

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1270/04
by Sérgio Sousa Pinto (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Building of the Sabor dam

The Portuguese Government is preparing to build a large dam on the river Sabor (for the Lower Sabor hydroelectric scheme), which will affect two sites of Community importance. This dam will destroy unique natural heritage, involving habitats of Community importance classified under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC¹) and bird species under threat, which are protected by the Bird Directive (79/409/EEC²).

Furthermore, the planned dam would provide only a tiny amount of additional energy, equivalent to no more than 0.6% of national consumption; in other words, it could be advantageously replaced by increasing Portuguese energy efficiency, which is the lowest in the EU.

1. What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent the ecological outrage which the Portuguese Government is preparing to perpetrate, in violation of Community environmental legislation?
2. Is the Commission prepared to take part in financing a dam which, in terms of Community environmental legislation, is illegal?

¹ OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

² OJ L 103, 25.4.1979, p. 1.