



Vides pārraudzības valsts birojs

Environment State Bureau of the Republic of Latvia

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Rīga

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The Ministry of Climate of the Republic of Estonia

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cc: Ms Lilli Tamm

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Regarding the environmental impact assessment of the Kiusumetsa sand quarry project in Pärnu county, Estonia

The Environment State Bureau (hereinafter – the Bureau) of the Republic of Latvia would like to express gratitude to the Ministry of Climate of the Republic of Estonia for information regarding the results of the environmental impact assessment (hereinafter – the EIA) of the Kiusumetsa sand quarry project in Pärnu county (hereinafter – the Project).

Please be informed that the Bureau published information regarding the EIA report of the Project on the Bureau's webpage¹ as well as sent directly to the involved authorities. The Bureau received response from the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia, the State Environment Service and the Nature Conservation Agency. The Bureau has not received comments from the public.

The Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia informed that it has no proposals regarding the scope of the EIA of the Project in the transboundary impact context to submit. However, the Ministry respectfully recalls that the prohibition for sand extraction extends 6 m from the State border line on the side of the Republic of Estonia and emphasizes the necessity to preserve existing elements of border infrastructure (border posts with equipment and fastening structures, border markers and border ditches) in accordance with the description of the State border between the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Estonia.

The Nature Conservation Agency (hereinafter – the Agency) shall accept the implementation of the Project if all the mitigation measures indicated in the Section 6 “Mitigating measures” of the

¹ The Bureau's webpage: <https://www.vpvb.gov.lv/lv/parrobezu-ietekmes-uz-vidi-novertejumu-projekti/smits-ieguve-kiusumetsa-karjera-pernavas-aprinki-hedemestes-pagasta-igaunijas-republikas-teritorija>

summary of the EIA report are complied with and the conditions of the Agency are met:

- Although hydrogeology has not been assessed in the territory of Latvia, upon reviewing the summary of the EIA report, the Agency initially concludes that no significant impact on the hydrological regime is expected in or near the area of the Project, however, to verify this, the Agency would like to review the full hydrogeological opinion. We would like to point out that approximately 900 m from the Project's site there is a forest micro-reserve complex established in 2022 (codes 3121, 3122, 3123, 3124)², which was established mainly for the protection of wet forests and specially protected species associated with such conditions. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 940 of 18 December 2012 "Regulations Regarding the Establishment and Management of Micro-reserves, Their Conservation, as well as Determination of Micro-reserves and Their Buffer Zones"³ stipulates that in micro-reserves established for the protection of habitats, lichen and moss species, "activities which cause change in the level of underground water, groundwater, and surface water" are prohibited. Similarly, in the forest lands adjacent to the Project's area in the territory of the Republic of Latvia, the presence of European Union forest habitats (specifically wet/humid types) is possible.
- The Agency invites to choose a recultivation scenario that is aimed at increasing natural and scenic values, as required by the Nature Restoration Regulation⁴ which highlights the need to restore degraded ecosystems (former industrial sites and quarries), for example, by improving biodiversity in natural areas.
- With regard to the protection of birds nesting in the impact zone, the Agency advises not to carry out noisy work (deforestation, road construction, etc.) during the nesting of the ural owl *Strix uralensis* from February 1 to August 31, in addition to creating bottom ramparts around the territory of the sand mining site.

The State Environment Service indicated that it has no objections and notes regarding the Project.

Sincerely yours,

Daiga Avdejanova (signature*) Director of Environment State Bureau of the Republic of Latvia

**Document is sign with secure electronical signature and contains a time stamp*

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² The nature data management system "Ozols" - public version <https://ozols.gov.lv/pub>

³ Regulation No. 940. Regulations Regarding the Establishment and Management of Micro-reserves, Their Conservation, as well as Determination of Micro-reserves and Their Buffer Zones
<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/253746>

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1991>

