

**Question for written answer E-001200/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
José Bové (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Threat to the Desges protection schemes

The construction of a hydroelectric power station began a few weeks ago on the river Desges, a remarkable river in the Haut Allier valley, a valley recognised internationally for its value in terms of biodiversity. The river is listed as a Natura 2000 site and in the Water Framework Directive.

The Desges river, which is home to Atlantic salmon, supplies water to the Conservatoire National du Saumon Sauvage (National Protection Centre for Wild Salmon), launched in 2001. As part of a programme to save a strain of salmon, which is unique in Europe, the centre produces 2 million young wild salmon each year to boost a population on the verge of extinction.

Local government, forgetting the outstanding biodiversity recovery programme launched by the Loire Grandeur Nature National Plan (4 January 1994), has given the go-ahead to a number of projects including the reconstruction of a dam abandoned since 1978, setting up a penstock, and the construction of a hydroelectric power plant, which would all lead to a dramatic change in the functioning of the Desges and the old mill, which is home to a protected species, the brook lamprey.

How can a EU-wide protection project be threatened by a development plan which has not been subject to an environmental assessment?