

**Question for written answer E-4134/2010
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert (ALDE)

Subject: Natura 2000 and restrictions on recreational and sport aviation

The European principle underlying the Natura 2000 programme is the identification and protection of existing vulnerable flora and fauna on the basis of scientific reports. However, the Netherlands is identifying areas where it wants there to be flora and fauna, and protecting plant and animal species which are not even present. The Commission also permits (i.e. does not require) EU Member States to set up 'management plans'. These management plans are mostly restrictive, and are therefore used by only a few countries. They mainly define what is not permitted in the areas surrounding the site; in other countries everyone is allowed to carry on as before under the heading of 'existing use'.

In the Netherlands two pilots have received convictions (against which they are appealing) for overflying the Oostvaardersplassen site. It would be good if the Commission could send a clear signal that what has happened here cannot be in line with the purpose of nature reserves or Natura 2000 sites. Soon it will not be possible to overfly such sites in the Netherlands without incurring a fine.

1. Does the Commission agree that the way in which the Netherlands is now implementing the Natura 2000 programme completely disregards the programme's original purpose?
2. If not, why not?
3. If so, when and how will the Commission take action on this matter?