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Berlin, 2 September 2010

### **Son Bosc Natural Area**

Dear Sir,

The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) calls on the Government of the Illes Balears to forcefully oppose and halt the construction of a golf course at Son Bosc. Through the construction of the golf course an area of high importance to the protection of species may be lost. We are supporting the concerns already expressed by our own members as well as many affiliated environmental groups such as our BidLife partner in the UK (RSPB), the Mediterranean office of IUCN and the GOB.

As you are aware, the area of Son Bosc with its dune grassland habitat hosts the largest part of the European population of the orchid *Orchis robusta*, within Mallorca the biggest breeding colony of the bee eater (*Merops apiaster*) lives here and it is an important feeding area for the Eleonora's falcon (*Falco eleonora*). This underlines the importance of the area in regard to species protection.

The outstanding natural heritage of the site is of interest not only to protect the unique and invaluable biodiversity, but also to attain the goal of the development of sustainable tourism on the island. The highest percentage of tourists to the Balearic Islands is from Germany. Since NABU has over 460.000 members and sponsors, one can assume a great part of them travel to Mallorca. Our members spend their time with nature activities, such as bird watching, trailing and trekking. Therefore many of them are sure to visit S'Albufera as one of the most important sightseeing points of the Island.

For tourists interested in conventional tourism, a high density of golf courses already exists on the Island (24). Since golf courses use a lot of water this raises more problematic issues in the dry Mediterranean Climate.

We stress the integration of the area into the s'Albufera Natural Park and/or the area to be classified as a Natura 2000 site. The construction of a golf course at Son Bosc would be a set-back to the efforts in the preservation of the environment on the Balearic Islands.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Tennhardt  
Vice-President