

**Question for written answer E-001533/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Hunting of birds during the courtship and migration season: contravention of Directive 2009/147/EC (the 'Birds Directive') by the Region of Lazio

In issuing the President of the Lazio Region's Decree No T00018 of 20 January 2012, the Lazio Region unexpectedly and dramatically decided to postpone the end of the hunting season, which normally closes on 31 January in Italy, until 9 February 2012.

This decree allowed hunting to be carried out right inside the special protection areas (SPAs) of the Natura 2000 network and, in particular, permitted the hunting of four species of birds in the category of European woodland fauna: the woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*), the hooded crow (*Corvus corone cornix*), the magpie (*Pica pica*) and the Eurasian jay (*Garrulus glandarius*).

This decision was made following the judgment by the Lazio Regional Administrative Court which reorganised the regional hunting calendar of the Lazio Region, as recommended by the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA). That body had stated that the hunting season should end for many species between late December and early January.

In other words, the Lazio Region has not only deliberately ignored the judgment by the relevant administrative court, but has acted in a way that runs counter to ISPRA's scientific advice.

The unacceptable extension of hunting during the courtship and migration season will cause serious damage and disturbance to many other bird species which are already in the process of migrating to Northern Europe.

- Is the Commission aware of the decree issued by the Lazio Region? What steps does it intend to take to tackle this latest in a series of infringements of Directive 2009/147/EC (the Birds Directive) ?
- Does the Commission agree that, in view of the repeated findings of serial infringements of the Birds Directive, it should take urgent and determined action to bring pressure to bear on the Region in question, as well as the relevant regional authorities in the Veneto, Lombardy, Liguria and Sardinia?