

According to the European Commission's letter of formal notice, Romania has two months to respond, otherwise the EC will issue a reasoned opinion. The EC has issued new infringement procedures against Romania for not complying with its environmental commitments in waste, natural habitats and water and air quality issues.

The EC demands that Romania will fulfil obligations such as closing and rehabilitating its illegal waste dumps (letter of formal notice), to ensure natural habitats and wild species protection (letter of formal notice), to respect the EU standards for urban waste water (letter of formal notice), and to adopt national air pollution control programmes (reasoned opinion).

No less than 15 illegal landfills benefited from a grace period of transition according to Romania's treaty of accession to the EU. In a letter of formal notice, the European Commission demanded that the 15 waste dumps must be closed, sealed, and ecologically restored. Member states have the obligation to retrieve and eliminate waste in a manner which won't affect public health and the environment. In the accession treaty, Romania had 101 non-compliant landfills which should have been closed as of 2019, but it only managed to rehabilitate 86 of them, and the calendar for closing the 15 illegal landfills which are still operating is uncertain, as works to do so have not even began for most of them.

Natural habitats and wild species protection

A major issue in many EU member states, the loss of biodiversity is addressed by the 92/43/EEC Council Directive concerning the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. The EU aims to stop the loss of biodiversity through improving and restoring damaged ecosystems, but Romanian legislation does not explicitly state that the conservation measures included in the management plans should take into account the ecological needs of natural habitats and wild species of the respective sites. Also, national legislation limits the application of the 92/43/EEC Council Directive only to activities carried out in Natura 2000 sites, thus excluding any perturbing or damaging actions coming from outside the actual sites. According to the letter of formal notice, Romania has two months to remedy this situation, otherwise the EC will issue a reasoned opinion.

Urban waste water

A further letter of formal notice was sent to Romania for breaching EU norms regarding the treatment of waste water in large urban areas. According to the 91/271/EEC Council Directive, cities have the obligation to establish the required infrastructure for collecting and treating their waste water. As much as 188 large urban areas in Romania are still

failing to comply with EU legislation on this matter, while 192 are not complying with the obligations of secondary treatment and 193 are not fulfilling obligations of a more rigorous treatment. According to the letter of formal notice, Romania has two months to respond, otherwise the EC will issue a reasoned opinion.

Air pollution

Together with Greece, Romania was urged by the EC to adopt national air pollution control programmes, in accordance with Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament. Member states have the obligation to develop, adopt and apply national air pollution control programmes, in order to reach air quality level that don't create any significant negative effects or risk for public health and the environment. The European Commission sent Romania and Greece an official reasoned opinion. The two countries have 2 months to take the appropriate actions, otherwise the Commission will refer the matter to the EU Court of Justice.

Source: business-review.eu