

**Question for written answer E-012211/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Environmental problems in Bulgaria

Concessions in Bulgaria are granted preferentially to one of two types of company: either Bulgarian companies with links to oligarchic or governmental structures, or companies from countries outside the EU such as Australia or Canada. This is at complete odds with the EU's goal of a free internal market, in particular at a time of economic crisis.

Bulgaria grants concessions for extraction of its natural resources in order to ensure that the law is followed. Concessions of this kind have been awarded to three companies for the extraction of precious metals: the Canadian company Dundee Precious Metals, Ellatzite-Med and Asarel Medet.

It has come to my attention that the activities of these three companies run completely counter to EU legislation and are causing great harm to the surrounding environment. Over 800 hectares of forest have been destroyed and the lives of many wild animals, and indeed human beings, are at great risk. I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Does the Commission intend to examine these three cases?
2. What action will it take if it finds evidence of irregularities?