

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1824/09
by Willy Meyer Pleite (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Caracena-Valderroman road scheme

Three alternative routes have been examined for the planned road to be built between Caracena and Valderroman (Castilla y León): (A) Valderroman-Caracena; (B) Fresno de Caracena-Montejo de Tiermes; and (C) Caracena-Hoz de Arriba-Carrascosa de Arriba. On the basis of the studies made, the Sorian Association for the Protection and Study of Nature (Asociación Soriana para la Defensa y Estudio de la Naturaleza) believes that route (B) has significantly less impact on the environment. The route planned by the Autonomous Government of Castilla y León, however, could infringe the following Community legislation: Directive 85/337/EEC¹ on environmental impact assessment, amended by Directive 97/11/EC², Directive 2003/4/EC³ on public access to environmental information, and the Directives on habitats and birds.

The scheme bypasses the town of Caracena, which under a LIFE project has been proposed as an Artistic Historical Entity (Conjunto Histórico-Artístico), and involves building a 65 metre high road bridge running through an SIC. The route crosses the Encinares del Tiermes SIC and various protected areas, Nature 2000 Network areas, and land belonging to the Tiermes-Caracena Important Bird Area (IBA) 079, which has been proposed as a future SBPA in view of its ornithological significance, notably the presence of Dupont's larks, Griffon vultures, Egyptian vultures, etc.

Is the Commission aware of the road scheme? If not, can it ask the Spanish authorities to provide information about it?

Can the Commission explain, on the basis of the information provided by the Spanish authorities, why the Valderroman-Caracena route has been chosen for implementation out of the three alternatives?

Can the Commission confirm that the EIA which has been carried out, over and above meeting a formal legal requirement, actually responds to the objectives of Directive 85/337/EEC, amended by Directive 97/11/EC?

What steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Community environmental legislation is respected in this matter?

¹ OJ L 175, 5.7.1985, p. 40.

² OJ L 73, 14.3.1997, p. 5.

³ OJ L 41, 14.2.2003, p. 26.