

Benita Ferrero-Waldner
Member of the European Commission

Rue de la Loi 200 - B-1049 Bruxelles
Wijkstraat 200 - B-1049 Brussel

Brussels, 28 JUL. 2006
A2413/D1123

Dear Dr. Lucas,

Thank you for your letter of 27 June 2006, concerning the risks to the environment that the development of a mine in the Valle de San Felix in Chile could cause. Our Delegation in Santiago is following this issue very closely.

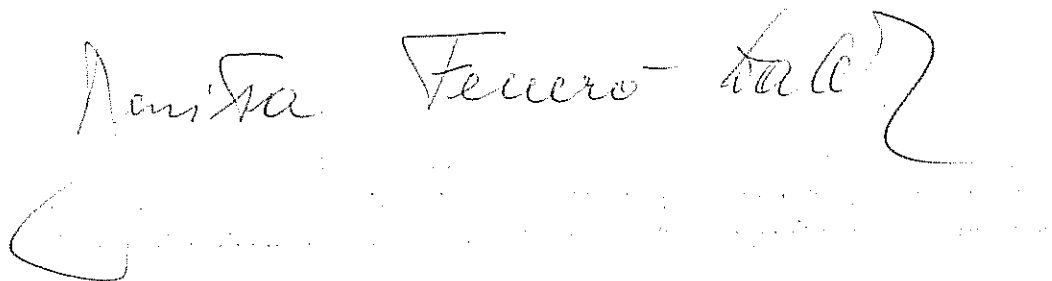
Environment is one of the areas covered by the EU-Chile Association Agreement and we have been following Chile's policy in this important sector. Furthermore, the European Commission, together with the Chilean authorities, are currently identifying a co-operation project in the area of strategic environmental assessment in Chile.

According to the environmental performance review of Chile conducted by the OECD for the period 1990-2004, "Chile has strengthened its environmental institutions" and has participated in the global efforts to tackle the environmental challenges. In fact, Chile has assumed important international obligations in the framework of the several Multilateral Environmental Agreements that it has signed.

Although in recent years Chilean authorities have implemented an active policy and different programmes to overcome environmental challenges, there is still much to be done to integrate environmental considerations more closely into other areas of public policy, to promote corporate environmental responsibility and to improve environmental management instruments.

In this context, the Commission intends to maintain an active dialogue on environmental policy and its paramount importance for the sustainable development of the country. Regarding the specific case of the mining project that you mention in your letter I can assure you that the Commission will continue to follow its development very closely.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Caroline Lucas, MEP
Suite 58
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY (UK)