

**Question for written answer E-001830/2014  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)**

Subject: Environmental impact assessment of fracking in Natura 2000 zones

The Cronos hydrocarbon exploration project affects Natura 2000 zones in the Autonomous Communities of Castilla-La Mancha and Castille and Leon. These include areas with special protection, such as the Parameras de Maranchón, Hoz del Mesa and Aragoncillo (SICs and SACs) in Castilla-La Mancha.

On 26 April 2013 the Council of Ministers granted a hydrocarbon exploration licence to the company Frontera Energy Corporation S.L. for a period of 6 years. The members of Desarrollo Verde, one of the associations that has appealed against the granting of this licence, have well-founded doubts that the firm responsible for the exploration has carried out the obligatory environmental impact assessment that is required by EU legislation for activities of this kind in Natura 2000 zones.

Can the government of a Member State authorise activities of this nature even though the company to whom the licence is granted has not carried out an environmental impact assessment of the Natura 2000 zones affected thereby?

Does the Commission consider that certain hydraulic fracturing operations will have such slight environmental repercussion in SIC and SAC zones that the government does not need to submit such projects to environmental impact assessment?