

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

1982-1983

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DOCUMENT 1-1339/82

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr DE PASQUALE and Mr CERAVOLO

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on protection of the natural habitat of the ponds  
of Vendicari (Syracuse)

PE 83.470

The European Parliament,

- A. having learned that a group of private entrepreneurs intends to construct a vast tourist complex with accommodation for no less than 5000 in the Vendicari nature reserve in the province of Syracuse,
- B. whereas the ponds of Vendicari, covering an area of some 1200 hectares, are the most extensive and best preserved feature of the coastal salt-water marshes that characterize the south-eastern tip of Sicily (Capo Passero area),
- C. whereas their natural environment is regarded by prominent scholars as the most interesting natural and ecological wetlands of Sicily in general and has been proposed as a wetland of international importance to the International Waterfowl for Research Bureaux under the Ramsar Convention Directives,
- D. whereas the Vendicari ponds are the ideal refuge for some 180 species of migrant birds, some of them extremely rare, and are a unique animal habitat of extreme importance to the ecological equilibrium,
- E. whereas the above tourist complex (which will involve the influx of thousands of people, the construction of hotel complexes, the creation of artificial dunes and a zoo for the species of birds driven out) will radically change the concept of a nature reserve,
- F. whereas a plan to make the ponds of Vendicari a reserve drawn up by the Sicilian Forestry Commission (Azienda Foreste Demaniali) has been submitted for approval to the Regional Councillor for Regional Development and the Environment and has obtained the support of numerous ecological organizations such as the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) and the LIPU (Italian League for the Protection of Birds),
- G. whereas the Community's third environmental action programme, submitted by the Commission to the Council on 4 November 1981, regards the conservation of habitats as a central problem and deems joint measures to coordinate national and local initiatives to be essential,

- H. whereas the proposal for a Council directive of 11 June 1980 on the assessment of the environmental effect of certain public and private projects, now at an advanced stage of discussion in the Council, is aimed at safeguarding the environmental assets of the European Community,
- I. whereas Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, requires the Member States to protect wetlands, particularly those of international importance, create land and sea protection areas for migrant species and prevent pollution or deterioration of habitats in the protected areas,
1. Calls on the Council immediately to adopt the programme and the directives on the environment proposed by the Commission so that it can proceed with their implementation within a reasonable time;
  2. Calls on the Council to make representations to the Member State and through it to the Sicilian region recommending adoption of the proposal for a nature reserve round the ponds of Vendicari submitted by the Forestry Commission and requesting confirmation that approval for the proposed hotel complex has in the meantime been refused;
  3. Deplores the fact that the Italian Republic has not taken steps to implement Directive 79/409/EEC of April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds after so many years, although it was required to do so within two years;
  4. Calls on the Commission to take action immediately under existing directives and recommendations to guarantee maximum protection of the environment and territory of the Community and to implement the programme guidelines laid down in the proposal of 4 November 1981;
  5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the national and regional authorities concerned.