

**Question for written answer E-014015/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)

Subject: Habitats Directive

At an event held at the European Parliament on 15 September 2015, the acting Director for Natural Capital in DG Environment stated that the main reason that certain large predators were listed in Annex V to the Habitats Directive was because there were specific hunting traditions in the Member States concerned. He also pointed out that there was no automatic connection between a species' conservation status and its listing in an annex.

With that in mind, can the Commission explain why, during Croatia's accession negotiations, that country's brown bear population was listed in Annex IV, despite the fact that Croatia has a tradition of bear hunting and a healthy bear population, and that its bear management plan was working well?

Does the Commission agree that it would be a good idea to update Annexes IV and V in line with scientific data to ensure that the protection of rare and endangered species is given top priority, whilst species whose populations have recovered to sustainable levels can be managed accordingly?