



Ms Kerstin Jorna
Director General
Directorate-General for Internal Market,
Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Strasbourg, 20 May 2026

Subject: **Questions regarding the selection of Strategic Projects under the CRMA**

Dear Ms Jorna,

Recent [reporting by the German outlet Table.Briefings](#)¹ and [Público in Portugal](#)², raises serious concerns regarding the transparency, legality and integrity of the first selection round of Strategic Projects under the Critical Raw Materials Act.

According to their information, the preliminary list of Strategic Projects presented to the Critical Raw Materials Board on 20 February 2025 was substantially modified following consultations with Member States. Eleven projects that had apparently not met all selection criteria during the initial technical evaluation by external experts were subsequently added to the final list discussed on 12 March 2025 and formally adopted by the Commission on 25 March 2025 with Decision C(2025) 1904.

Among these projects were several controversial mining and lithium projects in Member States such as Portugal and Spain, including the Barroso Lithium project, the Romano mine and the Lift One refinery project in Portugal, as well as Mina Doade and Las Navas in Spain. And also controversial projects in third countries such as the Jadar project in Serbia.

The material suggests that Member States were permitted to submit rebuttals or additional political feedback following the expert evaluations. However, neither the CRMA nor publicly available procedural guidance appear to foresee such a mechanism, nor is it clear under which safeguards, methodology or verification standards these interventions were assessed - particularly given the limited timeframe between the preliminary list of 20 February 2025 and the revised list presented to the Critical Raw Materials Board on 12 March 2025.³

This raises serious concerns regarding equal treatment of applicants, procedural fairness, political interference in technical evaluations and the reliability of information underpinning the final decisions. Several of the projects added at a later stage remain highly contested and are

¹<https://table.media/esg/talk-of-the-town-en/critical-raw-materials-doubts-raised-about-the-eus-project-selection>

² <https://www.publico.pt/2026/05/15/azul/noticia/ue-ignorou-peritos-atribuiu-estatuto-estrategico-projectos-litio-portugueses-2174818>

³ Opinion of the European Critical Raw Materials Board on the proposed list of Strategic Projects (DG GROW): "Member States whose territory is concerned by a proposed project could object to the project being recognised as Strategic Project in accordance with Article 7(8) of the CRM Act. Some Member States expressed substantiated views for certain projects."

subject to ongoing legal proceedings, including before the General Court of the European Union.

In light of the above, we kindly request clarification on the following points:

1. What was the legal basis for allowing Member States to provide additional feedback or rebuttals to negative or partially negative expert assessments?
2. Which services or actors assessed and validated the information submitted after the preliminary list of 20 February 2025?
3. Were all applicants given equal opportunity to respond to negative expert assessments?
4. Did the Commission verify the accuracy of claims submitted by Member States concerning permitting status, environmental compliance, social acceptance or technical feasibility?
5. Will the Commission disclose the methodology governing the re-evaluation process between the preliminary and final lists?
6. What guarantees can the Commission provide for the 11 projects added to the final list that initially received negative expert assessment, does the Commission believe they still meet article 6 of the CRMA?

We therefore urge the Commission to publish the relevant assessment methodology, correspondence and procedural safeguards relating to the re-evaluation process and to clarify whether the current framework sufficiently protects against undue political influence in future Strategic Project selections.

Given the substantial implications of Strategic Project designation for permitting acceleration, environmental governance and public trust, we believe that full transparency regarding the selection procedure is essential, and thus we propose to have a meeting in the upcoming weeks to discuss this issue that affects both our local communities and the European Union's credibility.

Yours sincerely,

Ana Miranda Paz, BNG MEP, Galiza

Catarina Martins, Bloco de Esquerda MEP, Portugal

Projects with entry into the final list between February 20 2025 and March 12 2025

- Spain: Mina Doade; Las Navas; PMR project.
- Portugal: Barroso Lithium; Romano Mine; Lift One.
- France: GALLICAM; Hydrometallurgy.
- Czech Republic: Cínovec Lithium.
- Romania: SALROM Baia de Fier.
- Italy: INSPIREE.
- Germany, France and Namibia: European Initiative for Strategic and Sustainable Graphite Production
- Serbia: Jadar project