

**Question for written answer E-010508/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
James Elles (ECR)

Subject: UK High Speed 2 (HS2) rail link - compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive

The UK Government has stated that the 'Appraisal of Sustainability' published in connection with HS2 is compliant with the SEA Directive. Rather than presenting a comparative assessment of different options for the route of the new rail line known as HS2, this document deals with the environmental issues pertaining to one of the options. The process by which the proposed route has been defined is not set out in an open and transparent way.

By not undertaking a comparative high-level assessment of the alternatives to HS2 and to the proposed route, it is not possible to determine whether the scheme presented is the most sustainable way to meet the purported 'need'.

In light of the above, does the Commission consider the 'Appraisal of Sustainability' to be compliant with the SEA Directive, and will it investigate the matter?