

April 2021

## MORATORIUM ON THE "BASCHARAGE BY-PASS" !

The report of the "Observatoire de l'Environnement Naturel" is clear: "The current state of preservation of natural habitats, of wild flora and fauna is of great concern. If we do not take countermeasures as quickly as possible, many animal and plant species will also become extinct in Luxembourg in the coming years."

According to the Global Footprint Network, Luxembourg reached its "Overshoot Day" for this year on February 15th (2nd place behind Qatar). The Grand Duchy has thus theoretically used up all the resources that nature could restore within this year.

In the meantime, the situation in Luxembourg is alarming, as two thirds of the natural habitats are in an "inadequate" or "poor" state of conservation. In addition to the current intensive agricultural production methods, the urban sprawl and sealing of the soil, as well as the change in natural ecosystems, are named as causes. **Luxembourg is of the most fragmented country in Europe!**

In this context, the undersigned are concerned about the preservation of the forest area on the outskirts of the villages of Sanem and Bascharage (Bobësch, Zaemberbësch) which, as is well known, would be severely damaged by the construction of a bypass.

The protected NATURA 2000 area is home to many bird- and other animal species, some of which can be found on the red list. **This natural habitat must not be destroyed under any circumstances!**

As is well known, the law on the construction of the bypass road across the NATURA 2000 zone was justified with the argument of high NOX values in the avenue de Luxembourg in Bascharage (imperative reason of major public interest), because in sporadic measurements (2011-2015), these values were 57, respectively 47  $\mu\text{g} / \text{m}^3$ , i.e. significantly above the limit value of 40  $\mu\text{g} / \text{m}^3$  authorized by the WHO.

Since 2016, when a fixed, homologated measuring station corresponding to EU quality standards was set up, **the limit values have only been exceeded once by 2 points** (in 2018).

2016 - 40  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (introduction of the measuring station during the year)

2017 - 38  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

2018 - 42  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

2019 - 38  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

2020 - 29  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (Maximum values measured outside the lockdown were 37  $\mu\text{g} / \text{m}^3$  in January and November)

Meanwhile, the NOX values are steadily below the limit value. In their report and their 1st appeal (2016) against the APS (avant-projet sommaire), the Sanem municipal council unanimously spoke out for a so-called zero alternative, i.e. **not building a bypass road**, but, as a solution to NOX pollution, implementing traffic calming measures on behalf of the state and the municipality of Bascharage (the so-called **0 + variant**)



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We expressly welcome the announced construction of a car park for 420 vehicles at the Bascharage train station, after the double-track railway line to Luxembourg City has been built and the number of train passengers has more than doubled. At the same time, we expect the immediate installation of so-called "intelligent traffic lights", the consistent expansion of cycle lanes as well as the installation of a bus lane in the avenue de Luxembourg (as promised by the Minister of Transports). We are convinced that these concrete measures will not remain without effect and will continue to have a positive influence on the decrease of NOX values and traffic noise.

Well aware that nature conservation concerns us all, that environmental issues are on the agenda of all political parties and that it was promised to deal with the climate crisis and the death of species and to counteract the loss of biodiversity, the first signatories would like to address you this APPELL to you to join the request for a moratorium on the construction of the planned Bascharage bypass.

Let words be followed by action! Now is the time to take concrete action! Looking back on the enormous use of this area as a high-quality local recreation area in the past year, it has been proven that the preservation of this unique nature reserve and the Bobësch is actually to be viewed as "**imperative reasons of overriding public interest**"!

Politics is challenged!

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