

## EDITORIAL

### EU Common Agricultural Policy: Will the Mid Term Review deliver for birds?

In the early hours of the morning of 26<sup>th</sup> June, the EU Ministers for Agriculture reached agreement on the Mid-term review of the Common Agricultural Policy. The CAP reform conclusions are a watered down version of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) plans first tabled by Commissioner Fischler in July 2002. In order to get agreement across the 15 Member States, the proposals have become so flexible as to allow some Member States to radically alter the way they manage farming whilst others can, almost, retain the status quo. The potential impact of the reforms will become clearer when Member States announce which combination of options they will implement.

The concept of full decoupling (which BirdLife supports) and the transfer of all funds from production-linked subsidies to a Single Farm Payment remains the most radical element of reform of the MTR package. However, it is no longer compulsory for any of the commodity regimes and Member States can delay implementation till 1<sup>st</sup> Janu-

ary 2007. It's not difficult to be sceptical about how much such a measure will work in practice. Experience has shown that unless a measure is obligatory, many Member States tend to ignore efforts to integrate environmental concerns into other policies.

Nevertheless, the EU farm reform deal is a first small step in the right direction and does include some positive elements for the environment and nature. Compulsory modulation is to be introduced a year earlier than originally proposed, although at a lower rate (rising to only 5%), whilst farmers receiving less than Euro 5,000 p.a. are exempt. There are also increased co-financing rates. All modulation money is to be spent on Rural Development, which is a very welcome alteration to the original proposals that intended to use the money to fund future market reforms. BirdLife will be working to ensure sufficient funding is secured for agri-environment schemes.

Cross compliance conditions will be introduced on all direct payments, and farmers will be obliged to meet 18 existing EU directives, including the Birds and

Habitats Directives, and a requirement to keep land in good agricultural and environmental condition. This is primarily targeted at preventing abandonment – important in farming areas of high natural value such as in Portugal and Spain – and could be developed to cover other environmental objectives.

But problems still exist and leave our European BirdLife Partners with a huge task at a national level, to promote full decoupling that is linked to strong cross-compliance and a much increased budget for rural development. This will be a key priority for BirdLife's Agriculture Campaign. Reform of the Rural Development Regulation is a priority for the next 12-18 months, along with Accession issues and WTO. In the longer term, there will be further reforms of the CAP, and raising awareness about unsustainable farming practices is key for bringing about the political change still needed.

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### Special points of interest:

- Italian Presidency: Priorities for BirdLife
- CAP Campaign
- Marine Transport: new staff person



## European Convention

The Convention for the future of Europe finished its work in May 2003. The Convention presented the final draft of the Constitutional Treaty in the end of May, in time for the Thessaloniki Summit on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and his team presented a draft in which two of the key demands of the NGOs had been reinstated, thereby representing a small victory for the NGOs. These key demands included the correct definition of sustainable development and the article on integration (current Article 6, in Amsterdam Treaty). The definition of sustainable development in the draft Constitutional Treaty now reads "*The Union shall work for a Europe of sustainable development based on balanced economic growth, a social market economy, highly competitive and aiming at full employment and social progress, and with a high level of protection and improvement*

*of the quality of the environment*", while the article requiring that environmental requirements are integrated in all EU policies applies to the whole of the policy section (current Part III).

The third strongest demand of the NGOs, which was also of interest to BirdLife, was the amendment of the outdated policy chapters in order to make them coherent with the overarching principles of sustainable development and integration. In the Thessaloniki Summit, the Convention was given an extension for its work up to 15<sup>th</sup> July, in order to complete some purely technical drafting of Part III, but it is doubtful whether this will be enough to allow substantial redrafting of the policy chapters.

Looking back at the work of the Convention, it is rather depressing to think that NGOs between them 'lost' about the equivalent

of one person's full time for a year, in order to restate in the draft Constitution what is already there in the Amsterdam Treaty. Very few new things have been included in the Constitutional Treaty for the environment, but we had to fight very hard to keep what was already there.

Now we have another challenge ahead of us, as the Convention hands over to the Intergovernmental Conference, which hopefully will not start by removing the environmental provisions, like the Convention did in February....

ECO wishes to thank Sacha Cleminson for his significant contribution throughout the months of the work on the Convention for the future of Europe.

