



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate E - International affairs & LIFE
ENV.E.3 - Enlargement & Neighbouring Countries

The Head of Unit

05 -02- 2008

Brussels,
ENV/E-3/FD/mpt D(2008) 2001

Ms Ana Colovic
Director
Center for Environmental Research
and Information
Eco-sense
f.Y.R.o.M.

By e-mail only: ana@ekosvest.com.mk

Dear Ms Colovic,

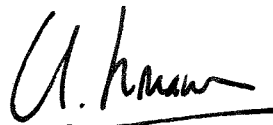
I would like to thank you for your letter in which you express your legitimate concerns about the construction of the Demir Kapija-Smokvica highway project in your country to be financed under IPA and its potential environmental impacts. The Commission is well aware of the situation and has taken appropriate measures to make sure that this project be carried out in line with sustainable development principles and meet relevant environmental norms, in particular directives on EIA, Habitats and Birds (in order to avoid negative impacts on potential Natura 2000 sites) and the relevant environmental *acquis*. To this aim, a joint mission including a site visit was carried out in your country from 12 to 14 November 2007 involving various Directorate Generals from the Commission: DG REGIO, DG TREN, DG ENV, but also EIB which will co-finance the project together with the EU.

The new alignment of the motorway has been selected in order to avoid disturbances to the Bela Voda cave. Since a part of this new alignment was not covered yet by the existing EIA study, a complementary one will therefore need to be carried out, in full compliance with the EIA Directive. During this mission, our services have firmly highlighted the obligation for a proper EIA including Natura 2000 elements, mitigation measures and all possible alternatives (alignments). We also insisted on the necessity to involve the relevant environmental authorities and the public through the consultation process (MoEPP, Universities, NGOs, and Citizens etc.) in line with the EU *acquis*. This message was also passed on to the State Secretary for Environment of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia during the sub-committee for Transport, Energy, Environment and Regional Development held on 25 January in Brussels.

We also wish to inform you that a training session to Macedonian officials on the environmental issues to be covered in EC co-financing applications including EIA and Nature-related directives has been planned for February 2008.

We can assure you that we will closely monitor the situation and that funding from the Commission and EIB will be made conditional upon the proper implementation of the EIA and Nature-related Directives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Rouam', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Claude ROUAM

Copy: Messrs. Kremlis (DG ENV), Unterwurzacher (DG REGIO), Da Fonseca (DG REGIO), Begeot (DG TREN), Ms Andreeva et Mr. Gjorsoski (EC DEL)