

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3960/00
by Ioannis Averoff (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Implementation of Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, and a project in the Prefecture of Ioannina, Epirus

Hydroelectricity Ltd., a subsidiary of TERNA Ltd., intends to build and operate a complex of four hydroelectric plants with a total generating capacity of 19.6 MW at a cost of Drs. 13 bn. at Tzoumerka in the south-eastern part of the Prefecture of Ioannina between the traditional villages of Kalarrytes, Syrrakos and Matsouki which were designated areas of outstanding natural beauty by the Ministry of Culture in 1975. The village councils of the three communities unanimously expressed their opposition to the company's plans.

However, despite the fact that they had not received the opinion of the prefectural council on this matter and despite the unanimous decisions by the village councils, the Ministries for the Environment, Development and Agriculture approved the environmental conditions for the project, without taking into account the opinions of these bodies, thereby violating national and Community law.

Council Directive 85/337/EEC¹ on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment specifically provides in Article 6(2) that the public concerned must be given the opportunity to express its opinion before the project is initiated. Article 8 of the same Directive also specifically states that information gathered pursuant to Articles 5, 6 and 7 must be taken into consideration in the development consent procedure.

Given that Member States are obliged to comply with the above provisions, will the Commission say:

1. What measures has it taken to ensure that the above Directive, and especially Articles 6 and 8 thereof, is implemented in Greece to the letter, and what action does it intend to take to address the violation referred to above?
2. If it has noticed the faulty transposition of the Directive which occurred in 1990 by Ministerial Decision 69269/5387/90, why has it failed to take action for a decade, and will it say what progress has been made in transposing Directive 97/11/EC²?

¹ OJ L 175, 05.07.1985, p.40

² OJ L 73, 14.03.1997, p.5