

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2947/03
by Peter Liese (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Trupbach industrial estate

On 24 April 2003, the Commission delivered its opinion on the plan for an industrial estate on the former military training area of Trupbach in Siegerland. The Commission rejected the plan while, on the same day, three other projects on FFH sites (Rotterdam port, a mine at Bottrop, a railway line in Sweden) were given the go-ahead on grounds of overriding public interest. The Commission justifies its rejection of the plan, in particular, on the grounds that it was not adequately shown that there were no alternatives to the proposal and that the competent authorities (the Land of Nordrhein-Westfalen) did not propose any compensatory measures.

Is it correct that the opinion on the Trupbach industrial estate is the only negative opinion delivered by the Commission on a project planned within an FFH site? Is it correct that decisive reasons for the negative opinion were that no compensatory measures were proposed and that it was not adequately shown why there were no alternatives to this project? Was this a case of failure to apply the FFH Directive properly? Can the Commission confirm that an application which put forward better reasons why there are no alternatives available and which proposed compensatory measures would possibly hold out the prospect of a positive opinion from the Commission?