

Warsaw, 14th June, 2018

Prof. Dr. Jan Szyszko, Ph.D.
Member of Parliament
of the Republic of Poland

(currently translation)

Mr. Karmenu Vella
European Commissioner for Environment,
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
AN OPEN LETTER

Dear Mr. Commissioner,

As I promised on 30 May 2018, I would like to cordially thank you for your nice letter of 15 May 2018 which I received on 29 May 2018 in reply to my open letter which I sent to you on 9 March 2018 (Attachment 1). Thank you for admitting in your letter that the case of the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska site which I highlighted in my open letter had been known to the Commission before it brought its action. I also agree with your statement that the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union fully upheld the action brought by the Commission. I also agree with your remark that in accordance with Article 260(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union Poland is obliged to take the necessary measures to fully comply with the judgment. I would like to assure you not only that Poland will comply, but also that it has long ago fully done what the Commission began to have doubts about in 2017 and what is included in both the complaint and the judgment of the Court of 14 April 2018. This has happened because since 2016 an annual nature inventory of the whole of the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska site has been carried out. On the one hand, it will allow us to have a full assessment of the remedial measures applied by Poland in 2017 on the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska Natura 2000 site and, on the other hand, to accurately determine nature losses in habitats and species and to indicate those who are responsible for these losses. The dialogue to which I have cordially invited you (Attachment 2), which would be carried out on the basis of specific data, would be an opportunity for

making sure that such an incident as the one that has taken place in the case of the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska site never happens again, as this would be very good for the full implementation of the Natura 2000 network in a uniting Europe.

For this reason, too, I receive with large concern the information reaching me that allegedly the European Commission exerts pressure requesting the cessation of the launched remedial measures (annex from 2017) and the stopping of the nature research begun in 2016 on the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska site. At this point, I would like to declare that the cessation of the remedial measures and the stopping of the inventory research intended to check their effectiveness is the obliteration of the traces of the crime committed in 2012 when unreasonable actions, drastically violating the law governing the Natura 2000 network being introduced in Europe, caused the loss of habitats and species of importance for the Community on the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska site which had been designated and incorporated into the Nature 2000 network.

I am sending this letter with its attachments as an open letter to all the European Environment Ministers, to all the scientific centres and scientists who are critical of or support my actions as the Polish Minister of the Environment, to all the environmental organisations and all the mass media, as well as to all the Members of the Polish Parliament, Senators and all the Members of the European Parliament, inviting them to look at the data and participate in the dialogue. I invite them to do it with the hope that the dialogue can be started on the basis of the judgment and specific data collected in the Forest since 2016. It seems that it will help ensure that science and national thinking are used again, as they should, in creating law applicable to nature. I also extend my special invitation to all the judges of the Grand Chamber of the Court to visit Białowieża Forest and the “D&B” Research Station in Tuczno, which specialises in research on the control of the population dynamics of species living in the wild, with an expression of appreciation and admiration for bravely taking a decision in extremely complicated issues their knowledge of which was naturally not very good. All the materials on the state of habitats and species which come from the inventory on the PLC200004 Puszcza Białowieska site since 2016 should be available on the websites of the Ministry of the Environment, the Directorate General of State Forests, the Ministry of the Environment and the Association for Sustainable Development of Poland (www.ekorozwoj.pl).

Attachments

1. The open letter of 9 March 2018
2. The invitation to a dialogue of 11 June 2018

*Respectfully yours
Prof. Jan Szyszko
Member of Parliament
Former Minister of the Environment
of the Republic of Poland*