Fostering international raw materials cooperation

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www.intraw.eu

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The INTRAW project has been formulated with the objective of mapping best practices and boosting cooperation opportunities on raw materials with technologically advanced non-EU countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, South Africa and the United States) in response to similar global challenges.

The project will address:

- Research and innovation
- Raw materials policies and strategies
- Joint educational and skills programmes
- Licensing and permitting procedures, royalties and tax policies
- Data reporting systems
- Exploration, extraction, processing and recycling practices
- Management and substitution of Critical Raw Materials

The ultimate goal is to set up and launch the European Union’s International Observatory for Raw Materials as a permanent body to continue as an independent entity after the project’s end.

WHY INTRAW?

In the last decade, a structural change has taken place in global mineral markets and the global demand for raw materials stands at the bottom of a new growth curve. In this perspective, safeguarding the domestic minerals supply will be challenging for the European Union and all other technologically advanced countries to ensure economic sustainability and to improve our quality of life.

In this sense, the European Commission’s communication “The raw materials initiative - meeting our critical needs for growth and jobs in Europe” (November 2008) recognises the need to address the raw materials issue at a high political level to ensure future security of supply for Europe.

The European Union’s overall growth strategy “Europe 2020” (2010) outlines the EU’s aim to develop into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. In this context, seven so-called flagship initiatives were presented as new engines to boost growth and jobs.

Two of these initiatives are particularly relevant for the INTRAW project:

- The core message of “An Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era” is that industry must be placed centre stage if Europe is to remain a global economic leader. Only a European Raw Materials Policy targeting competitiveness and sustainability on an international level can muster the critical mass of change and coordination needed for success.
- “A resource-efficient Europe” intends to support the shift towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy to achieve sustainable growth. Europe needs technological improvements and significant changes in the fields of raw materials research, recycling, energy, industrial production and transport systems.

In addition, the European Commission established in 2010 the European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs). An EIP on Raw Materials was set up in 2012 to promote research and innovation along the entire value chain of raw materials.

INTRAW will play a key role in the alignment of the R&I activities among the EU countries, boosting synergies with international research and innovation programmes, and reinforcing the European role and scientific capabilities for the sustainable development of raw materials for EU industry in line with the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Raw Materials.

INTRAW will:

- Enhance the EU’s scientific capabilities in the raw materials area in the mid-term and long-term;
- Promote evidence-based policies and appropriate, cost-effective management, planning and adaptation decisions by the public sector;
- Contribute to the transparency and harmonization of mineral policies all over the EU;
- Enable a better alignment of the R&I activities among the EU research facilities and universities, boosting synergies with international research and innovation programmes;
- Benefit the EU industry conditions for sustainable access and supply of raw materials (within the EU) and;
- Foster a stable and synergic cooperation with technologically advanced countries.

The services offered by the International Observatory for Raw Materials will include:

- A comprehensive database on cooperation opportunities between EU/individual EU members and international cooperation countries;
- Industry-financed grants and other research cooperation activities;
- Information on events relevant for international cooperation on raw materials;
- Communication activities towards the active development of R&I activities between the EU, individual EU member and technologically advanced countries.