

Dr José Manuel Soria López  
Minister of Industry, Energy & Tourism  
Ministerio de Industria, Energía y Turismo  
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**Concern about seismic activities to explore hydrocarbon resources in the waters off the Balearic Islands**

Dear Minister,

We have learned that the Spanish government is just up going to decide upon whether seismic activities to explore potential oil and gas resources in the waters of the Balearic Islands are to be granted or not. At the same time we note the increasing concerns expressed by the local community, but also people from all over Europe about the potential risks and negative impacts such projects might pose to the biodiversity of the Balears. Within just a few weeks more than 200.000 people, all potential tourists, have signed a petition calling on the Spanish authorities not to grant a permit for seismic activities due to their potential impacts.

The Balearic Islands are a unique and diverse destination – among the most popular European tourism destinations – and its biodiversity plays a fundamental part to uphold this image. It is implicit that any future developments and industrial activities are undertaken in a precautionary and sustainable manner, protecting the biodiversity as well as local economy.

In this respect, we – on behalf of the Swiss tour operators and travel agencies - do share the concerns about the potential negative impact on the marine environment as well as the local economy and the wider risks the exploration of oil and gas resources pose to the islands.

We therefore do hope that the responsible authorities do take these concerns very seriously and file any decision in caution and long-term interest of the Islands. Reviewing the currently available information, we are of the opinion that such a decision would come to the conclusion that oil and gas exploration in this region does not fit within such a concept.

Looking forward to your answer,  
Yours sincerely,



Walter Kunz  
Executive Director