Question for written answer E-001055/2024
to the Commission
Rule 138
Eugenia Rodríguez Palop (The Left)

Subject: Large-scale cellulose plant threatens environment and water in Galicia, Spain

The Portuguese company Altri SGPS S.A., whose main business is the production of wood pulp and eucalyptus-based forestry products, has officially announced its intention to set up a soluble cellulose and vegetable fibre production plant in A Ulloa (Lugo), Spain. The company hopes to obtain public funding of EUR 250 million through a strategic project for economic recovery and transformation (PERTE) industrial decarbonisation programme (NextGenerationEU).

The project aims to install a water catchment system with a flow of 46 000 cubic metres per day. In addition, the factory would discharge organic compounds (increasing total phosphorus and total nitrogen, as well as sulphates, all at high temperatures) into the river Ulla, which would affect a body of water 1.5 km away that already suffers from serious eutrophication problems. The deterioration in the ecological status of the bodies of water concerned would jeopardise the environmental objectives relating to surface waters set out in Article 4(1), point (a), of the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC[1].

1. As this project represents a breach of the 'do no significant harm' (DNSH) principle and does not comply with several environmental objectives under Regulation (EU) 852/2020[2], such as the protection of water resources, does the Commission consider this project eligible for funding?

2. Also, does the Commission consider that this project is in line with Directive 2000/60/EC?

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[1] Directive 2000/60/EC of 23[0]October[0]2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1.
[2] Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of 18 June 2020 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, OJ L 198, 22.6.2020, p. 13.