

WRITTEN QUESTION P-7081/08  
by Louis Grech (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Reconstruction of Ghadira road

A unique environment in the northern tip of Malta is potentially jeopardised by a proposed EU-funded road as part of the Trans-European Network (TEN-T). The first proposal to reconstruct the road had been approved by the Commission in 2005, but has been subsequently scrapped by the Maltese Government. Under a proposal put forward by the Government the road is planned to pass through a unique Maltese rural feature – Foresta 2000, an afforestation project managed by environmental organisations in conjunction with the Government itself. It is also protected by the Habitats Directive 92/43 EEC<sup>1</sup>.

Adjacent to this site is the Ghadira Nature Reserve – a bird sanctuary since 1978 spread over 11 ha. On accession to the European Union, Malta designated this place as the suitable wetland on its territory for inclusion in the Ramsar List, and it forms part of the EU Natura 2000 sites. Considering that this is a highly controversial item and is considered to be a high priority matter for the Maltese public, I believe that the same public should be given a real opportunity to express their views, since no meaningful consultation has taken place with the stakeholders involved in this matter. Moreover all relevant documentation and information should be made available for whoever wishes to know more about the construction of this road.

Any scientific studies on environmental impact assessments of this project should not be limited to the three options as presented by the Government, but rather should focus on all the different aspects of this issue, including coastal erosion, and evaluate the need to construct this new road with so much urgency.

Considering that the Maltese Government seems to be adamant that it will go ahead with this EU-funded project in the immediate future, it would be appreciated if the Commission would give its views and comments on this subject and any action that will be taken in this regard.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.