For more information:  
C l a i r i e .  
Papazoglou@birdlifeeco.net



Arctic Tern - © Jouni Ruuskanen/BirdLife

## BirdLife's priorities during the Italian Presidency

ECO with help from the RSPB and LIPU issued in the end of June the BirdLife presidency document called 'Greening Europe', outlining BirdLife's priorities for the Italian Presidency. The document was sent to all Partners in the end of June in order to be distributed to national decision makers. ECO also distributed the electronic version.

The document outlines the Common Agriculture Policy, the Financing of Natura 2000, the European Constitution and the review of the Structural Funds as BirdLife's major priorities. Amongst other priorities are the adoption of the BirdLife indicator for Biodiversity for the Spring Report of the Commission, the Directive on Environ-

mental Liability, the Spanish Hydrological Plan, the revisions of the TENS guidelines.

ECO wishes to thank especially Sacha Cleminson for all his help in the preparation of this document.

If you need more copies, please contact: Eleonora. Cavalera@birdlifeeco.net



Puffin - © Andy Hay / RSPB images



## Hunting: Opinion of General Advocate and Hunting Guide

On the 6<sup>th</sup> May, General Advocate Jarabo Colomer issued his opinion on the French reference to Court case on the use of Article 9 for allowing hunting beyond the hunting period allowed under Article 7.4 of the Birds Directive. As explained in the previous issue, this is a case started by the LPO/BirdLife France in 2001, and it is because of that case that LPO was able to plead before the European Court of Justice in April. The Opinion of the General Advocate is the second step in the judicial proceedings after the hearing in April, and it is not binding. The advocate proposes a judgment to the Court. The judgment of the Court is expected in September. The General Advocate took a strict line of interpretation for the two questions asked by the French Court and proposed that the answer to the question “Does Article 9 (1)(c) of Council Directive

79/409 of 2 April 1979(1) permit a Member State to derogate from the opening and closing dates for hunting set in the light of the objectives specified in Article 7(4) thereof”, should be No. He dismissed the second question. The LPO when they pled before the Court in April had also proposed that the answer to this question should be No. BirdLife is watching very carefully this case, as the judgment will have numerous implications, whichever way it goes. Meanwhile, because of this case the Commission has issued only a restricted version of the Hunting Guide “Interpretative guide for Articles 5-7 of the Birds Directive’. In earlier issues we had announced that the guide was almost ready, but now because of the way the French case seems to be going the Commission has withheld the part of the Guide dealing with Article 9, until after the judgment of the Court.

The Court judgment is final and overrides any guidance by the Commission, and as there is risk of disagreement between what the guide says and what the Court will say, the Commission has chosen to wait for the Court. Very wise in our opinion.

The restricted version of the Guide is available in English, French and German on:

[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/sustainable\\_hunting.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/sustainable_hunting.htm)

For more information: C l a i r i e . Papazoglou@birdlifeeco.net



Lesser Kestrel - ©C.Oguztuzun

## BirdLife CAP campaign website launched

The BirdLife CAP campaign website was launched in June. The new website includes many BirdLife position papers and views on agriculture and rural development, reports on farmland bird declines, puts environmentally friendly agriculture case-studies from different EU Partners in the

spotlight, details press releases, includes a very useful glossary, a photo gallery, facts sheets and different interesting and useful links.

The campaign website offers the opportunity to every BirdLife Partner working on agriculture to promote best practice case studies and

national/local work with farmers or other stakeholders. So make sure you use it! The website address is: [www.birdlifecapcampaign.org](http://www.birdlifecapcampaign.org)



## European Council

The European Council met in Thessaloniki on 19 and 20 June 2003.

The European Council welcomed the Draft constitutional Treaty presented by the President of the Convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The European Council decided that the text was a good basis for starting in the Intergovernmental Conference. The Italian Presidency will have to initiate the procedure laid down in Article 48 of the Treaty, in its Council meeting in July, to allow this Conference to be convened in October 2003.

The Conference should complete the Convention's

work and agree the Constitutional Treaty as soon as possible and in time for it to become known to European citizens before the June 2004 elections for the European Parliament. The acceding States will participate fully to the Conference. The Member States of the enlarged Union will sign the Constitutional Treaty as soon as possible after 1 May 2004. The European Council also continued the ratification process of the Accession Treaty and with the results of referendums in Malta, Slovenia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic, it lend additional momentum to

the process that must be completed in time for the ten new Member States to join the Union on 1 May 2004.



