

COBALT Newsletter July 2014



cobalt

awareness . learning . dialogue

Contributing to Building of Awareness, Learning and Transfer of knowledge on sustainable use of raw materials

Dear colleague,

COBALT (<http://www.cobalt-fp7.eu/>), a project funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration, provides a platform for dialogue addressing key challenges on the route towards more sustainable management of raw materials, including issues of raw materials supply and use. In this respect it brings together a multitude of actors from industry and business (including SME and larger businesses), civil society, geological surveys, policy making (EU, national and regional level) and academia to stimulate a joint debate on sustainable raw materials management.

If you want to get in touch with us or you are interested to learn more about upcoming COBALT activities and events, please contact us: cobalt@cobalt-fp7.eu

With best regards,
The COBALT team

This COBALT Newsletter informs about the following topics and activities on sustainable raw materials management in Europe:

- **SAVE THE DATE - "Towards sustainable mineral production - The role of industry and civil society", Second COBALT Regional Civil Society-Industry Dialogue Copenhagen, 8 October 2014**
- **Upcoming COBALT EU and Regional Dialogues**
- **2nd COBALT EU Dialogue and COBALT Policy Brief No. 3: "Urban mines, consumer behaviour and producer responsibility in a circular economy"**
- **1st COBALT Regional Dialogue and COBALT Policy Brief No. 4: "Sustainable raw materials management in the Iberian Peninsula: the role of industry and consumers in driving circular economy"**
- **Education for sustainable mineral production - Tackling knowledge gaps and skill shortages**

- **Other news**

- 20 critical raw materials - major challenge for EU industry
- European Commission communication “Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe”
- Recommendations on the framework conditions for the extraction of non-energy raw materials in the European Union
- PRESOURCE – Competence platform for resource efficiency in Central Europe
- European Commission plan will seek to boost SME resource efficiency
- Conference on European Rare Earth Resources in Greece

SAVE THE DATE - “Towards sustainable mineral production - The role of industry and civil society”, Second COBALT Regional Civil Society-Industry Dialogue Copenhagen, 8 October 2014

The Second Regional Civil Society-Industry Dialogue, “Towards sustainable mineral production - The role of industry and civil society”, will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark on October 8, 2014.

The event will bring together key regional civil society and industry stakeholders with policy-makers and researchers to foster debate, networking and exchange. The Dialogue will feature presentations from key stakeholders, as well as case studies on sustainable practices within the production of minerals and metals from primary raw materials. The dialogue will also provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on their own role in driving sustainable mineral production, and to begin investigating possible pathways for inter-stakeholder collaboration.

For more information about this event or about registration, please send an email to MGheoldus@bio.deloitte.fr. Please also check the COBALT website (<http://www.cobalt-fp7.eu/>) for regular updates on this Regional Dialogue over the next weeks.

Upcoming COBALT EU and Regional Dialogues

3rd Regional Civil Society-Industry Dialogue in November/December 2014 in Bucharest

Throughout the COBALT project, three European and three regional-level dialogues will be organised in order to foster debate and exchange between key stakeholders, particularly those from industry and civil society. EU-level dialogues will address key broad themes of relevance to raw material use – besides ecodesign and new business models, urban mining

and producer responsibility, as well as new technologies and community engagement during materials extraction. The first regional Dialogue took place in Madrid in June 2014 (see information below), the second Regional Dialogue will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark on 8 October 2014 (see above). The Regional dialogues, which will take place in Spain, Denmark and Romania, will shed light on relevant issues of regional importance.

More information on past and future Dialogue events are available on the COBALT project homepage (www.cobalt-fp7.eu).

2nd COBALT EU Dialogue and COBALT Policy Brief No. 3: “Urban mines, consumer behaviour and producer responsibility in a circular economy”

The 2nd COBALT EU Dialogue, which was held on 6 June 2014 in Brussels, brought together a group of high-level stakeholders around the topic of “Urban mines, consumer behaviour and producer responsibility in a circular economy”. The event focused on recycling and material recovery from the fast-growing and resource-rich waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) waste stream. Drawing on presentations by keynote speakers, practical examples and their own experience, participants reflected on the role of key stakeholders in driving urban mining and WEEE recycling, as well as on potential avenues for multi-stakeholder collaboration. Key messages emerging from the day’s presentations and discussions include the following:

- Organisational and technological improvements along the product and recycling value chains can contribute substantially to material recovery from electric and electronic products;
- Urban mining and WEEE recycling involves a multitude of actors, who at times remain fragmented and disconnected from each other and could benefit from greater exchange and collaboration to improve efficiency and effectiveness; and
- Successful multi-stakeholder collaboration could benefit from factors such as: open and transparent communication; established incentives; clear understanding of actors’ goals and visions and improved data availability and market visibility

A **policy brief**, which summarizes key elements and insights from the day’s presentations and discussions, and provides certain policy relevant recommendations, is now available for download under <http://www.cobalt-fp7.eu/download>

1st COBALT Regional Dialogue and COBALT Policy Brief No. 4: “Sustainable raw materials management in the Iberian Peninsula: the role of industry and consumers in driving circular economy”

The first COBALT Regional Civil Society-Industry Dialogue entitled “Sustainable raw materials management and circular economy in the Iberian Peninsula: the role of industry and

consumers in optimizing the raw materials value chain”, was held on 12 June 2014 in Madrid. The Dialogue had a focus on industrial and particularly metallic sensitive raw materials: those with a high environmental or social impact at any phase in the supply chain, used in some products highly relevant to the consumer and consumer products. During the workshop, participants reflected on the role of key stakeholders in sustainable raw materials management, as well as on potential avenues for multi-stakeholder collaboration in a context of circular economy. Key messages emerging from the day’s presentations and discussions include the following:

- In the transition to a circular economy there is a need of sustainable extraction for a secure supply of raw materials. Some ongoing regional policies and initiatives foster sustainability in the mining sector with fiscal incentives and certification tools to promote disclosure and transparency;
- Regional governments are already taking actions to foster better implementation and enforcement of EU waste legislation. However the barriers which prevent recycling such as little incentives to recycle critical materials and insufficient public awareness need to be further addressed; and
- Despite the key role civil society organisations can play in optimizing the raw materials value chain, further efforts should be taken to enhance communication channels and to increase their representation in decision taking fora.

