

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

## Critical Raw Materials Act: An unmissable opportunity to help secure the energy transition

Brussels, 9 March 2023: “With a strong Critical Raw Materials Act, Europe’s metals supply chain can help deliver the metals necessary for the energy and digital transition. We fully support the European Commission in their urgency of action to address the 2030 risk of raw materials bottlenecks for clean energy technologies. Next week starts an important longer process for re-aligning Europe’s industrial and climate goals” said Guy Thiran, Eurometaux Director General, the week before the Critical Raw Materials Act release.

Europe’s clean energy goals will increase demand for base metals (aluminium, copper, zinc, silicon), battery materials (lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite, manganese), rare earths, platinum group metals, and other technology metals. These materials are required to build all necessary energy transition technologies (RES units, electric vehicles, hydrogen electrolysers, batteries, electricity grids etc). Once extracted, new metal volumes will provide a permanent resource for recycling across this century, avoiding billions of tonnes of extracted fossil fuels. But Europe must address the short-term challenges of supply security and sustainability.

Evangelos Mytilineos, President of Eurometaux, continued: “Our companies have ambitions to invest into responsible extraction, processing, and recycling activities that will help to secure Europe’s clean energy supply chains. The Critical Raw Materials Act is a key starting point to improve Europe’s strategic autonomy, through 2030 production goals, clear ESG provisions, a streamlining of the permitting process, and new financing support. This is rightly being accompanied with a global strategy for securing necessary imports. We welcome these steps, and encourage that the EU builds them into the wider necessary debate on Europe’s industrial policy framework and its overall consistency”.

Europe’s metals supply chain is at a crossroads in 2023. A large percentage of Europe’s existing metals processing industry has been forced to curtail production due to the ongoing energy crisis, and no new mines have opened in the continent for the last 15 years. But EU companies have high ambitions to invest into new capacity across the supply chain and further improve the climate and environmental footprint of their operations. The Critical Raw Materials Act should be a turning point to start enabling this ambition, stopping the worsening pattern of Europe outsourcing its raw materials challenge to other regions.

Guy Thiran continued: “Metals produced responsibly in Europe have a lower environmental and climate footprint to competing regions (as well as European players operating overseas). It’s crucial that the EU helps streamline the permitting process, preventing avoidable project delays. These operations need to be online by 2030 when supply bottlenecks are highest, while keeping environmental checks. We’re pleased the Commission aims to pragmatically address both the economic and sustainability dimensions in its proposal”.

Evangelos Mytilineos concluded: “Looking ahead, we will continue working with the EU institutions to ensure that our strategic raw materials operations also have a supportive and coherent package of wider policies, enabling them to use more clean energy at affordable prices, safely manage any chemicals risks, and compete fairly with subsidised imports”.

**Contact:** Chris Heron, Communication & Public Affairs Director | heron@eurometaux.be | +32 (0) 493 18 89 63

**About Eurometaux:** Eurometaux is a trade association representing the collective European non-ferrous metals industry, including miners, smelters, refiners, fabricators and recyclers. The industry employs 500,000 people across over 900 facilities, with an annual turnover of €120bn.