Robin - ©Chris Gomersall/RSPB images

## Environmental Liability

Following the European Parliament's First Reading of the Environmental Liability Directive on 14 May, Ministers reached a political agreement at the meeting of the Environment Council in Luxembourg on 13 June.

In addition to the many representations made by BirdLife Partners at national level, BirdLife and other NGOs participated in a meeting with Environment Ministers on the eve of the Council organised by the Presidency.

Despite considerable NGO activity in the run-up to the Council and the efforts of the Greek Presidency to broker an effec-

tive deal, BirdLife was disappointed with the final text agreed by Ministers. While the overall agreement is slightly better than the original Commission proposal in several areas, it fails to introduce a robust 'polluter pays' regime. In particular, Member States can allow polluters to escape all environmental clean-up costs on the basis of 'compliance with a permit' or operation according to 'state-of-the-art' technology and knowledge. A financial security requirement for high-risk companies will only be considered at the review, five years after the entry into force of the Directive. There is no obligation on

national authorities to clean up the environment where the polluter cannot be found or cannot pay.

The Directive is likely to return to the European Parliament for a Second Reading in the autumn. We hope that many of the Parliament's First Reading amendments will be re-tabled and adopted by MEPs, in order to bring forward vital improvements to the Council's text.

For more information, please contact: Vikki Phillips at victoria.phillips@rspb.org.uk



## Indicators for Biodiversity

BirdLife was invited to a meeting, organised by the EEB, with Commissioner Wallström in May in Brussels. The meeting's purpose was to promote structural (Headline) indicators for four areas as part of the environmental indicators to be included in the Commission's Spring Report, which gets adopted by the Heads of State in the spring Summit. The next spring Summit will be under the Irish presidency. BirdLife was invited to speak about Biodiversity indicators. In 2003, there

was a biodiversity Headline indicator included in the Spring report but in our opinion it was not an appropriate one. At the meeting BirdLife was represented by Norbert Schaffer/ RSPB and Claire Papazoglou. BirdLife promoted the Pan-European index for common birds as the more appropriate indicator to be included in next year's spring report. We gave all the arguments for why birds are good indicators of the state of the environment and other biodiversity. The Commissioner for the

Environment, Mrs Wallström, enthusiastically approved of our proposal in the meeting. Now BirdLife, has to follow up actions, in order to ensure that the index which is due to be produced for the first time in the autumn, is incorporated in the Commission's report and is discussed by the Heads of State in the Spring Summit in Ireland. This will represent a major victory for BirdLife, but until then more work is needed.

For more information: Claire.Papazoglou@birdlifeeco.net



Skylark - © Chris Gomersall/RSPB images

## Marine Transport Policy: new staff person

ECO welcomed in June a new staff person in its Brussels office.

Toni Garcia, with support from LPO/BirdLife France, will work for ECO for the next two months until mid-August.

He will research at which stage the two Erika pack-

ages are in the European Parliament and the Council and he will compile a comprehensive information dossier concerning the latest developments in the area of Maritime Transport. He will also research the positions of other NGOs and other stake-

holders. Finally, he will give directions in order to help BirdLife set up its own position on this complex policy issue.

For more information, please contact Toni Garcia at visitor@birdlifeeco.net

## NewsFlashes

### Call for Proposals

#### OJC104 - 30/04/03

Notice of call for proposals with a view of obtaining grants for the organisation of conferences in the field of energy & transport—DGTREN/SUB/02-2003.

#### OJC115 - 15/05/03

Call for proposal for innovative actions to enhance the role played by women in the fisheries sector 2003;

#### OJC115 - 15/05/03

Call for proposal concerning transnational projects for innovative actions in the fisheries sector.

#### Flash - 28/05/03

German Greens bid to slash "harmful subsidies",

### Agriculture

#### AE 84 - 03/05/03

EU divided over duration of mandate of high level group on reform of Common Agricultural Policy

#### AE 85 - 03/05/03

Agri/Enlargement: next round of enlargement will require a new turn on CAP.

#### OJL112 - 06/05/03

Commission regulation of 5/05/03 on community support for pre-accession measures for agriculture and rural development in the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the pre-accession period.

#### AE 88 - 09/05/03

Fifteen to discuss quality-assured products and CAP reform at informal meeting in Corfu.

#### OJL116 - 13/05/03

Commission regulation laying down detailed rules for the application of the agri-monetary system for the euro in agriculture.

