

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000733/26  
to the Commission  
Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE)  
(23 February 2026)**

*Subject:* Violation of EU law at the San Gregorio military training ground

The Commission must be aware of the violation of EU law at the San Gregorio military training ground, which belongs to the Spanish Government's Ministry of Defence. Stretching over 33 389 hectares, it is the largest military training ground in the European Union, and a large amount of its surface area is part of the Natura 2000 network, which aims to conserve the EU's biodiversity for the benefit of citizens.

In light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation at the San Gregorio military training ground, which is jeopardising other activities taking place in the metropolitan area of the city of Zaragoza?
2. Is it aware of the overlap between the military training ground and protection schemes (Sites of Community Importance and Special Protection Areas) in the EU's Natura 2000 network?
3. What steps should the Spanish Government take to respect such a valuable and vulnerable area in terms of the environment and society?

Submitted: 23.2.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission  
(6 May 2026)**

The Commission is not informed about any situation in relation to the San Gregorio military training ground that could jeopardise other activities taking place near the city of Zaragoza.

The San Gregorio military training ground indeed overlaps with two sites in the Natura 2000 network, namely the special area of conservation 'El Castellar' (ES2430080), designated under the provisions of the Habitats Directive <sup>(1)</sup>, and the special protection area 'Montes de Zuera, Castejón de Valdejasa y El Castellar' (ES0000293), designated under the provisions of the Birds Directive <sup>(2)</sup>.

The overlap of military grounds and Natura 2000 sites is not prohibited by EU law. There are numerous examples across Europe of Natura 2000 sites in military areas that sustain valuable biodiversity and several LIFE projects under the EU programme for the environment and climate action <sup>(3)</sup> have supported this over the years <sup>(4)</sup>.

In the case of the San Gregorio training ground, it is the responsibility of the competent national or, if applicable, regional authorities, to determine the compatibility between the military activities and the conservation objectives of these sites.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7-50.

<sup>(2)</sup> Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010, p. 7-25.

<sup>(3)</sup> LIFE : [https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en).

<sup>(4)</sup> For instance LIFE NATURARMY (FR) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE18-GIE-FR-001029/to-promote-and-strengthen-the-army-as-a-natura-2000-site-manager-in-france-and-in-europe>; LIFE21-GIE-PL-INF-ARMY (PL) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE21-GIE-PL-INF-ARMY-101074108/supporting-users-of-military-areas-in-the-management-of-natura-2000-sites>; MILITAIRE GEBIEDEN (BE) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE03-NAT-B-000024/integrated-restoration-of-natural-habitats-on-military-areas-in-natura-2000>; VATTAJAN DYYNI LIFE (FI) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE05-NAT-FIN-000104/restoration-of-dune-and-coastal-habitats-in-the-vattaja-military-area>; ZAHORIE SANDS (SK) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE06-NAT-SK-000115/restoration-and-management-of-sand-dunes-habitats-in-zahorie-military-training-area>; HUNGARIAN LITTLE PLAIN (HU) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE08-NAT-H-000289/restoration-and-conservation-of-priority-listed-pannonic-sand-land-habitats-in-military-owned-area-of-the-hungarian-little-plain>.