

**Question for written answer E-004655/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Radan Kanev (PPE)

Subject: Deterioration of environmental conditions on Lake Varna permitted in violation of Directive 92/43/EEC

Following completion of an ISPA project in 2011, waste water from the Asparuhovo district has been channelled to Varna waste water treatment plant. Owing to the appearance of a fault in the pipeline – which under the project was to run under the floor of Lake Varna – high levels of pollution have been recorded in the lake and in the coastal waters off Varna. This has resulted in the deterioration of environmental conditions at the lake, in violation of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992. The Bulgarian authorities have decided there is no need for an assessment, in line with Article 6(3) of that directive, of any plans, programmes or projects connected with the aforementioned project, including the pipeline along the floor of the lake.

1. Why has financing been permitted without there being any such assessment of potential risks, including of possible leakages, their impact and prevention and management measures, and how is the Commission making sure that Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive is being implemented and that all appropriate steps are being taken to avoid, in special areas of conservation, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species?
2. Are conditions at the site and the species subject to conservation being monitored, and with what results? What emergency action is being planned to remedy the adverse effects of the leakage, and how will the Commission ensure that this is implemented and that similar risks are avoided in the future?