

**Question for written answer E-001997/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurélia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: 'Protected species' exemptions for renewable energy projects

As part of its REPowerEU plan, the Commission issued a recommendation on speeding up renewable energy projects. The overriding public interest granted to these projects by the Commission could make it easier to obtain 'protected species' exemptions.

Yet the 'protected species' classification is hard to get and subject to binding rules. As a result of these exemptions, we could therefore see installations such as wind farms and solar parks being built in areas inhabited by species at risk of extinction, and completely legally so.

The Commission recommendation also recalls the French Constitutional Council's decision of 13 May 2022, which stated that developing renewable energy sources was 'of public interest'.

1. What conditions do Member States have to fulfil in order to obtain such an exemption?
2. Does the Commission consider it more important to develop renewable energy sources than to protect the environment and our ecosystems?
3. Has the Commission taken account of recommendations made by associations and NGOs, which are broadly opposed to this approach? If so, can it specify which ones?