

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1976 - 1977

5 October 1976

DOCUMENT 329/76

ORAL QUESTION (0-58/76)

with debate pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure by Mr JAHN, Mr ARTZINGER, Mr BURGBACHER, Mr van der GUN, Mr KLEPSCH, Mr SPRINGORUM and Mr VANDEWIELE

on behalf of the Christian-Democratic Group as well as of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection to the Commission of the European Communities

Subject : Proposal for a directive from the Commission on bird protection

On 9 February 1976 Vice-President Scarascia-Mugnozza replying in plenary sitting to my oral question tabled on behalf of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment on binding Community regulations on bird protection, stated¹;

'As in all proposals concerning the environment, the Commission has borne in mind the views of the European Parliament, and particularly those formulated in the resolution on Petition No. 8/74 of 21 February 1975 and in the extensive debate in which many Members took part.

¹O.J., Annex, No. 199, February 1976, p.15

These are the guidelines which the draft directive is to follow: First, a general system for the protection of wild birds is to be established, comprising the prohibition of killing and trapping and of trade in birds, both dead and live. This system would provide for certain exceptions in respect of certain species (for instance, game birds) and certain special situations (for instance, when the population of a particular species grows to a dangerous size).'

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza then added that 'the Commission's intentions, some of which have already found expression in practical measures, ... will be embodied in the proposals we shall be submitting at an early date to the European Parliament'.

In point 19 of its resolution of 8 July 1976 on the continuation and implementation of a European Community policy and Action Programme on the environment¹, the European Parliament 'expects the Commission to take full account of the demands made by the European Parliament in its proposal for a Directive on the harmonization of legislation in Member States on the protection of birds which it announced a long time ago but which has still not been submitted'.

In view of the fact that the European Parliament has still not received the long-awaited Commission proposal and that it has, on the other hand, received numerous protests, together with documentation, from bird protection organizations against the totally inadequate provisions apparently laid down by the Commission in its draft, the following questions are asked:

1. Why, contrary to the views of the European Parliament, has the list of birds which may be hunted contained in the Commission's draft directive been extended to include starlings, blackbirds, chaffinches, wood larks, skylarks, crested larks, tawny pipits, meadow pipits, tree pipits, fieldfares and redwings, thus increasing the number of species which may be hunted from 50 to 61?
2. Is the Commission aware that the species which have been added to the list of birds that may be hunted are precisely those most likely to be hunted and killed in Italy and that the adoption of the Commission's proposal would entail the risk of complete extinction of some of the species concerned?
3. Is it true that the species added to the list are those for whose preservation the Italian bird protection organizations, supported by other European organizations, have always fought and that - as shown in the Italian hunting calendar for 1975/76 - some of these species are at present protected in Italy, so that the adoption of the current Commission proposal would considerably exacerbate what is already a precarious situation in the bird protection field?

¹ O.J. No. C 178, 2 August 1976, p.47

4. Why, during its preparatory hearings of experts, did the Commission consult representatives of the hunting associations, while failing to consult the representative Community bird protection organizations?
5. Is the Commission prepared, in these circumstances, to revise its proposal for a directive and, in its definitive proposal, to take full account of the above observations?
6. Is the Commission aware of the urgency of Community regulations in this field and when does it intend to submit its definitive proposal on the protection of migratory birds and song birds to the Council and European Parliament?

