

Concluded Main Hearing – One Step Closer to Long-Term Mining Operations in Tornedalen

The main hearing this week in the Land and Environment Court of Appeal regarding Kaunis Iron's case for continued and expanded mining operations has concluded, with a ruling expected in 2025. – I hope that we will now reach a final decision, allowing us to take important steps toward long-term operations in Tornedalen, says Åsa Allan, Deputy CEO of Kaunis Iron.

From November 4 to 7, the Land and Environment Court of Appeal held the main hearing in Pajala Folkets Hus regarding our application for continued and expanded mining operations in Tapuli, Sahavaara, and Palotieva, as well as related activities at the enrichment plant in Kaunisvaara.

During the hearing, the primary focus was on the aspects of the permit that the opposing parties had contested, although we also outlined how the future mining operations are planned to be conducted. No Swedish authorities opted to appeal the previous decision.

– We feel confident in the material we have developed over a long period and had the opportunity to present it to the court and the opposing parties. In addition to the information presented, there is extensive written documentation that will also form the basis for the court's decision. Our thorough internal controls also confirm that we comply with the current conditions in the permit, says Åsa Allan, Deputy CEO.

Focus During the Hearing

The focus of the hearing largely been around truck transport and how the water we discharge might potentially affect the Muonio River.

– As an example of the thorough work behind this application, which we presented during the proceedings, we built a flow model of the Muonio River by using sonar mapping on the relevant parts of the river. Additionally, electrofishing was conducted to survey the fish population, says Åsa Allan.

On Wednesday, at the request of the Gabna Sami village, a field inspection along the logistics chain was conducted, with stops at two locations, just west of the Suptallen interchange and near the transfer station in Pitkäjärvi by the E10 highway.

Kaunis Iron was primarily represented by Åsa Allan, Deputy CEO, and Hans Djurberg, Head of Sustainability, focusing on the overall operations and the company's collaboration on reindeer husbandry issues. Sven-Erik Olsen, site manager in Junosuando, described how we work on driver onboarding, protocols for wildlife and reindeer on the roads, and continuous improvement efforts to prevent traffic accidents using the latest technology.

Ruling Expected in 2025

Thursday, November 7, was the final day of the hearing, dominated by the closing arguments from the attending parties. In conclusion, the court announced the continued proceedings and the timeline for the ruling, which will be issued on February 7, 2025, at 11:00 am.

The journey toward a new permit has been ongoing for several years with many developments along the way. The application was submitted in 2019, and securing a permit after such a lengthy process is now critical—not only for us as a company but also for Tornedalen, the Norrbotten region, and Sweden as a global supplier of iron ore.

– I hope that we will now reach a final decision, allowing us to take important steps toward long-term operations, says Åsa Allan.

We see that the local community supports our vision of establishing a mining operation here for future generations. This is shown in the attitude surveys conducted by Kantar Sifo (Verian) during the years we have operated the mine. In 2022, as many as 88 percent of Pajala residents supported the company's plans to expand operations with two new open-pit mines, and in 2023, this support increased to 90 percent.

Contact**Åsa Allan**

Deputy CEO Kaunis Iron

Phone: 072-724 41 20

E-mail: asa.allan@kaunisiron.se

Hans Djurberg

Head of Sustainability Kaunis Iron

Phone: 070-640 65 89

E-mail: hans.djurberg@kaunisiron.se

Image Attachments

Åsa Allan, Deputy CEO