

Question for written answer E-004171/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Alberto Cirio (PPE)

Subject: Changes to the boundaries of special protection areas

Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) provides for the designation of special protection areas to form part of the Natura 2000 network.

Member States are responsible for the designation and delineation of these areas, but it is not uncommon that the decisions they make are ill-suited to the everyday economic, social and cultural circumstances in the areas in question.

In one case, in the province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola in Piedmont, a scientific study was submitted to the relevant ministry in support of a request for boundary changes, but the ministry rejected the request, stating that such matters were dealt with by the Commission.

1. In order to clarify the situation, can the Commission say whether, provided that they are based on well-researched, authoritative and in-depth science, requests for boundary changes can be submitted directly to local authorities?
2. If so, do they then go directly to the Commission or must they be forwarded to the relevant ministry first?
3. Is it true, as ministerial sources claim, that there are set periods during the year when such requests can be accepted?