

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2860/99
by Rolf Linkohr (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Rheinfelden power station - support for large hydroelectric plants

The Rheinfelden Rhine power station plans to expand its hydroelectric power output from 25.7 to 116 megawatts. This extension is to replace the old power station dating from 1898, which is in need of renovation. The changeover must begin by the middle of 2003, otherwise the concession granting the right to use the water will expire and with it the authorisation to produce power on this site.

Large hydroelectric power stations are not at present covered by either German or European schemes to support renewable forms of energy. The extension to the Rheinfelden hydroelectric plant which is needed would be impossible in the current situation. If for economic reasons large hydroelectric power stations such as Rheinfelden can no longer be built, the EU will have even greater problems fulfilling its Kyoto commitments to reduce CO₂.

1. Is the Commission aware of the Rheinfelden case? Are there similar cases in other countries?
2. What is the Commission's view of this case?
3. Does the Commission see any possibility that this case may be covered by the planned directive on support for electricity from renewable energy sources in the internal electricity market?