

Brussels, 15. 05. 2019
Ares(2019)3459550

Dear Madams/Sirs,

First of all, please accept my apology for replying this late to your letter of 23rd January 2019, in which you raise the issue of the possible environmental impact of the antitrust remedies approved in April 2018 in the *Greek lignite* case.

The Commission has taken account of the potential environmental implications of any remedies when re-opening this competition case after the Court procedure in 2018. While the enforcement of the remedies originally proposed by Greece in 2009 would have led to the construction of new lignite-fired plants, the current remedies allow PPC's competitors to access a portion of the existing lignite capacity, without increasing in any way the use of lignite in Greece.

It is also true that, as any other Member State, Greece itself can determine the structure of its energy mix. In this regard, even after the implementation of the remedies, PPC will remain by far the main operator of lignite capacity in the country. Moreover, it appears that PPC still relies on lignite-fired capacity and is currently constructing a new lignite-fired plant. The shift toward a greener mix of energy sources will therefore rely on the decisions of the Greek State and on PPC's behaviour and its adjustment to the new environmental targets.

So while the antitrust remedy is energy neutral, the implementation result in an opening of the wholesale electricity market and in an increase in competition, which should bring a more market-based and environmentally sustainable use of current generation sources in Greece. This will incentivise all players, including PPC, to make a more cost efficient use of the existing plants and potentially lead to investments in greener generation technologies.

We trust that the opening of the market through the antitrust remedies will help introducing more competition and attracting investments for a sustainable economy in Greece.

Yours sincerely,



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