

**Question for written answer E-003833/2020**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Ignazio Corrao (NI)**

**Subject:** Destruction of the dunes at Agrigento and protection of the Sicilian coastline

In June 2020, authorisation was granted for extraordinary clearance works along the coastline and beaches at Maddalusa, near Agrigento.

In just a couple of hours, the caterpillar tractor used by the firm hired by Agrigento City Council destroyed a section of decades-old sand dunes, driving them into the ground and inland.

Although the dunes at Agrigento are of great natural importance, being bird and turtle nesting sites, they are deemed to be a 'minor' dune system and do not form part of the Natura 2000 network.

The demolition of the barrier they provide, which is instrumental in preventing coastal erosion, will result in a retreat of the coastline. Despite the funding to combat coastal erosion and regardless of the Habitats Directive, the regional authorities in Sicily are allowing such destruction to take place along the coast, as was recently also the case with the ITA040003 Natura 2000 site, with the construction of two restaurants in the municipality of Montallegro and near Eraclea Minoa beach.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of this serious situation of the demolition of coastal dunes in Sicily;
2. How it intends to tighten up the protection of dune systems not covered by the Natura 2000 network;
3. Whether it will provide support for design, monitoring and control measures to ensure the protection and renewal of coastal dunes, regardless of whether they are Natura 2000 sites?