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Ärendenr:
NV-25-049478

Finnish Environment Institute
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cc: transboundaryEIA.SEA@syke.fi

Notification in accordance with the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) regarding an upcoming application for exploitation concession in Pajala municipality, Norrbotten county

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency hereby notifies Finland, in accordance with Article 3 of the Espoo Convention of the intention to apply for an exploitation concession permit for expanded operations in Pajala municipality.

Information about the planned project

The developer, Kaunis Iron AB, intends to apply for an exploitation concession under the Swedish Minerals Act (SFS 1991:45) for an area designated as Tapuli K No. 3. Tapuli K No. 3 covers just over 30 hectares, affects the properties Pajala Kaunisvaara 13:1 and 26:4, and is located directly adjacent to the mining operations conducted by Kaunis Iron AB at the Tapuli mine, approximately 25 km north of Pajala in the Norrbotten County. The concession area currently consists mainly of forest land and wetlands. Adjacent to the north and east of the concession area lies Kaunis Irons ABs existing mining and industrial site.

If the exploitation concession is granted, the developer intends to apply for a permit under the Environmental Code for the extraction of mineral resources within the concession area and the associated operations. The activities will consist of open-pit mining and beneficiation of iron ore at the Kaunisvaara processing plant to produce a magnetite concentrate.

Attached to this notification letter is the developer's consultation document, which contains a detailed description of the project and its anticipated environmental impacts.

Upcoming procedure and applicable legislation

An exploitation concession (“bearbetningskoncession”) in accordance with the Mineral Act gives the holder the right to exploit a proven, extractable mineral deposit for a period of 25 years, which may be prolonged. The concession does not confer the right to conduct mining operations. Additional permits are required for that, including permits under the Environmental Code. The competent authority for exploitation concession is the Mining Inspectorate of Sweden (“Bergsstaten”).

According to Chapter 4 of the Swedish Minerals Act (SFS 1991:45), an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Environmental Code (SFS 1998:808) must be attached to an application for an exploitation concession. Since January 1, 2018, there is also a requirement to conduct public consultation. In order for a concession to be granted, it must concern a deposit that is likely to be economically viable, and whose location and characteristics do not make it unsuitable for the applicant to be granted the requested concession.

The concession must also comply with the so-called resource management provisions in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, Sections 1–7 of the Environmental Code. This means that the concession application must be assessed in terms of whether it is compatible with the appropriate use of land and water resources, as well as the physical environment from a public interest perspective.

If the concession is given there will be further consultations on the EIA required for the application to the environmental permit in accordance with the Environmental Code. The competent authority for the permit is the Land and Environmental Court.

General information on consultation under the Espoo Convention

According to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, a Party of origin intending to carry out a project or activity that is likely to cause significant transboundary environmental or health impacts shall notify the affected Party and, if the affected Party so wishes, initiate consultations.

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency is, pursuant to the Environmental Assessment Ordinance (2017:966), the competent authority responsible for issuing and receiving notifications and otherwise fulfilling obligations related to environmental impact assessments in a transboundary context.

Participating in the transboundary EIA-procedure

Referring to Article 3.3 of the Espoo Convention, Sweden kindly asks for eventual comments **no later than the 28th of November** at the latest and:

1. acknowledge the receipt of the notification,
2. indicate whether your state intends to participate in the EIA procedure
3. provide comments concerning the scope for the assessment of the environmental impacts of the project on your territory
4. submit any comments you might receive from the public in your state.

Kindly send the answer to this notification by e-mail to:
registrator@naturvardsverket.se cc: espoo@swedishepa.se Please indicate Case
number NV-25-049478.

This decision has been made digitally and therefore lacks signatures

For the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Nanna Wikholm
Head of Unit

Richard Kristoffersson
Point of Contact, Espoo Convention

Attachments:
Consultation document (Swedish and Finnish)

Cc:
Ministry of Climate and Enterprise, Eleonora Rönström