#### AE 89 - 13/05/03

Mr Fischler predicts agreement on CAP in June, but still hopes not to give ground on broad proposal outlines.

#### EIS 15 - 16/05/03

Campaign groups urge radical reform of CAP.

#### AE 92 - 16/05/03

Commission to recover 169 million Euros of aid misspent by Member States.

#### AE 93 - 16/05/03

Ministers and Commission prepare to defend high quality agriculture at WTO

#### AE 94 - 16/05/03

*Newsflashes will, as previously, be listed by theme. But they will be labelled as follows:*

*Newsflashes from Official Journals will be preceded by mention OJ + C or L nr + date + title.*

*Newsflashes from Agence Europe will be preceded by AE + date + title*

*Newsflashes from other sources will mention source + date + title.*



## NewsFlashes (cont.)

Denmark and UK question effectiveness of CAP publicity campaigns.

### **AE 96 - 20/05/03**

High-level group on CAP reform identifies thematic fields to work on at political and technical level.

### **AE 97 - 20/05/03**

Intense negotiations at agriculture committee on finding CAP compromise.

### **AE 98 - 23/05/03**

Parliamentary committee on agriculture nails colours to council mast in CAP reform negotiations, by recommending partial decoupling and rejecting sectorial modifications proposed.

### **AE 99 - 24/05/03**

On Thursday, high-level group on CAP reform fails to achieve significant progress over issues.

### **AE 100 - 24/05/03**

On Monday and Tuesday EU 15 will discuss CAP reform, GMO and social consequences of Cod crisis.

### **AE 101 - 28/05/03**

Political conditions are present to reach agreement in June over CAP reform, even if EU 15 remain divided and confused over compromise options.

### **AE 102 - 05/06/03**

MEPs ask Commissioner Fischler to modify CAP reform proposals - Mr Fischler subscribes to MEP's objectives, but expresses doubts as to solutions proposed.

### **AE 109 - 07/06/03**

Parliament confirms opposition to total decoupling of aid and sectorial measures proposed under reform.

### **Flash - 10/06/03**

EU ministers hold crunch Cap reform talks

### **AE 110 - 11/06/03**

Commission authorises Fischler to amend proposals with view to Council agreement on CAP reform.

### **AE 114 - 12/06/03**

Presidency submits council to first "cautious" compromise on CAP reform.

### **EIS 20 - 13/06/03**

NGOs will take what they can from CAP reform deal

### **AE 115 - 13/06/03**

Next Presidency compromise on CAP reform should be based on Franco-German suggestions leading to agreement.

### **AE 116 - 14/06/03**

Negotiations over reform of CAP to start up again on 17 June - Commission and Presidency working on a more realistic compromise.

### **AE 117 - 18/06/03**

At time of CAP reform, court of auditors dresses up balance sheet of rural development that is far from flattering.

### **AE 118 - 19/06/03**

Several Member States express reserve about new compromise on CAP reform - first night negotiating session.

### **AE 119 - 20/06/03**

Negotiations on CAP reform continue Thursday evening in dramatised context.

### **AE 124 - 21/06/03**

Negotiations on CAP reform, complicated by opening of European Council on Thursday evening, to continue next Wednesday.

### **AE 125 - 25/06/03**

Negotiations on CAP reform resume on Wednesday afternoon in atmosphere more conducive to agreement.

### **AE 126 - 26/06/03**

"All cards on table" for CAP negotiations.

### **Flash - 26/06/03**

EU farm subsidy reform plan agreed,

### **EIS 21 - 27/06/03**

Farm Ministers strike deal to shake up aid system.

### **AE 127 - 28/06/03**

Farming organisations highly critical of CAP reform decisions - NGO disappointed.

## Enlargement

### **AE 82 - 01/05/03**

Presidents of candidate country Parliaments discuss final preparations for accession and reform of EU with EP and Commission

### **AE 87 - 10/05/03**

162 Accession country "observers" to take part in their first plenary session next week - details on their status/

### **AE 90 - 14/05/03**

Commission looks at strengthening relations with Balkans - relations with future neighbours of enlarged EU.

### **AE 121 - 14/06/03**

In this weekend referendum Czechs expected to vote in favour of joining EU.

### **AE 122 - 17/06/03**

Czechs overwhelmingly in favour of EU membership - Verheugen says Czech Republic's accession will be to the advantage of the EU as a whole.

### **AE 123 - 18/06/03**

Thessaloniki summit is expected to support conclusion of negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania in

2004 - Detaching negotiations of talks on financial perspectives.

