

**Question for written answer E-003292/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Natura 2000

In May 2016, the Danish government entered into a political agreement on the so-called Nature Package¹. The agreement implies a wish to adjust the Natura 2000 area², and for this purpose a set of criteria has been prepared³. It is estimated that 28 000 hectares are being taken out, including 5 000 hectares which must be adjacent to existing areas. As a result, the reduction would mean that the proportion of Danish land area designated as a 'special conservation area' (Natura 2000 area) will be reduced from the current 8.3% to 7.8%. The primary purpose is to take out agricultural land areas, as described in criterion 2a.iii

However, Article 9 of the Habitats Directive stipulates that the status of a locality as a special conservation area may be repealed if the monitoring, as provided for in Article 11 of the Habitats Directive, shows that natural development can justify this.

Can the Commission state whether it is common practice in Member States to reduce special conservation areas for the sake of agricultural interests?

¹ http://mfvm.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/Naturpakke-2016.pdf

² <http://mst.dk/natur-vand/natur/natura-2000/natura-2000-omraaderne/justering-af-natura-2000-omraaderne/>

³ <http://mst.dk/media/139254/kriterier-til-forslag-til-aendringer-i-natura-2000-graenserne.pdf>