

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Conflict Minerals Vote: political lines are set, now it's time for implementation

Brussels, 16 March 2017 – The European Parliament’s Plenary has today adopted the final Conflict Mineral Regulation resulting from triologue negotiations between EU institutions. This paves the way for the Regulation to be implemented after the next four years.

The European non-ferrous metals industry is pleased that policymakers will now be able to move from political discussions to actual implementation. If we can get the details right, then Europe has an opportunity to build on our sector’s high standards of responsible sourcing. If not, then the Regulation will unfairly penalise the companies that have already invested into being conflict-free.

Guy Thiran, Eurometaux’s Director General, commented: “We’re pleased that EU institutions have been able to reach an agreement after several years of difficult political negotiations. The final Regulation might not be as effective as we’d pushed for, but we’re now looking forward to moving from words to actual implementation.

Our priority is to make sure the procedure for recognising existing due-diligence schemes is workable and efficient. Europe’s smelters and refiners of 3Ts and Gold have already invested into becoming conflict-free through compliance with voluntary initiatives. EU policymakers have agreed that this best practice should be recognised – now’s the time to make that happen”.

EU producers comply with several due-diligence schemes, which are based on OECD guidelines and include third-party auditing. More than 300 companies participate in the Conflict Free Sourcing Initiative, while 99% of cassterite imports from Central African countries are controlled through the Tin Supply Chain Initiative. Overall, Thomson Reuters have concluded that EU smelters operate “to the highest standards”.

Guy Thiran continued: “We do have concerns with several loopholes in the agreed Regulation. In particular, the exemption for gold imports lower than 100kg is an invitation for circumvention. A threshold has been included to avoid overburdening dentists and other small organisations importing gold in small quantities. But 100kg is enough gold for over 60,000 dental crowns. Do dentists really import such large amounts? We’ll continue to request lower thresholds to prevent unlawful companies from evading requirements”.

Eurometaux is now ready to work constructively with the European Commission to ensure the Conflict Regulation is implemented well. Other important areas include the white list of exempted smelters and how Member State controls will be implemented. We’re also concerned about possible circumvention over semi-finished/finished products as the whole supply chain is not covered in the current legislation.

ABOUT EUROMETAUX

Eurometaux is the decisive voice of non-ferrous metals producers and recyclers in Europe. With an annual turnover of €120bn, our members represent an essential industry for European society that businesses in almost every sector depend on. Together, we are leading Europe towards a more circular future through the endlessly recyclable potential of metals.

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