

**Question for written answer E-015976/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Jude Kirton-Darling (S&D)**

Subject: Abuse of Baka 'Pygmies' and their neighbours in Cameroon in the name of conservation

The EU is one of the main funders of conservation in southeast Cameroon, both directly, to the Cameroonian Ministry of Forests and Fauna (MINFOF), and via the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Almost all of the 'protected areas' in southeast Cameroon are in fact the ancestral land of the Baka 'Pygmies' who have virtually no access to them. And throughout their land, the Baka are often criminalised as 'poachers' when they hunt to feed their families as they have done for generations.

As a result, the Baka, as well as their neighbours, face harassment, beatings, torture and even death at the hands of state-employed anti-poaching units funded partly by the EU.

These abuses have been publicly documented for over a decade. In 2012, a senior MINFOF official was reported admitting that torture was routinely used in interrogations.

Recent reports of abuse come from the Ngoyla-Mintom 'landscape', where the EU is the main funder of the project governed by a contract DCI-ENV/2010/222-423.

What steps will the Commission take to ensure that:

1. members of anti-poaching units who violate human rights are held to account for their actions, especially where those units are co-financed by the EU?
2. the land rights and other rights of the Baka in the 'protected areas' of southeast Cameroon are respected?