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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.5.2025)

The Commission recognises the importance of ensuring public participation, transparency, and compliance with environmental and social safeguards in projects involving critical raw materials, including for the selected Strategic Project mina Doade in Galicia, Spain.

The assessment of mina Doade project included the evaluation of environmental and social impacts, and the use of transparent business practices. The assessment concluded that the project would be implemented sustainably according to the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRM Act)¹.

The granting of Strategic Project status requires socially responsible practices, respect for human rights and comprehensive and meaningful consultations with local communities and the granting of the permit is carried out independently by the Member States' competent authority. Moreover, granting Strategic Project status does not undermine the obligation of the project promoter to comply with EU environmental legislation², which mandates public consultation for plans related to the environment³ and for projects likely to have significant environmental effects.

The implementation of the selected Strategic Projects for the EU will be monitored, and in case a Strategic Project no longer fulfils the criteria laid down in the CRM Act, the Commission may withdraw the recognition of a project as a Strategic Project, taking into account the CRM Board's opinion.

¹ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials/critical-raw-materials-act_en.

² Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1–21, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014, OJ L 124, 25.4.2014, p. 1–18. 2001/42/EC, 2011/92/EU, 2014/52/EU.

³ Article 7 of the Aarhus Convention.