



28.4.2020

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 1236/2019 by Jiří Vozák (Czech), on behalf of Liberecký kraj, on the danger of losing drinking water in the Liberec Region (Czech Republic) due to the expansion of a brown coal mine in Turów (Poland)

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner fears that 30 000 inhabitants of the Liberec Region are in danger of losing drinking water due to the activities and expansion of a brown coal mine in Turów. In addition, it negatively affects the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Czech borderland due to the noise and the dust in the air.

The petitioner states that the mining licence is valid until April 2020, but its operator is applying for an extension until 2044 and also an expansion with 150-200 meters. The petitioner is of the view that in case of continued mining, there will be a risk of losing drinking water. In his opinion, the ongoing authorization process violates the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

The petitioner asks for an assessment by the Commission in advance of the requested extension, and a due check according to the relevant EU legislation.

He also asks for a fact-finding mission to the concerned territory and the adoption of recommendations on minimizing the impact of the Turów mine on human health and the environment.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 28 February 2020. Information requested from Commission under Rule 227(6).

3. Commission reply, received on 28 April 2020

The Commission closely follows-up on the developments of this case.

On 27 December 2019, the Commission received a complaint lodged on behalf of the Liberec region concerning the same subject as described in the petition.

Following the assessment of the complaint, the Commission launched an investigation (EU Pilot) and asked the Polish authorities for clarifications on the facts presented and procedure followed in this case.

The Commission is currently assessing the information and documents provided by Poland on this matter to verify whether this project complies with the applicable environmental EU rules.

Depending on the outcome of this analysis, the Commission will decide on the next steps.

Conclusion

The Commission is currently assessing the alleged breaches of EU environmental law in this case. Based on the outcome of this assessment, the Commission will decide on the next steps.