

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5748/09
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to the Commission

Subject: Authorisation for a gold mine in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Government has decided to authorise the operation of a gold extraction and processing plant in the town of Kirtzali, which is very close to the border between Greece and Bulgaria. Local groups have expressed their opposition to the project and are calling on the Bulgarian Government to revoke its decision immediately. It is considered a major threat to the environment, because effluent from the works will be deposited in an area very close to the bank of the river Arda. There are also fears that if an accident occurs it could pollute the waters of the Arda and Evros rivers.

Having regard to Directive 2006/21/EC¹ on the management of waste from extractive industries, which provides inter alia that every new extraction plant must fulfil the requirements of the Directive with regard to public participation, use of the best available techniques, adoption of special preventive measures to protect the environment and public health, provision of a financial guarantee, measures to limit and manage waste and prevent serious accidents, and cross-border consultations in the event of any cross-border impact, does the Commission consider that this decision by the Bulgarian Government to grant authorisation is in line with Community law?

¹ OJ L 102, 11.4.2006. p.15