is discovered is in fact never repaid.

What percentage is repaid of the funds the Commission claims back? Can the Commission account for these repayments in percentages for each Member State? What is the Commission doing to ensure that 100% is recovered?

**Answer given by Ms Schreyer on behalf of the Commission**

(19 July 2001)

A distinction should be made between irregularities in indirect expenditure by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF-Guarantee structural operations), where the recovery of amounts unduly paid is the responsibility of the Member States, and irregularities in direct expenditure, where it is for the Commission to recover amounts unduly paid.