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P-001613/2024

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(30.9.2024)

1. In order to comply with the judgment of the Court of Justice of the EU in Case C-661/20, Slovakia must provide for appropriate assessment of inter alia sanitary logging to comply with Article 6(3) Habitats Directive¹. It also must prevent forest management activities from deteriorating Capercaillie habitats and disturbing the species and adopt conservation measures for seven Natura 2000 bird sites designated for the Capercaillie. Slovakia informed the Commission about the measures taken, e.g. zonation of national parks Muránska Planina and Veľká Fatra and designation of Pralesy and Stolica nature areas, thus improving protection of Capercaillie habitats, and about the adoption of conservation measures for the Volovské vrchy site. Slovakia also informed about the envisaged measures, e.g. zonation of national parks Nízke Tatry, Vysoké Tatry and Malá Fatra and adoption of management plans for them. However, the Slovak legislation has not yet introduced sufficient legislation submitting sanitary logging to appropriate assessment. Slovakia has thus not yet taken all necessary measures to comply with the ruling.

2. If Slovakia does not make substantive progress to comply with the Court's judgment, the Commission may initiate the infringement procedure under Article 260(2)² of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and subsequently, refer Slovakia to Court of Justice of the EU for the second time while proposing financial penalties.

¹ 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.

² [https://ec.europa.eu/atwork/applying-eu-law/infringements-proceedings/infringement_decisions/?langCode=EN&version=v1&typeOfSearch=byCase&page=1&size=10&order=desc&sortColumns=refId&refId=INFR\(2018\)4076](https://ec.europa.eu/atwork/applying-eu-law/infringements-proceedings/infringement_decisions/?langCode=EN&version=v1&typeOfSearch=byCase&page=1&size=10&order=desc&sortColumns=refId&refId=INFR(2018)4076)