

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0270/09
by Willy Meyer Pleite (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Centre for industrial waste at Vertavillo (Palencia, Spain)

I have recently been informed of plans to build a centre for industrial waste at Vertavillo (Palencia) which may be in breach of European environmental legislation.

The purpose of the project, submitted by the Hera Holding and other firms, is to manage and dispose of 180 000 tonnes of industrial waste per year in the municipality of Vertavillo, which will involve the construction of various facilities: a landfill site, a sludge treatment plant, a biomethanation plant and a leachate plant. This waste treatment centre is to be built on a plot of land that has been separated off from an area designated as a site of Community interest (SCI), known as Montes del Cerrato, especially for this purpose. This area is also protected as part of the Natura 2000 network.

The planned site for the landfill of irrecoverable waste, covering 23 hectares, borders the SCI, which would be left suspended 8 metres above the base of the landfill once the landfill basin has been excavated. The demarcation of these natural areas is incompatible with the siting of activities that destroy the soil and damage the countryside and the environment in their immediate vicinity. The plant also affects a 'green corridor' that enjoys both environmental and cultural protection, a livestock path that crosses the farmland.

This project may be in breach of Directive 92/43/EEC¹ on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, jeopardising biodiversity in the area, and Directive 91/156/EEC² amending Directive 75/442/EEC³ on waste, which includes an obligation for the Member States to ensure that waste is disposed of without endangering human health and without using processes which harm the environment.

- Is the Commission aware of the above project? If not, can the Commission request information from the competent national authorities and the Government of the Autonomous Community of Castile and Leon?
- Does the Commission believe that this project to build a centre for industrial waste respects European legislation on the environment? What steps will the Commission take to ensure that this legislation is complied with?

¹ OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

² OJ L 78, 26.3.1991, p. 32.

³ OJ L 194, 25.7.1975, p. 39.