Question for written answer E-001681/2021

to the Commission

Rule 138

Róża Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Bartosz Arłukowicz (PPE), Magdalena Adamowicz (PPE), Leszek Miller (S&D), Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (S&D), Robert Biedroń (S&D), Tomasz Frankowski (PPE), Łukasz Kohut (S&D), Jerzy Buzek (PPE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Michał Wiezik (PPE), Marek Belka (S&D), Jarosław Duda (PPE), Sylwia Spurek (Verts/ALE), Janusz Lewandowski (PPE), Andrzej Halicki (PPE), Krzysztof Hetman (PPE), Janina Ochojska (PPE)

Subject: Resumption of logging activities on the Puszcza Białowiska site

The Białowieża Forest is one of the best preserved natural forests in Europe and the only natural site in Poland included on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

In its ruling of 17 April 2018, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) confirmed that Poland had failed to protect Bialowieża Forest. Consequently, logging activities have been suspended in this Natura 2000 site.

As Poland has still not fully complied with the CJEU ruling, in February 2021 the Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Poland to take all required measures within two months to respect the CJEU verdict.

Notwithstanding the CJEU ruling, as well as the Commission’s formal notice, the Polish Government has planned to resume logging activities in two of the three forest districts of the Puszcza Białowiska site.

In this context:

1. Is it true that the Commission, as claimed by Lasy Państwowe, did not object to the new quotas set by the Polish Government in two of the three forest districts of the Puszcza Białowiska site? If so, how can the Commission justify this in the light of its prior actions and the aims of the Biodiversity and Forest Strategies?

2. What concrete actions is the Commission planning to take to prevent this environmental destruction as soon as possible?