

COBALT Newsletter February 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 new project funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for research, 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:

- **COBALT Opening Conference Report: What can we learn from existing needs and perspectives in relation to sustainable raw materials management in Europe for joint future action?**
- **COBALT report on mineral raw material related education**
- **First COBALT EU Civil Society-Industry Dialogue, "Ecodesign and New Business Models in a Circular Economy", Brussels, 27 February 2014**
- **Upcoming COBALT EU and Regional Dialogues**
- **Other news**
 - European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials: Strategic Implementation Plan
 - New Call for proposal: A new KIC tackling societal challenges related to raw materials

- 2nd workshop of the Innovation Network for Substitution of Critical Raw Materials
- IMAGINE: Industrial Minerals Associations' Global Innovative Network
- STIMULATE: New European research project on awareness for advanced materials

COBALT Opening Conference Report: What can we learn from existing needs and perspectives in relation to sustainable raw materials management in Europe for joint future action?

The **opening conference** of the COBALT project, held on November 28-29, 2013 in Brussels, helped exploring different views and establishing an open, respectful multi-stakeholder dialogue. More than 80 participants from all over Europe attended the event and engaged into this dialogue on future options. The debate highlighted that

- sustainable raw materials management will require integration of different and differing priorities present in the discourse, such as
 - increasing recycling, substitution and more sustainably using domestic mineral resources
 - and reducing virgin material consumption within Europe,
- looming challenges, e.g. increasing resource scarcities and environmental degradation, will likely cause shifts in priorities in the future
- so that therefore an inclusive and respectful dialogue is needed to openly debate critical issues and to form new partnerships in order to take sustainable raw materials policy implementation forward.

The **conference report**, which summarizes all presentations, group debates and discussion outcomes, is now available for download under <http://www.cobalt-fp7.eu/conference>

COBALT report on mineral raw material related education

The COBALT report “**Education Related to Mineral Raw Materials in the European Union**” has now been released. The publication constitutes a preliminary report on available study programmes and skill shortages related to the EU mineral raw materials sector.

The main contribution of the report is a **comprehensive mapping of higher education study programmes in the European Union, within fields related to the raw materials value chain**. The educational offers are compared against industrial activities within various regions and put in context with national and EU-level strategies and policy objectives. This enables an evaluation of the relationship between educational supply and industrial demands. The availability of education is mostly found to correspond to the needs of local industry, but some notable regional imbalances could also be identified. A few educational institutions

have the ability to address cross-value chain skill and knowledge issues, but in most EU Member States this capacity is missing.

Further work will be focused towards development of syllabi and planning of training courses to overcome the knowledge gaps and skill shortages identified during the mapping phase.

The report was published in January 2014 and is now available to download at <http://www.cobalt-fp7.eu/download>

First COBALT EU Civil Society-Industry Dialogue, "Ecodesign and New Business Models in a Circular Economy", Brussels, 27 February 2014

The first COBALT EU stakeholder dialogue will take place on 27 February 2014 in Brussels. It will bring together key stakeholders to explore the role of both ecodesign (and specifically design for reuse and recycling) and new business models in enabling more efficient product and resource management, extending product lifetimes, and promoting a circular economy.

This first EU Dialogue will feature presentations from industry and civil society, as well as case studies on innovative approaches to reducing material use and promoting a circular economy. The dialogue will also provide ample opportunity for participants to exchange perspectives and to begin investigating possible pathways for collaboration.

For more information about this event or about registration, please send an email to manuela.gheoldus@biois.com

Upcoming COBALT EU and Regional Dialogues

2nd EU Dialogue on Urban Mining in Bergamo (IT) in May 2014, following the Symposium on Urban Mining

1st Regional Dialogue in June 2014 in Madrid

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, participants will exchange on urban mining and producer responsibility, as well as new technologies and community engagement during materials extraction. The second EU Dialogue is planned to take place in Bergamo, Italy, back-to-back with a Symposium on Urban Mining. The Regional dialogues, which will take place in Spain, Sweden and Romania, will shed light on relevant issues of regional importance. The first Regional Dialogue will take place in Madrid in June, 2014.

More information on these forthcoming events will be available soon and also posted on the COBALT project homepage (www.cobalt-fp7.eu).

Other news

European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials: Strategic Implementation Plan

The **Strategic Implementation Plan** (SIP, adopted September 2013) is the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials' action plan. It outlines a detailed schedule with regard to EIP objectives, targets and methodology and detailed action for achieving its targets. The SIP has been elaborated through a multi-stakeholder process involving industry, EU Member States, research organisations and other relevant stakeholders. (see also <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/raw-materials/en/content/about-sip>)

New Call for proposal: A new KIC tackling societal challenges related to raw materials

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology launched a selection process on February 14 to set up a new Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) on raw materials. These autonomous public-private partnerships support innovation and in this context create business opportunities to foster sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution.

2nd workshop of the Innovation Network for Substitution of Critical Raw Materials

The CRM_InnoNet project (<http://www.criticalrawmaterials.eu/>), funded by the European Commission under the FP7 programme, is organizing the 2nd Innovation Network Workshop in the field of substitution of critical raw materials. Special focus will be given to strategic sectors such as Energy, Transport and ICT with the presence of key speakers as well as participatory activities.

The event is open for all stakeholders who are involved in the whole value chain of Critical Raw Materials and willing to exchange ideas and visions for enhancing the competitiveness of the EU R&D&I, industry and economy in the area of substitution of Critical Raw Materials.

For more information, please see <http://www.criticalrawmaterials.eu/blog/news-events/>

IMAGINE: Industrial Minerals Associations' Global Innovative Network

The Industrial Minerals Associations' Global Innovative Network (IMAGINE) is the future international platform on industrial minerals. It facilitates dialogue between the relevant global stakeholders in parallel with the creation of a network of Industrial minerals focal points in the Asia-Pacific region.

For more information, please see www.ima-europe.eu

STIMULATE: New European research project on awareness for advanced materials

The main target of European Commission FP7 project STIMULATE is to stimulate the European public, especially the youth, towards a positive attitude in the field of advanced materials and make it realise the role of science in our life. For this reason, the project integrates onto its web portal, online educational resources, a web-based serious game and a character-led documentary film. Through this set of media products, the project aims to uncover to the European Public the world of Materials Science and Technology Applications, where solutions can be found to everyday sustainability problems. See also www.materialsfuture.eu.