

KARMENU VELLA

Member of the European Commission

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Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter of 6 May on the use of cyanide-based mining technologies in the EU.

While acknowledging your concerns, the Commission remains convinced that the proper implementation of existing environmental legislation is already contributing to reducing the risks of accidents and should prevent detrimental impacts in case they occurred. Only if existing requirements were proven to be insufficient would the Commission consider additional ones.

The Commission is strongly committed to effective implementation of relevant legislation, essentially by monitoring and assessing activities in Member States and, if needed, by enforcing relevant EU provisions. Although the responsibility on particular mining projects primarily lies with Member States, the Commission intends to play close attention to those developments implying the use of cyanide based technologies.

In this respect, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Commission intends to submit to Parliament and Council a consolidated report covering the two first reporting periods in the implementation of the Extractive Waste Directive (2006/21/EC), as soon as the necessary information has been gathered and assessed. An evaluation of the Directive is to be launched soon too, including in particular an evaluation of the provisions applicable to the use of cyanide.

In addition, concerning the point on water protection you raise in your letter, the Commission will consider whether cyanide should be included in the list of priority substances under the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) during the regular review of the list due for completion in 2017. This process will take into account any relevant and reliable toxicity and monitoring data that have become available since the previous review.

Bearing all this in mind, the Commission finds no reason to propose a general prohibition of the use of cyanide-based technologies for mining activities at present.

Yours sincerely,



To MEPs László TÖKES, András GYÜRK, József SZÁJER, Ildikó GÁLL-PELCZ, Kinga GÁL, Andrea BOCSKOR, Norbert ERDŐS, Ádám KÓSA, György SCHÖPFLIN, Tamás DEUTSCH, György HÖLVÉNYI, Andor DELI, Csaba SÓGOR, Gyula WINKLER, Pál CSÁKY, Milan ZVER, Patricija SULIN, Nessa CHILDERS, Hugues BAYET, Ricardo SERRAO SANTOS, Benedek JÁVOR, Bart STAES, Claude TURMES, Molly SCOTT CATO, Keith TAYLOR, Jose Inacio FARIA, Pavel TELICKA, Marian HARKIN, Paloma LOPEZ BERMEJO, Anja HAZEKAMP, Lidia SENRA RODRÍGUEZ, Eleonora EVI, Zoltán BALCZÓ, Ana MIRANDA

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