

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3452/02  
by Carlos Bautista Ojeda (Verts/ALE)  
to the Commission

Subject: The Andalusia region's GIS

Under Community law, one of the requirements of the olive-oil production-aid monitoring scheme is that a Geographical Information System (GIS) should be in operation. From 1 November 2003 the above aid scheme will apply only to olive trees registered under an approved GIS. On 14 October 2002 the Spanish authorities submitted the Andalusia region's GIS to the Commission for approval. The relevant document has been sent for processing to the Andalusian Government, which is being bombarded with appeals concerning discrepancies vis-à-vis the data submitted by the Spanish Agriculture Ministry. It is currently estimated that approximately 30 000 olive producers have lodged appeals and that a further 11 000 have had their appeals rejected on the grounds that they were submitted too late. In the meantime, and pending settlement of their appeals, farmers are unable to receive advance payments on the next season's crop.

Is the Commission aware of this state of affairs? If so, does it consider approval of such a controversial GIS to be feasible? Can it say what stage has been reached in the processing of that GIS?

Does the Commission consider that the Spanish Government should be asked to draw up a new GIS once the outstanding cases are settled?

Is the Commission aware that, in view of the large number of appeals, approving the GIS as submitted would be tantamount to excluding many Andalusian olive trees from the census? This would lead to unofficial olive oil production which could prevent the relevant Community rules from being applied, with a consequent risk to consumers.