

Procedure file

Basic information	
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2000/2111(INI)
Implementation of directive 92/43/EEC on habitats	Procedure completed
Subject	
3.70.01 Protection of natural resources: fauna, flora, nature, wildlife, countryside; biodiversity	
4.70.04 Urban policy, cities, town and country planning	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	GUE/NGL SJÖSTEDT Jonas	23/02/2000

Key events			
04/05/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
05/12/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
05/12/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0387/2000	
17/01/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0015/2001	Summary
17/01/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		
18/09/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2111(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Implementation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142-p2; Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/5/12712

Documentation gateway					
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0387/2000	05/12/2000	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0015/2001	17/01/2001	EP	Summary

Implementation of directive 92/43/EEC on habitats

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Jonas SJÖSTEDT (EUL/NGL, S) on the implementation of the 1992 Habitats Directive. It was critical of the fact that the Community's nature conservation legislation was not yet fully operational as a result of the failure of Member States to implement the directive, which was now more than 8 years old. The Commission was urged to continue to use the appropriate legal enforcement means within its powers to ensure proper implementation of the directive and to act speedily whenever it detected a breach of the Member States' obligations. Speedier progress was also needed on site designation for the Natura 2000 network of special areas of conservation, including those of the countries applying for accession, and the deadline of June 2004 should be respected. The report urged the Member States to see nature conservation as a policy area, a source of economic potential and a right to be enjoyed by future generations. It stressed that results could be achieved only with the active cooperation of citizens in their roles as landowners and users, and called for improved mechanisms for public participation. The committee also urged the Commission to emphasise the availability of existing financial instruments, such as the structural funds, the ERDF and the EAGGF, to promote biodiversity conservation and the implementation of the Habitats Directive. It suggested that such funds could be used, for example, for providing conservation advice and training for farmers and fishermen and incentives for farmers using environmentally-friendly farm practices and for afforestation of farmland. Other measures proposed by the committee included the drafting of a guide on how to interpret parts of the Habitats Directive, to be translated into the official EU languages and those of the applicant countries, the publication by the Commission of an annual report on the effects of the common agricultural policy on habitats and species throughout the EU and a call for the EIB to prepare and make public environmental impact assessment reports on projects in the applicant countries prior to their approval. ?

Implementation of directive 92/43/EEC on habitats

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mr Jonas SJOSTEDT (EUL/NGL, S) which calls on the Commission to ensure the proper enforcement of the Habitats directive. The aim of the directive is to promote biodiversity by protecting natural habitats. The directive provides for the creation of a network of protected areas called Natura 2000, with each Member State being required to list areas for protection within its territory. Member States have so far listed a total of 384,500 square kilometres. The percentage of each country's total surface area varies from 3.1% (Belgium) to 17.6% (Greece). Parliament points out that the Commission has begun infringement proceedings in six cases against four countries: France (2), Ireland (2), Germany (1) and Greece (1). The resolution underlines the importance of the legally binding timetable laid down in the directive and calls on the Commission to continue using all means within its powers to enforce the directive. Member States are called upon to ensure immediate protection of all proposed Sites of Community Interest from damaging developments. It should be noted that the Parliament welcomes the effort of the Commission to deny access to EU funds to Member States that have not ensured that the requirements of environmental protection are respected in measures supported by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. The resolution stresses that the suspension of payments by the Community is justified only when there are serious indications that the payments in question result in adverse effects on an important habitat. With regard to the applicant countries, the European Investment Bank is called upon to prepare environmental impact assessment reports on projects in these countries prior to their approval and to make these available to the public. ?