

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

Critical Raw Materials Act: Making Europe's metals supply the Green Deal's foundation

Brussels, 16 March 2023: "Today's Critical Raw Materials Act confirms there will be no energy transition and no Green Deal without metals. Europe must act urgently to avoid unhealthy dependencies or supply bottlenecks. We welcome today's proposal, which can be a real paradigm shift for Europe's raw materials policy if implemented quickly. It now just needs expanding to rightly cover the full range of metals needed for the twin transition. Europe's metals supply chain has the ambition to deliver", said Guy Thiran, Director General of Eurometaux (Europe's metals association), after the Critical Raw Materials Act publication.

Almost all the technologies prioritised in today's accompanying Net Zero Industry Act (wind turbines, solar PV systems, batteries, grid technologies, hydrogen electrolyzers) require an increased supply of metals and minerals. A [2022 study](#) by KU Leuven – commissioned by Eurometaux – has warned of looming metals supply bottlenecks without the EU taking urgent action to maintain and expand its metals supply chains, while securing responsible imports from third countries.

Europe has a meaningful [project pipeline](#) for the mining, processing and recycling of base metals, battery materials, and rare earths (inside and outside its territory). These can be brought online by 2030 under the right conditions, adding to Europe's existing production with the same guarantee of high climate and environmental performance.

Guy Thiran continued: "We support the Act's 2030 production goals, bold proposals for accelerating project permitting, and ESG provisions. This is rightly accompanied by a global strategy for securing necessary imports. There is no time to waste. Investing companies need guarantees of EU and national support urgently, so they can commit to Europe amidst counteroffers from the US and other regions".

"The Commission's proposals to streamline the permitting process are crucial to prevent avoidable delays for strategic mining, processing, and recycling projects. These projects need to be online by 2030 when global supply bottlenecks are highest, while keeping environmental checks and community involvement. The EU must also act for the survival and competitiveness of its existing metals capacity and the immediate rebound of curtailed production from the ongoing energy crisis".

The European Commission's proposal includes a list of strategic raw materials they judge will have rising demand and potential supply challenges this decade. Strategic projects linked to these materials can benefit from accelerated permitting procedures and new financing. But several crucial metals to the energy transition have not yet been included - like aluminium, silver, zinc – despite EU capacity & investment plans.

Evangelos Mytilineos, Eurometaux's President, stated: "Today's strategic raw materials list must not be the finished picture. We look forward to working with co-legislators to make sure the full range of raw materials needed for the energy and digital transition are rightly covered under the final legislation".

He also put the focus on wider policy action: "The Critical Raw Materials Act now needs to be a compass for directing Europe's wider policy agenda. Achieving the Act's 2030 benchmarks will require concrete follow-up action to address the other structural challenges facing upstream industrial activities in Europe. Metals operations and projects today remain challenged by high energy prices, unpredictable chemicals rules, and the risk of dumping from subsidised imports. We hope today's important proposals are the start of Europe's new industrial policy story and not a drop in the ocean".

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About Eurometaux: Eurometaux is a trade association representing the collective European non-ferrous metals industry, including miners, smelters, refiners, fabricators and recyclers.

