

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0285/04  
by Alexander de Roo (Verts/ALE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Landfill on Malta

The Maltese Government intend to establish a new temporary landfill very close to the neolithic temple complex of Mnajdra, which is designated as a UNESCO heritage site.

According to a report, commissioned by Friends of the Earth Malta, the site selection process took six days (from 3 to 9 June 2003) without any representation from the Museums Department.

The Maltese Minister remarked that an EIA on the project could be completed in three to four months, establishing a precedent in the field of EIAs in Malta, and giving a new definition to the term 'multi-seasonal'. The company SLR Consulting accepted to undertake the EIA within this timeframe.

The Hydrological Risk Assessment presented by SLR uses a model to establish the risk of contaminants finding their way out of the sealing lining. The model erroneously assumes a situation where the 'lining always operates as designed'.

Regarding air quality, there are strong contradictions: SLR state that 'no data are available to assess the potential for these deposition rates of gas to impact on stone' but somehow still go on to conclude that 'the potential for impact on the archaeological features including the World Heritage Sites and Misqa tanks will be negligible'.

Does the European Commission know that the proposal contradicts policy with regard to siting of landfills?

Does the Commission know that the interim landfill is not designed for hazardous waste?

What does the Commission intend doing to stop the Maltese authorities from enacting their plans for this landfill sited near the UNESCO World Heritage sites?