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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.5.2025)

The Commission does not directly authorize specific business activities for coal companies on the assets of decommissioned mines. However, in general, the Commission would encourage the use of assets in a way that aligns with EU policy goals, to facilitate economic diversification and transformation. Approval relies on plan details and current laws. The Member States must ensure that such activities comply with EU laws, including EU State aid rules and environmental standards.

In general, it is for Member States to decide if they wish to support a specific economic activity or a specific objective. Any new mechanism involving State aid would require notification to the Commission under EU State aid rules, unless it is exempted pursuant to regulations such as the General Block Exemption Regulation¹ or the de minimis regulation².

It is for the Member States to design measures in line with EU law including State aid rules, and international trade rules. The measure must abide by applicable sector specific State aid rules as well as horizontal State aid provisions.

¹ Commission Regulation (EU) 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 (consolidated text) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2023.167.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2023%3A167%3ATO
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² Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2831/oj>