Mineral deposits of public importance

Specific Challenge: The appropriate and sustainable supply of raw materials requires framework conditions which relate to mineral policies, permitting procedure and data reporting system, raw materials knowledge infrastructure, research and innovation coordination, and international cooperation. Mineral policies are sometimes not clear, too dispersed in their implementation or insufficiently linked to other related policies (e.g. land-use planning and management) to be fully effective. A common understanding of which mineral deposits are of public importance is lacking. Permitting procedures can be lengthy and sometimes conflict with other public authorities’ requirements. Knowledge of raw materials reserves and resources is dispersed, terminology is often heterogeneous and reporting standards vary throughout the Member States. There is no raw materials knowledge infrastructure at EU level.

Research and development in the area of raw materials is scattered between different players. Further coordination is required between industrial players, researchers in the EU and across the whole value chain and EU and Member State funding authorities. There is a need to better exploit synergies in R&D with the best world players in raw materials technology and scientific developments, as well as to learn from the experience of raw materials-producing countries.

These specific challenges are identified in the Strategic Implementation Plan of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Raw Materials.

Scope: The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of between EUR 1 to 2 million would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Proposals shall address the following issue:
Mineral deposits of public importance: developing a concept and methodology for defining and protecting the mineral deposits of public importance with an adequate regulatory (including permitting) or guidance framework similar to NATURA 2000 in order to ensure the best use of the mineral deposits of public importance in the future. It should develop an appropriate mapping framework with the detailed definition and qualifying conditions of the concept of mineral deposits of public importance, covering all minerals with stress on the occurrence of critical minerals and defining deposits of local, regional, national or EU interest and importance and their safeguarding. It should also examine how to incorporate the concept into the national and regional minerals policies as well as in land use planning policies of different scales through different policy scenarios and their impacts, and test the methodology on several areas and scales for ensuring robustness at all scales (local, regional, national and EU) and transferability across Member States. The proposal shall engage all relevant actors across the EU from local, regional, national to EU levels, including civil society, relevant representatives of public administration and experts on mineral deposits, land use and development planning, mining and related legislation (particularly permitting), and the relevant industries.

Expected impact: In the medium to longer term enhanced impact of research and innovation activities through better identification of R&I priorities, improved coordination of EU and Member States' research and innovation programmes and funded activities, and synergies with international research and innovation programmes. Greater EU influence in multilateral processes and better support to implementation of international commitments. Contribution to evidence-based policy and appropriate, cost-effective management, planning and adaptation decisions by the public sector, businesses, industry and society addressing global challenges in the EU and beyond through the provision and effective communication of trustworthy science-based information. Establishing and maintaining strong and sustainable relationships with the countries concerned. Improved conditions for sustainable access and supply of raw materials in the EU. Facilitated decision-making at EU, national, regional and local levels and in the minerals industry. Safeguarding of mineral wealth for future generations by defining mineral deposits of public importance. Stable and competitive supply of raw materials from EU sources. Promotion of good governance and facilitation of public acceptance in the EU. Increased competitiveness of the EU industry and minerals supply from EU sources. Increased transparency of EU raw materials policies and legislation. Increased EU raw materials knowledge for different stakeholders, increased transparency of EU raw materials information through completion of an inventory of raw materials. Better understanding of longer term raw materials research and innovation needs and initiatives by the wider society in the EU. Facilitated translation of the industrial needs into governmental planning, policy and decision making and vice versa resulting in an improved environment for the industry in the EU. Contribution to achieving the objectives of the EIP on Raw Materials.
Type of action: Coordination and support actions

Last update: 25 March 2015
Record number: 664589


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