A **policy brief**, summarizing key elements of workshop presentations and discussions is now available for download under <http://www.cobalt-fp7.eu/download>

Education for sustainable mineral production - Tackling knowledge gaps and skill shortages

The increasing importance of eco-efficiency and sustainability in mineral production presents challenges to professionals as well as non-experts. An important key to a clearer understanding of the raw material value chain and to higher technical skills lies in an enhanced educational offer. Within the COBALT project this subject is now tackled by developing course syllabi and blueprints for a set of training courses that are tailored for specialists and for laypersons.

Other news

20 critical raw materials - major challenge for EU industry

The European Commission elaborated a [revised list of Critical Raw Materials](#) including 13 of the 14 materials identified in the previous list of 2011 (COM 2011/25 Final), with only tantalum moving out of the list (due to a lower supply risk). Six new materials appear on the list: borates, chromium, coking coal, magnesite, phosphate rock and silicon metal bringing the number up to 20 raw materials which are now considered critical by the European

Commission. The purpose of the list of 20 critical raw materials is to contribute to the implementation of the EU industrial policy and to ensure that European industrial competitiveness is strengthened through actions in other policy areas. Overall, three main aspects that can be underlined regarding this review: 1) the new list has used a comparable methodology as the one used in 2010; 2) It has widened the scope of raw materials analysed (54 non-energy, non-food materials were analysed against 41 in 2010); and It has refined the analysis and using additional data (i.e. it has divided rare earths into 'heavy' and 'light' categories). See more at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/raw-materials/critical/index_en.htm

European Commission communication “Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe”

On 2 July, 2014, the Commission adopted proposals to turn Europe into a more circular economy and boost recycling in the Member States. The Communication shows how new growth and job opportunities will emerge from a more efficient use of resources. Greater efficiency will be driven by innovative design, better performing and more durable products and production processes, forward-looking business models and technical advances to turn waste into a resource. The package that accompanies the Communication aims to create a framework to help the circular economy become a reality, with policies that are better inter-linked, smart regulation and active support from research and innovation. See more at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/pdf/circular-economy-communication.pdf>

Recommendations on the framework conditions for the extraction of non-energy raw materials in the European Union

An Ad-hoc Working Group on Best Practices on Minerals policy and legal framework, information framework, land-use planning and permitting (launched in 2009), which is a sub-group on the Raw Materials Supply Group, has prepared a recommendation report on framework conditions for the extraction of non-energy raw materials. The starting point of this report is the need to implement the Raw Materials Initiative, in particular its second pillar, which relates to fostering a sustainable supply of raw materials within the European Union from domestic resources. The report provides insights in terms of state of play and challenges and best practice examples on the existing framework conditions for non-energy extractive industry in the European Union, specifically, referring to 1) the policy and legal framework, 2) information framework, 3) Land-use planning, and 4) permitting and authorisation. See more at: <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/5571/attachments/1/translations/en/renditions/native>

PRESOURCE – Competence platform for resource efficiency in Central Europe

The PRESOURCE project aims at increasing the resource productivity, especially in small and medium sized enterprises (SME) of the manufacturing sector, in the countries of Central Europe. PRESOURCE partners have gathered a broad range of information on relevant actors, their respective activities and support mechanisms in the field of resource efficiency. PRESOURCE facilitates the exchange of actors on both policy and technological good practice as well as on financing schemes for resource efficiency measures. Information on relevant actors, their activities, events, documents, tools and good practice examples can be accessed free of charge for each partner country as well as transnationally. The PRESOURCE Online Competence Platform is continuously updated and enables intermediaries from public, private and scientific institutions to use the content in their daily work:

<http://www.resourceefficiencyatlas.eu/>

European Commission plan will seek to boost SME resource efficiency

A Green action plan for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to be published soon by the European Commission, will set out a series of measures that are proposed to be taken at European level to encourage resource efficiency among SMEs, to promote "green entrepreneurship" and to make it easier for SMEs to access domestic and international markets for eco-innovative products and services. See more at:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoap/about-eco-innovation/good-practices/eu/european-commission-plan-will-seek-to-boost-sme-resource-efficiency_en.htm

Conference on European Rare Earth Resources in Greece

The 1st conference on European Rare Earth Resources (ERES 2014) will take place on 4-7 September, 2014, in Milos, Greece, in the framework of the EURARE project („Development of a sustainable exploitation scheme for Europe’s rare earth ore deposits”). The scientific conference emphasises topics such as i) European perspective for a rare earth element (REE) industry, ii) REE exploitation policy issues, iii) REE urban mining/recycling, or iv) environmental impacts (gains and losses through REE utilization and REE extraction).

Andreas Endl (Vienna University of Economics and Business) will present research undertaken in the context of the COBALT project on a comparative analysis of national raw materials and mineral policy approaches that address rare earth element challenges and formulate policy responses in the context of general raw materials policy in Europe. More specifically, his presentation will shed light on the involvement of stakeholders, policy design and implementation of national raw material and mineral strategies in four European Union Member States (GR, SE, FI, AT).

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