## Marine Transport & Oil Spills

### **EIS 11 - 01/05/03**

Waste Hydrocarbons: incineration of waste from Prestige oil tanker.

### **EIS 12 - 01/05/03**

Three - Year Cooperation plan floated.

### **EIS 16 - 16/05/03**

Outcry at IOPCF decision of 15 % compensation

### **EIS 17 - 16/05/03**

Oil slicks off the French Riviera.

### **AE 103 - 29/05/03**

Entry into force of two directives for improved safety

### **AE 105 - 05/06/03**

Parliament wants single-hulled oil tankers phased out more quickly.

### **AE 120 - 18/06/03**

Environment committee calls for committee of inquiry into Prestige disaster.

## Transport

### **AE 86 - 09/05/03**

Tighter maritime security in the EU

### **AE 95 - 17/05/03**

Euro 900 million for compensating victims of oil pollution

## Environment

### **AE 83 - 13/05/03**

Informal Lagonissi Council (2/4 May) to focus on environment in future European constitution and environmental cooperation with Balkans;

### **Flash - 14/05/03**

NGOs press for greener EU convention

### **EIS 14 - 16/05/03**

Greece told to respect the environment in Olympic Games preparations.

### **Flash - 19/05/03**

European marine protection talks heat up

### **AE 104 - 29/05/03**

International Conference on protection of marine ecosystem of Mediterranean and black sea.

### **EIS 18 - 28/05/03**

Brussels hosts third Green Week

### **AE 106 - 22/05/03**

Paris and London warn partners about impact future provisions on environmental liability will have on European competitiveness.

### **AE 107 - 31/05/03**

Change in conduct for sustainable development at heart of Green Week (Brussels, 2-5 June)

### **AE 108 - 03/06/03**

For binding European legislation on coexistence of conventional crops and GMOs.

### **AE 113 - 17/06/03**

Council plans to extend "reduction of pollution by off-road engines" directive to inland navigation boat engines and large locomotives.

### **EIS 22 - 27/06/03**

MEPS back effort to preserve marine environment.

### **AE 129 - 24/06/03**

Member States applying environmental impact assessment directive wrongly.

### **AE 130 - 26/06/03**

WWF Exhorts union to reduce energy consumption by 1% a year if it really wants to save the climate.

### **EIS 24 - 27/06/03**

Water Directive: NGO critical of implementation in Member States.

## Environmental Liability

### **EIS 10 - 01/05/03**

Environmental Liability: Proposal watered down in European Parliament.

### **EIS 13 - 16/05/03**

European Parliament votes for strict regime.

### **AE 91 - 15/05/03**

Parliament supports ambitious environmental liability regime.

### **AE 112 - 17/06/03**

Political agreement on essential elements of future environmental liability regime - EP not sure to pronounce itself at second reading before mandate ends.

### **EIS 19 - 13/06/03**

Environment Council: Environmental liability to dominate June 13 session.

## Conservation

### **OJC101 - 26/04/03**

Judgement of the court : Commission against Rep of Finland. (Protection of wild birds and their habitats).

### **EIS 9 - 01/05/03**

Development projects affecting Natura 2000 sites under the microscope.

### **OJC112 - 10/05/03**

Two Judgements of the Court against the Italian Republic. Failure by a Member State to fulfil its obligations - Special Protection areas, conservation of wild birds and Conservation of natural habitats - Wild fauna & flora.



## European Parliamentary Questions & Answers

*The Questions & Answers are set out as follows:*

*Subject, Question nr., Name & Party asking, date of question, Summary of Question, Commissioner answering, date of answer, Summary of answer.*

*Please contact us for more information on any of these questions & answers.*

### Marine Pollution

Prestige: sensitive sea areas  
E-0724/03 by Rosa Miguélez Ramos (PSE) - 27/02/03

On 21 November 2002, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Prestige disaster off the coast of Galicia. Paragraph 11 reads:

'Calls on the Commission, in agreement with the Member States, to draw up a list of European sea-fishing areas which warrant special protection by virtue of the nature of their marine ecosystems, their fishery, shellfish and aquaculture resources and their high level of dependency on fisheries;'

How does the Commission review this request from Parliament?

What initiatives has it taken or does it intend to take in response?

**Mrs Wallström - 16/04/03**

The Commission has always supported the need to take measures to protect marine sites in order to safeguard them from the possible impact of human activities, and shares Parliament's point of view in this respect.

