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Nicaragua requests cancellation of mining activity in the San Juan River

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Nicaragua's Government will ask Costa Rica's to cancel the concession granted to the Canadian Company Industrias Infinito S.A. authorizing the opening of a mine close to the border San Juan River.

Norman Caldera, Nicaraguan chancellor, told the Nicaraguan media yesterday that they will make a request to the Costa Rican authorities based on an impact study presented by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Nicaragua (MARENA, acronym in Spanish).

"Based on the technical report that Marena has, we will get in touch with the authorities of Costa Rica to try to influence on the cancellation of a concession that could be harmful", Caldera said.

The local study concluded that the concession authorizing the opening of an "opencast" mine given by Costa Rica to the company would cause "serious risks of pollution" to the San Juan River, which is under Nicaragua's sovereignty.

This document states that the environmental impact study carried out in the North of Costa Rica, near the river, by the license holder "has too many technical deficiencies"

"The environmental impact study that was carried out by the Canadian company, Infinito S.A., to be presented to the Government of Costa Rica in order to apply for the concession, does not foresee the environmental damages it would cause to the river", the document states.

It also adds that the sedimentation and erosion caused by a mining company will be impossible to stop later on.

The mine, that has not started operations yet, would be located at the Costa Rican village of Las Crucitas, seven kilometers away from the San Juan River.

Caldera said that, even the mine is expected to be open in Costa Rica, "we have the right to complain since the river basin is going to be affected and Nicaragua, as the river owner, has to watch over the protection of its basin"

When consulted on this, Jesus Carvajal, general manager of the company, affirmed he was not aware of such declaration, thus he preferred not to refer to the issue for the time being.