



PRESS RELEASE

Focus on raw materials to overcome the crisis European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials key to securing minerals and metals supply for Europe

The official position of the European Technology Platform on Sustainable Mineral Resources (ETP SMR), an industry-driven forum, on the probable forthcoming European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials was presented today by Henryk Karaś, Chair of the ETP SMR High Level Group to Director Herbert von Bose from the European Commission's DG Research & Innovation, in the form of a new Policy Document. An even more stagnating economy could be generated by the lack of sustainable supply of raw materials, crucial for sectors like renewable energy which needs rare earth elements, a group of minerals, to manufacture wind turbines and photovoltaic panels. However, 97% of the world production of these minerals is Chinese.

“Several strategic sectors of the European economy heavily depend on the availability of mineral resources” explains Henryk Karaś. “These resources are essential to our developed high-tech economy as a whole and, more specifically, to the products and technologies that will allow a transition towards a competitive and sustainable European economy. It is crucial to point towards sustainability and economic development through **secure access to raw materials and the continued development of recycling**”.

In fact, for the sectors of information technology, renewable and efficient energy production, investment, medical devices and construction that provide **a total added value of €1,324 billion** and **employment for some 30 million people**, access to minerals and metals is vital.

Nevertheless, the EU heavily depends on imports of metal concentrates (EU domestic production 3%), while the increased use of recycled scrap (40-60% of input of EU base metal production) is not sufficient to meet growing demand. In addition, the EU faces major problems in accessing its scrap as exports of scrap and end-of-life products containing valuable raw materials has increased dramatically over the last decade (more than 125%) while imports have dropped significantly (-40%).

The long-term sustainability of these sectors and in turn the achievement of the EU 2020 objectives of moving towards a competitive and sustainable economy requires that **the EU minerals and metals industry will have secure access to raw materials in the required quantity and quality and at competitive cost.**

European Technology Platforms are set to assist the EU in defining medium to long-term research and technological objectives and developing roadmaps to achieve them. The ETP SMR unites stakeholders from the minerals and metals industry, geological surveys and the research and academic community around the major technological challenges to the sector. It strives to jointly act towards providing technological and policy solutions and form a common vision for the future.

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