

**Question for written answer E-002803/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)

Subject: Acheloos valley threatened with destruction by the proposed Avlaki hydro-power project, the eighth such project in an already overburdened river

The Avlaki hydroelectric project planned in the Acheloos Valley has been met with strong opposition from local communities and stakeholders concerned about its devastating effects on the natural environment and cultural heritage of the area. The Acheloos valley is a Natura 2000 protected area with considerable ecological importance and special biodiversity. What is more, it has been recognised as being valuable for alternative, rural and religious tourism and local residents are trying to get the valley listed as a UNESCO heritage site.

The project will lead to a major environmental disaster, as the dam will flood almost the entire valley, altering the natural landscape and submerging important cultural monuments, forests, homes and arable land.

Taking into account the European directives on the protection of natural resources and aquatic ecosystems and the opposition voiced by Greece's Natural Environmental and Climate Change Agency and local regions and municipalities, can the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the environmental impact that the project will have on a Natura 2000 protected area?
2. How will it ensure that large renewable energy projects do not harm the environment and cultural heritage in areas of natural and cultural importance?
3. What measures will it take to protect local communities that oppose projects altering the character of their region, leading to migration and desertification due to the loss of agricultural and low-impact alternative tourism activity?

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