

**Question for oral answer O-000017/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 136

Bert-Jan Ruissen, Robert Roos

on behalf of the ECR Group

Subject: Unjustified interference by the Commission in the chosen nature policy of a Member State

On 21 March 2023, Commissioner Sinkevičius sent a letter to the Netherlands about nitrogen emissions in relation to Natura 2000. In the Netherlands, this letter is generally considered to be an inappropriate reaction to the recent electoral outcome and an unjustified interference in national affairs. The demands made in this letter are unfeasible (among others, the demand that for each Natura 2000 site, the critical deposition value is no longer exceeded). In addition, it is remarkable that the Commission mentions a 2030 deadline, though this deadline is not mentioned in the Habitats Directive. Finally, it is strange that the Commission requires the Netherlands to respect the Farm to Fork target of reducing nutrient losses by 50 %, even though this target is not legally binding.

1. Is the Commission aware of the fact that it is making unjustified and unfeasibly stringent demands in its letter to the Netherlands, as well as mentioning deadlines and targets that do not have any legal status at European level?
2. If so, is the Commission willing to recall the letter in question?
3. Is the Commission willing to consult the Dutch authorities in order to reach a compromise that acknowledges the results of the regional elections of 15 March 2023?

Submitted: 11.4.2023

Lapses: 12.7.2023