

**Priority question for written answer P-001713/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: The Commission's failure to appoint a representative to coordinate the EU's protection of wildlife

A key position for the implementation of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations remains vacant, jeopardising the Union's record and leadership in the protection of wildlife.

Since the end of 2020, the position of Chair of the Scientific Review Group (SRG)¹ – incumbent upon a Commission representative – has been vacant.

As a direct consequence, the most recent meeting of the SRG, originally scheduled for March 2021 was cancelled, as was one of the two annual meetings of the Enforcement Group established by the same regulation.

The work of these groups is essential to the definition and implementation of the EU wildlife protection measures, as well as to the EU's contribution to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

While the protection of wildlife and biodiversity is a stated priority for the current Commission, as exemplified by the recent Biodiversity Strategy 2030², and in the run-up to the 2022 CITES Conference of the Parties, can the Commission explain:

1. Why this position has been allowed to remain vacant?
2. What the Commission is doing to fill this position at the earliest possible opportunity?
3. What steps the Commission is taking to ensure that the SRG meetings continue in the meantime?

¹ Established by the Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein, OJ L 61, 3.3.1997, p. 1.

² EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives (COM(2020)0380).