

**Question for written answer E-004044/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

José Gusmão (The Left), **Marisa Matias** (The Left)

Subject: Protecting Alagoas Brancas – important wetlands

The Alagoas Brancas wetlands in Lagoa are unprotected and at risk. A number of water courses branch off around Alagoas Brancas, and the person who came up with the land-use plan for the municipality of Lagoa was able to identify Alagoas as a floodplain. Yet, oddly, they were designated an economic activity expansion area and earmarked for development. The Left Bloc takes the view that Alagoas Brancas should be protected and conserved by giving them the status of wetland of municipal interest and should not be left to fall prey to real-estate interests. Wetlands are key to preserving biodiversity, to regulating the water cycle and the climate, to preventing extreme weather events such as floods, to protecting coasts, and as a source of food for people. We cannot talk about wanting to tackle climate change and at the same time allow areas of this kind to be destroyed. Usually the Commission refuses to intervene and passes the buck to governments, which in turn pass the buck to municipalities, which are very often where the problem began in the first place. Is the Commission willing to recommend to the Portuguese Government and municipal executives that they protect areas that are important to biodiversity by putting environmental interests before economic interests?