

EN

E-000741/2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.6.2025)

1. Maximum levels (MLs) for lead and cadmium in food were established by Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/915¹ and for feed by Directive 2002/32/EC². Only food and feed compliant with the MLs can be placed on the market guaranteeing a high level of human and animal health protection.

Without information on the levels of thorium in feed and food in the concerned area, no assessment of the possible risk for animal or public health can be done.

2. The Commission is aware of the potential health implications arising from environmental pollution and emphasises the importance of ensuring compliance with EU legislation that aims to protect public health. However, safeguarding public health is primarily the responsibility of Member States including the investigation of potential disease clusters.

3. If the pollution is the result of a serious breach of EU environmental law, then the conduct might be framed as an environmental crime under the Environmental Crime Directive³. If the liable operator is identified and the contamination fulfils the criteria of environmental damage under the Environmental Liability Directive⁴, the operator shall be required to remedy the damage to the environment.

Salto di Quirra is located in air quality zone IT2010 Zona Rurale according to Ambient Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EC⁵, with the closest sampling point in Nuraminis. The latest data for this zone for 2022 and 2023 does not indicate the exceedance of any air quality standard⁶.

Based on the information from the European Industrial Emissions Portal⁷, no industrial installation covered by the industrial emissions directive was identified in the area.

¹ Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/915 of 25 April 2023 on maximum levels for certain contaminants in food and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 *OJ L 119*, 5.5.2023, p. 103–157

ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/915/oj>.

² Directive 2002/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 May 2002 on undesirable substances in animal feed *OJ L 140*, 30.5.2002, p. 10–22 ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2002/32/oj>.

³ Directive 2008/99/EC on the protection of the environment through criminal law *OJ L 328*, 6.12.2008, p. 28–37, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2008/99/oj>, replaced by Directive (EU) 2024/1203 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on the protection of the environment through criminal law and replacing Directives 2008/99/EC and 2009/123/EC, *OJ L*, 2024/1203, 30.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1203/oj>, in force and to be transposed by Member States by 21 May 2026.

⁴ Directive 2004/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage, *OJ L 143*, 30.4.2004, p. 56–75. ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2004/35/oj>.

⁵ Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe *OJ L 152*, 11.6.2008, p. 1–44 ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2008/50/oj>.

⁶ The Italian authorities are reporting information of the following pollutants in this zone: arsenic, benzene, benzo(a)pyrene, cadmium, carbon monoxide, lead, nickel, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and sulphur dioxide, <https://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/it/eu/aqd/g/>.

⁷ <https://industry.eea.europa.eu/>.