

**Question for written answer E-005094/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Struma motorway financing and respect for biodiversity conservation

The Struma motorway project in Bulgaria is part of TEN-T corridor IV and is funded under the Cohesion Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. The existing route traverses the Kresna gorge, a priority area for biodiversity conservation at both EU and national level. The environmental impact assessment (Decision No 1-1(1)/2008) concluded that the only viable option for preserving the gorge is a long tunnel. This is reflected in the decisions on financing of the project and funding of the preparation works for lot 3, including the designing of a route that avoids the 'ecologically sensitive Kresna gorge'. The only 'major project' in the recently approved Operational Programme on Transport 2014-2020 for Bulgaria is the construction of lot 3.

1. What measures will the Commission take to ensure compliance with the arrangements for the construction of the Struma motorway, in accordance with EU legislation and the obligatory conditions laid down in Article 6(3) of the consent issued in 2008?
2. Has the Commission made provision for an assessment of the impact of road and railway traffic, with a view to ensuring maximum economic viability for both projects and assessing their impact on biodiversity?
3. Can the Commission indicate what was financed under the Operational Programme on Transport 2007-2013 for the preparation of lot 3 and whether it was satisfactory?