

The European Commission has decided to send Croatia to the Court of Justice of the EU for failing to ensure an adequate level of protection of human health and the environment at Crno brdo site in Biljane Donje, near the town of Benkovac, less than 50 meters from houses.

The Commission said that for almost four years, the industrial waste deposited at Crno brdo illegal landfill has not been cleared and properly managed, threatening to pollute groundwater and air. According to the Commission, the location is currently used as a depository of a large amount of production residue of processing of ferromanganese and silicomanganese.

"As the Croatian authorities failed to classify that material as waste in line with the Waste Framework Directive, approximately 140,000 tons of this potentially harmful stone aggregate is deposited directly on soil, threatening local inhabitants and the environment," the Commission said.

Croatia should have been managed the waste according to the EU rules on waste by the end of 2015 at the latest. The Commission underlined that country obliged to solve the issue on several occasions, but there has been no progress on the ground.

The Commission opened the infringement proceedings against Croatia in March 2015.

"Since there has been no progress in ensuring proper waste management in Biljane Donje that the waste does not endanger human health and harm the environment, the Commission decided to refer Croatia to the Court of Justice of the EU," the Commission said.

Under EU law, Croatia should have put in place measures for the protection of groundwater and the prevention of the dispersion of the harmful particles through the air.

According to the Waste Framework Directive EU Member States must recover and dispose of waste in a manner that does not endanger human health and the environment, prohibiting the abandonment, dumping or uncontrolled disposal of waste.

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