

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5271/08

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to the Commission

Subject: Shooting cormorants

In Bavaria's small-scale fish-farming industry, the ponds and the fish they contain are unrestricted private property. The fish cannot escape from cormorants, which cause considerable damage not only because they eat the fish but also because injured fish tend to die. The cormorant is protected as a European bird species under EU legislation. Our question concerns this legislation.

1. Is it permissible that the owner of a fish farm has the right under Bavarian law to protect his property in the event of damage – e.g. by firing shots to scare the birds away – as other measures are costly and ineffective? (Protection of property is enshrined in the German constitution.)
2. Is shooting cormorants completely forbidden in bird protection areas – even in cases of major damage to fish farms – or are exceptions to this legislation possible?