## Basic information

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| **2010/2593(RSP)**<br><br>RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects | Procedure completed |
| Resolution on a general ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies in the European Union<br><br>**Subject**<br><br>3.60.01 Solid fuels, coal mining, mining industry<br>3.70.10 Man-made disasters, industrial pollution and accidents<br>3.70.13 Dangerous substances, toxic and radioactive wastes (storage, transport) | |

## Key players

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|---|---|---|
| European Commission | Commission DG | Commissioner |
| | Environment | POTOČNIK Janez |

## Key events

| Date | Event | Reference | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21/04/2010 | Debate in Parliament | | Summary |
| 05/05/2010 | Decision by Parliament | T7-0145/2010 | Summary |
| 05/05/2010 | Results of vote in Parliament | | |
| 05/05/2010 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |

## Technical information

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| **Procedure reference** | 2010/2593(RSP) |
| **Procedure type** | RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects |
| **Procedure subtype** | Debate or resolution on oral question/interpellation |
| **Legal basis** | Rules of Procedure EP 142-p5 |
| **Stage reached in procedure** | Procedure completed |

## Documentation gateway

**European Parliament**

| Document type | Committee | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oral question/interpellation by Parliament | | B7-0206/2010 | 19/04/2010 | |
| Motion for a resolution | | B7-0238/2010 | 05/05/2010 | |

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| Motion for a resolution | | B7-0239/2010 | 05/05/2010 | |
| Motion for a resolution | | B7-0240/2010 | 05/05/2010 | |
| Motion for a resolution | | B7-0241/2010 | 05/05/2010 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, single reading | | T7-0145/2010 | 05/05/2010 | Summary |

**European Commission**

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| Commission response to text adopted in plenary | SP(2010)4415 | 06/09/2010 | |

# Resolution on a general ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies in the European Union

2010/2593(RSP) - 05/05/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 21 April 2010, the European Parliament adopted by 488 votes to 48, with 57 abstentions, a resolution on a general ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies in the European Union.

The resolution had been tabled by the ALDE, S&D, EPP, Greens/ALDE, ECR and GUE/NGL groups.

It notes that cyanide is a highly toxic chemical used in the gold-mining industry, one which qualifies as a main pollutant under Annex VIII to the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) and which can have a catastrophic and irreversible impact on human health and the environment, and thus on biodiversity. However, several EU Member States are still considering new projects for large-scale open-cast gold mines using cyanide technologies in densely inhabited areas, projects which pose further potential threats to human health and the environment. Under the Water Framework Directive Member States are obliged to achieve and preserve the 'good status' of water resources and to prevent their pollution with hazardous substances. However, that good status could also depend on water quality in a river basin located in neighbouring countries which use cyanide mining technologies. Consequently, Parliament considers that compliance with the EU's objectives under the Water Framework Directive, namely to achieve good chemical status for water resources and to protect water resources and biological diversity, can be achieved only by banning cyanide mining technology. It calls on the Commission to propose a **complete ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies in the EU before the end of 2011**, since this is the only safe way to protect our water resources and ecosystems against cyanide pollution from mining activities, and to carry out an ordinary impact assessment at the same time. The Commission and Member States are asked not to support, either directly or indirectly, any mining projects in the EU that involve cyanide technology until the general ban is applicable, nor to support any such projects in third countries.

Furthermore, Parliament calls on the Commission to:

- encourage industrial reconversion of the areas where cyanide mining was banned, through appropriate financial support for alternative green industries, renewable energy and tourism;
- propose an amendment to existing legislation on the management of waste from the extractive industries (Directive 2006/21/EC) requiring that every operating company should take out insurance to cover compensation for damage and all remedial costs incurred in restoring a site to its original ecological and chemical status in the event of an accident or malfunction. Members note that the latter directive provides for the use of cyanide in mining, at the same time laying down maximum permissible cyanide levels. Cyanide mining provides few jobs, and only for a period of eight-16 years, whilst it runs the risk of causing enormous cross-border ecological damage the cost of which is usually not met by the responsible operating companies, which generally disappear or go bankrupt, but by the state, i.e. by taxpayers.