The reasons for protection are varied, and include those mentioned by the Honourable Member.

At Community level, there are several legislative instruments which already make it possible to provide special protection

for marine sites. Mention should be made of Directives 92/43/EEC, the Habitats Directive, and 79/409/EEC, the Birds Directive, which concern nature protection, and the relevant measures under the Common Fisheries Policy.

In particular, the definition of marine areas that warrant special protection by virtue of the nature of their ecosystems is a responsibility of Member States in accordance with both Nature Directives. A working party has been set up to speed up the implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives in the marine environment. Its main objective is to ensure a common approach to the designation of marine sites and their future management.

As regards the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), some areas requiring special protection by virtue of their fishery resources are already defined and subject to certain specific measures (the so-called "boxes"). Following the reform of the CFP, the Commission committed to review these area restrictions to ensure that they are solely based on scientific criteria of conservation.

### Birds & Habitats Directive

#### Incorrect application of the habitats directive in Zeeland

E-0815/03 by Alexander de Roo (Verts/ALE) - 06/03/03

The province of Zeeland has made out a case for building a container terminal (WCT - Westerschelde Container Terminal) for maritime and inland shipping in the port area of Vlissingen-Oost. In order to build this terminal the promoter Zeeland Seaports needs approximately 20 million m<sup>3</sup> of infill sand, to be extracted from the North Sea. The Ministry of Transport and Public Works has therefore launched

an environmental impact assessment.

On 21 February 2003 the Council of State ruled that the WCT plans were incompatible with certain provisions based on, or contained in, the habitats directive, because in the regional plan review adopted by the Provincial States a 141.72-hectare nature area (with a pilot function in environmental development) would become seaport territory.

It is claimed that the policy decision violates the rules, because the use of agricultural land as natural compensation for the construction of the WCT is not equivalent to compensation in a wet area outside the dike.

The nature area where the projected WCT would be located, which includes the fossil beach "De Kaloot", should be conserved, given that the building of the WCT on this land is incompatible with Article 6 (4) of the habitats directive.

The Council of State has temporarily suspended the implementation of the WCT plans.

Does the Commission agree that, until the procedure is complete, all parallel activities (EIA and application for a licence to extract sand for the WCT) should be suspended?

Does the Commission intend to take steps to prevent this threatened violation of the habitats directive?

Does the Commission intend to look more carefully at the natural compensation measures envisaged, inter alia as regards drylands being used as compensation for wetlands?

**Mrs Wallström - 05/05/03**

The Commission has received two complaints about the construction of the Westerschelde Container Terminal (WCT) near Vlissingen. The complaints question the compatibility of the proposed WCT construction with the Nature

Protection Directives: Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds (Birds Directive) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive).

The Westerschelde has been designated by the Netherlands as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the Birds Directive and has been put forward as a proposed Site of Community Importance (pSCI) under the Habitats Directive.

The Commission is currently investigating the complaints. In this respect, Article 6(3) and 6 (4) of the Habitats Directive seem relevant. According to Article 6(3), a plan or project that is likely to have significant effects on the site must be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site. If there are negative implications for the site, and if the plan or project, in the absence of alternative solutions, must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, appropriate compensatory measures must be taken according to Article 6(4). The Commission will take the necessary steps to see to it that the relevant provisions of both Directives are complied with.

The Commission is further aware of a ruling of the Dutch Council of State (Raad van State) in this context of 21 February 2003. However, the Commission is currently not in a position to comment on the consequences of this ruling on the parallel activities mentioned by the Honourable Member.



**BirdLife International**

European Community Office  
81 A, rue de la Loi  
1040 Brussels  
Belgium

Phone: +32 2 280 08 30  
Fax: + 32 2 230 38 02  
Email: [bleco@birdlifeeco.net](mailto:bleco@birdlifeeco.net)

[www.birdlife.org](http://www.birdlife.org)



## **The Brussels Briefing**

This Brussels Briefing is produced by the staff of ECO. It is intended to give up-to-date information on the activities of BirdLife International and the European Union.

The Newsletter is supported by RSPB, NABU, Vogelbescherming Nederland and the European Commission.

### **Further information on specific topics**

The Briefing is not large enough to contain the text of all the source materials used to compile it. If you would like further information on specific topics reported in the Brussels Briefing, please contact us - details above.