

Question to the Commission on trapping of birds in Cyprus

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0914/04

by Caroline Lucas (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Illegal bird-trapping in Cyprus

Each year an estimated 12 million birds are illegally trapped while on migration through Cyprus. The use of such trapping methods as mist nets and lime sticks, which contravenes the Birds Directive, is still widespread.

Given that Cyprus has to fully implement and enforce the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as of 1 May 2004, what action is the Commission taking to curb the practice of illegal bird-trapping and to ensure full implementation and enforcement by the date of accession?

E-0914/04EN

Answer given by Mrs Wallström
on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2004)

The Commission clearly pointed out during the negotiations for accession and the subsequent pre-accession period that certain bird-trapping methods, like those involving the use of mist nets and lime sticks, are incompatible with the provisions of the Birds Directive, Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, as modified by Commission Directive 91/244/EEC of 6 March 1991 . The practice is illegal in Cyprus and the Cypriot authorities have assured the Commission that they would step up efforts for effective enforcement of the law in question.

Cyprus is required to ensure full implementation of the Birds and Habitats, (Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 31 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) Directives from the date of accession to the European Union. From 1 May 2004 onwards the Commission will take appropriate measures to ensure full implementation of these Directives as it would for any other Member State.

In this pre-accession period, Cyprus has now transposed these two Directives and is therefore obliged to implement them under Cyprus national law.