The Portuguese national lithium strategy was quoted in the Commission Staff Working Document “Report on Raw Materials for Battery Applications”¹ and mentioned as an example in the overview of EU Member States’ raw materials policies, battery raw materials potential, and battery production. However, the Commission is not in a position to determine whether it meets all the requirements to fall within the scope of Directive 2001/42/EC², in particular, whether the adoption of the strategy was a requirement under Portuguese legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions.

All mining activities are potentially disruptive of the environment. However, the EU has adopted a legal framework that aims at reconciling the competitiveness of the industry with the necessary environmental protection. Based on the principles of precaution, prevention and rectifying pollution at source, and on the ‘polluter pays’ principle, those rules strive at mitigating or minimizing to the extent possible the disruption of the environment entailed by the mining cycle in all its stages. Commission Guidance Document on Non-energy mineral extraction and Natura 2000³ provides guidance on how best to ensure that mining developments are compatible with the conservation of Natura 2000 sites by effectively applying the relevant provisions of EU environmental legislation. The Commission notes that Member States are primarily responsible for ensuring that the operators comply strictly with the environmental standards required under EU law.

¹ SWD(2018) 245/2 final.