

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3570/08
by Michl Ebner (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Naturalisation of the wild cat, Article 12 of the Habitats Directive

The wild cat (*Felis silvestris*) has died out in Germany, but there are now plans to re-introduce native populations on military training areas. The advantage of these areas is that the restricted access and lack of roads offer opportunities to wild cats that cannot be found in normal rural landscapes.

There are however concerns about such reintroduction projects in terms of their legal or financial implications under the Habitats Directive, in which the wild cat is listed as a protected species under Annex IVa. These concerns relate in particular to the consequences of Article 12 which prohibits deliberate actions and, in subparagraph 1d, any form of 'deterioration', as regards the animal species listed in Annex IV.

Is the European Commission aware of such reintroduction projects?

What scope is there for allaying the legal concerns regarding the reintroduction of species on military land, particularly those arising from the Habitats Directive, and thus providing incentives for establishing a habitat for wild cats? What specific options are available to the Member States?