

**Question for written answer E-004578/2017
to the Commission
Rule 130
Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Infringement procedure concerning Białowieża Forest

In reply to our previous Written Question (P-004262/2016), the Commission confirmed, on 4 July 2016, that it had launched an infringement procedure against Poland in response to changes in Polish law that repealed the protection regime afforded to the Natura 2000 site 'Puszcza Białowieska PLC 200004'. Commissioner Vella stated that a letter of formal notice had been sent on 16 June 2016.

Logging has now commenced in earnest, including on tree stands aged 100 years and older. In Białowieża Forest District alone, 5 400 m³ of timber was logged during the first four months of 2017, of which 44 per cent involved tree stands aged 100 years and older. Logging is also under way in Browsk and Hajnówka Forest Districts, impacting, in particular, the conservation status of Galio-Carpinetum oak-hornbeam forests and species linked to dead-wood. The scale and pace of the destruction of protected habitats and species requires immediate intervention.

Could the Commission please update Parliament on progress on the said infringement procedure?

Will the Commission take interim measures when referring the case of Białowieża Forest District to the European Court of Justice?

Will the Commission start new, or extend existing, infringement procedures in response to the damage caused in Browsk and Hajnówka Districts, given the equivalent breaches of the Birds and Habitats Directives?