

**Question for written answer E-003504/2018  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Stefan Eck (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Infringement procedure 2013/4077

1) Why did Austria, a Member State which has a high requirement for designating special areas of conservation and the worst conservation statuses for protected areas, through interventions with the Presidents of the Commission, manage to obtain significant economic benefits that were technically and legally sound in the demands for additional areas submitted on 5 October 2017, which will be withdrawn on 15 November 2017 in violation of the law and judicature, despite the Commission being aware of the fact that Austria had made a significant number of false statements to circumvent the designation of special areas of conservation, and that there are barely any, or only obsolete, areas designated for many species and types of habitats, and that no research has been conducted meaning that Austria's contribution to conserving biodiversity and achieving the Directive's goals are no longer enforceable by law or in practice, as Austria has already allowed significant deterioration and extinction to take place. Even in the areas under debate, priority protected species are in the worst condition and are increasingly deteriorating. Furthermore, there is excellent evidence to date that shows that an increased delay in the procedure can result in Member States being treated unequally (for example, see C-290/18 Complaint against Portugal regarding the lack of Natura 2000 area designations of 26 April 2018)?

2) Will the Commission quickly and fully enforce the designation, in line with Ares(2017)4860668-05/10/2017, of 52 habitat types and 63 species under the Habitats Directive, along with the most recent requirements, and take action where necessary?