

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4111/08
by Petru Filip (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: The Bâstroe canal - impact on the Danube Delta's ecosystem

It has recently been stated by the director of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)'s Danube-Carpathians programme, Michael Baltzer, that *from the ecological viewpoint the Bâstroe canal is not an acceptable solution for navigation on the Danube*. The Commission recently issued a warning to Ukraine regarding the ecological problems raised by the continuation of this canal project in the Danube Delta (an international protected area), and the Secretary-General of the Espoo Convention (Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context), Wiek Schrage, has stressed that there has been a breach of its rules. Nonetheless, Kiev has yet to give a clear response. Pending completion of the assessment of the impact of the project on biodiversity in the Danube Delta, no real guarantees exist that there will be no works in the area. Neither the Ukrainian officials' promise to suspend the works nor the EU's symbolic gesture of diplomatic intervention constitutes a workable solution.

In view of the significant adverse effects that have appeared at the level of the ecosystem of the Danube Delta area, will the Commission take clear and firm action on the matter, including the option of sanctions?