

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2666/99
by Francis Decourrière (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Directive 92/43/EEC

With regard to the application of Annex III of Council Directive 92/43/EEC¹ of 21 May 1992, Stage 2, paragraph 2(b) provides that the assessment of the Community importance of a site shall take account of the 'geographical situation of the site in relation to migration routes of species in Annex II and whether it belongs to a continuous ecosystem situated on both sides of one or more internal Community frontiers'.

Socio-economic activities on either side of a frontier are sometimes completely different, since frontiers are governed by national law. For example, hunting and fishing are lawful and traditional activities in France in publicly-owned coastal land, whereas they do not exist on the other side of the frontier, in Belgium.

1. Since economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics have to be taken into account (Article 2 of the directive), how does the Commission intend to reconcile managing these border sites of great ecological value (classified as nature reserves or biogenetic reserves), linked with an Annex II species (*Phoca vitulina*), with such variations in activity?
2. Should these sites be managed by a single body?
3. Will these cross-border sites benefit from special conditions, particularly financial conditions, in the introductory phase of Directive 92/43/EEC and in the context of its main application in 2004?

OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.