



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate D - Natural Capital
ENV.D.3 - Nature Protection

Brussels, 18 March 2020
ENV.D.3/JC/FL ARES (2020) 1629610

Dear Madam / Dear Sirs,

Thank you for the letter you addressed on behalf of the Curlew Forum to Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius. The Commissioner asked me to reply.

The European Commission is following the project for the development of the existing military airport in Montijo, Portugal, to convert it into an international airport serving the city of Lisbon.

We are, therefore, aware of the issuing by the Portuguese authorities, in January 2020, of a positive Environmental Impact Statement with conditions, based on the preliminary project for the conversion of the airport and enhancement of the existing road and boat connections with the city of Lisbon.

The Environmental Impact Statement for the project is explicit about the negative impacts identified in the Environmental Impact Study and about the negative opinions received in the public consultation. In particular, the Environmental Impact Statement recognises the importance of the Tagus Estuary as a key area in the Eastern Atlantic Flyway and as a wintering area for up to 200,000 birds. It identifies the impact of the project on the birds wintering in the estuary as being negative, significant, of moderate to high magnitude, permanent and irreversible, and classifies the impact on migratory birds as possibly even stronger. The Statement also identifies negative impacts concerning, for example, noise pollution and groundwater pollution. However, it concludes that those negative impacts can be minimised or compensated.

The Environmental Impact Statement also concludes that the majority of the concerns expressed in the public consultation relate to the impacts which were identified in the Environmental Impact Study. The conditions attached to the positive Environmental Impact Statement are, according to the Portuguese authorities, expected to be sufficient to minimise or compensate the negative impacts of the project.

The Commission services are currently examining the Environmental Impact Statement and Study, including the detailed conditions imposed on the project, in light of the

Curlew Forum
mary@curlewmedia.com
phil.sheldrake@gmail.com
smartmike143@gmail.com

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111
Office: BU-5 06/181 - Tel. direct line +32 229-59328

Joaquim.Capitao@ec.europa.eu

applicable EU legislation, the Birds and Habitats Directives¹ in particular, and will follow up as appropriate. We recall that, according to the Portuguese legislation, the Report on Environmental Conformity of the Final Project (RECAPE) will need to be approved by the environmental authorities before the development permits are issued.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Notaro', is centered on the page.

Nicola Notaro
Head of Unit

¹ Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20 of 26.01.2010. p. 7) and Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206 of 22.7.1992, p. 7).