



30.11.2024

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 0554/2024 by Bran Andrei Petru (Romanian) on exposure to traffic noise and pollution due to construction of a hydropower plant in Pascani, Romania

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner complains that, as a result of the construction of a hydroelectric power plant on the Siret River, near the town of Pascani in Romania, and in the absence of adequate road infrastructure, the local community has been severely affected by the noise and pollution caused by the heavy vehicles passing through, which, in his opinion, may even affect the safety of the structure of the buildings. He explains that he has already approached the relevant national authorities in this regard, but has been redirected to the local authorities, who were unable to deal with the situation.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 27 September 2024. Information requested from Commission under Rule 233(5) (former Rule 227(5)).

3. Commission reply, received on 30 November 2024

In response to the complaint regarding noise from heavy machinery during the construction of the hydropower plant, it should be noted that noise nuisances from such activities are not regulated at the EU level.

Regarding the relevant environmental law, the hydropower plant is being constructed on the river Siret situated within the Siret River Basin District¹. According to the 3rd River Basin

¹ <http://siret.rowater.ro/abas/despre-noi/descrierea-activitatii/managementul-european-integrat-resurse-de-apa/planurile-de-management-ale-bazinelor-hidrografice>

Management Plan, this heavily modified water body has a moderate ecological potential. However, it is subject to an exemption under Article 4(4) of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), which allows for the deadline to achieve good ecological potential to be extended to 2027.

The national authorities are responsible for overseeing the implementation of these exemptions and ensuring that the water body reaches the required status within the agreed timeframe. The European Commission does not have inspection powers in this area and relies on national authorities for enforcement.

Finally, as regards enforcement action taken by the Commission in relation to noise issues in Romania, on 3 October 2024 a letter of formal notice was addressed to Romania for its failure to adopt and report strategic noise maps as required by Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise (INFR(2024)2200).

Conclusion

The petitioner should continue to seek a remedy with the national authorities, notably those responsible for overseeing the construction of this hydropower plant.