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E-002682/2025

Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(3.9.2025)

According to Article 355.5.b of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, during the United Kingdom's (UK) membership in the EU, 'the Treaties [did] not apply to the United Kingdom Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia in Cyprus except to the extent necessary to ensure the implementation of the arrangements set out in the Protocol No. 3 on the Sovereign Base Areas of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Cyprus'¹. Such arrangements did not include environmental law.

Following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU, the Protocol relating to the Sovereign Based Areas (SBA) annexed to the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement provides that EU law applies to the SBAs only to the extent necessary to implement the arrangements outlined in the Protocol No. 3. These arrangements primarily involve customs, taxation, duty relief, social security, agriculture, fisheries and veterinary and phytosanitary rules, border control, and administrative cooperation. No environmental provisions are included.

The UK has established an SBA Environmental Department in 2002 in recognition of new and impending environmental legislation to which the Administration of the SBAs has legal and policy responsibilities². In accordance with the UK 1960 Declaration on the Administration of the SBAs, the SBA Administration seeks to replicate as far as possible the legislation of the Republic of Cyprus and this also applies to environmental legislation. The SBA Administration is also a signatory to many International Conventions and with this comes an obligation to demonstrate good environmental Stewardship of the Bases.

¹ Protocol No 3 on the Sovereign Base Areas of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Cyprus annexed to the Act concerning the conditions of accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the European Union is founded, Official Journal L 236, 23/09/2003 P. 0940 – 944.

² SBA Administration website: <https://www.sbaadministration.org/index.php?view=article&id=126>.