

**Question for written answer E-001156/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Josep-Maria Terricabras (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Military exercises in natural areas protected by the Natura 2000 network

Military exercises, including target practice and the firing of explosive devices, have been carried out in protected areas in Catalonia, such as the Area of Natural Interest in Les Gavarres, the Albera National Park and the Collserola National Park. These three areas are part of the EU's Natura 2000 network¹, which protects natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. They are not suitable locations for military activity due to the risk that it poses to local flora, fauna, habitats and people. The parks are used for sports and hiking, and the military exercises are having a negative impact on tourism as they restrict the leisure activities that can be held in the park. Exercises have also been carried out near urban centres, acts that have put their populations at risk. As a result, the municipalities affected are opposed to these practices^{2 3 4}.

1. Is the Commission aware that military exercises are being carried out in protected areas?
2. Does the Commission believe that these exercises are compatible with the environmental protection granted by the Nature 2000 network?
3. Will the Commission take any action on the above issues?

¹ Directives 2009/147/EC and 92/43/EEC.

² Celrà, Girona, Sant Climent Sescebes, Espolla, Llançà, Barcelona, Sant Cugat, Esplugues and Cerdanyola, among others.

³ http://www.ara.cat/societat/Alcalde-passa-nomes-maniobres-militars_0_1477652249.html.

⁴ http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2017/02/20/catalunya/1487577286_828555.html.