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Under the German Nature Conservation Act, companies constructing wind farms in Germany must pay compensation. Notwithstanding these provisions, however, many companies in Rhineland-Palatinate have been given a significant discount on such compensatory payments in recent years. Some companies have had to pay only 10% of the amount due, while others have had to pay the full amount. The Rhineland-Palatinate Audit Office estimates that EUR 25 million in revenue has been lost as a result, and has suggested that EU state aid legislation may have been breached.

1. Is the Commission already aware of this situation?
2. Will it launch a state aid investigation into this matter?
3. If so, could the possible consequences include the withdrawal of operating permits, as well as retrospective payments?