

FORAM 18 Pilot Event: testing the concept of a World Forum on Raw Materials

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Back to back with the World Materials Forum (WMF), the Horizon 2020 funded FORAM project has gathered stakeholders on 27 June 2018 in Nancy (France) to test the concept of a World Forum on Raw Materials. Although affected by the French railway strike, the conference was attended by nearly 60 stakeholders from all over the world.

The conference started with an introduction by project officer Jonas Hedberg from the European Commission's Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) who presented his institution and basic facts about the H2020 funding programme. He also outlined the new framework programme "Horizon Europe" which has recently been proposed by the European Commission as the biggest funding programme for research and innovation ever and which is fully aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Jonas Hedberg finally also highlighted the work carried out by other EU projects in the field of international raw materials cooperation, citing especially the recently finished INTRAW project.



In his keynote speech, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Member of the European Parliament (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe), endorsed the idea of creating a World Forum on Raw Materials which would facilitate international resource governance. Considering the fast-changing political world order, demographic growth and the consequences of climate change, an international coalition for the sustainable management of natural resources is essential according to Gerbrandy, the more so as the global use of raw materials is steadily growing.



Project coordinator Mathias Schluep from the World Resources Forum (WRF) then introduced the main actions FORAM has taken since the project started in November 2016. To begin with, the consortium has identified global raw materials initiatives and stakeholders and classified existing knowledge databases. The identified network has then been clustered into target groups and a dialogue with stakeholders has been established to recognise the needs and expectations towards a potential World Forum on Raw Materials. Taking into consideration the strategic vision developed by

the team, as well as the outcomes of two previous stakeholder consultation rounds, the pilot event will thus allow testing the feasibility of a World Forum.

Jelena Vidovic from the EuroGeoSurveys (EGS) presented in detail the stakeholder engagement activities conducted so far and which have allowed to actively engage more than 180 persons. She then introduced the three stakeholder workshops scheduled right afterwards: Knowledge Management; Policies and Strategies; and International Cooperation – Mineral Raw Materials Sourcing: From Competition to Cooperation.



To introduce the plenary session relating to the workshop outcomes, Stefan Bringezu (Professor and Director at the Center for Environmental Systems Research Sustainable Resource Futures Group at the University of Kassel) emphasised that growing conflicts with regard to resource exploration and extraction call for a standardised reporting protocol for all activities relating to mining, including for instance the overall water, energy and land use, in order to ensure a higher transparency of the mining industry. He also recommended increasing research in the field of urban mining.



The workshop leaders and keynote speakers then briefly summarised the outcomes of their sessions. All participants agreed unanimously on the need to establish a global platform for raw materials. In terms of knowledge management, the need for databases which are accessible and sustainable in the long-run was highlighted. In this respect, the participants recommended that the EU should set up an institute responsible for the collection and sharing of data gathered during EU-funded projects. The workshop on policies and strategies emphasised the importance of considering the Sustainable Development Goals within the Social License to Operate (SLO), shifting the concept towards a Sustainable Development License to Operate (SDLO). The workshop on international cooperation stressed the importance of involving industry and developing appropriate education and training. The establishment of transparent standards for the management of natural resources as well as the importance of communication was also highlighted.

During the event's closing session, Constantin Ciupagea from the European Commission's Joint Research Center (JRC) reminded the participants that although the Commission provides an important support to Research and Innovation, the Raw Materials policy in Europe is not set by the EU, but by the Member States. He introduced the Raw Materials Knowledge Gateway (RMKG) which aims to link electronically data from different EU-funded projects in a single place and called upon the duty of research projects to convince industry of the importance of establishing dialogue and concentrating knowledge.

Victoire de Margerie (Vice Chairman of the World Materials Forum) stressed in her closing words the complementarity of the World Materials Forum organised in parallel with the FORAM pilot event, from 27 to 29 June, since both aim at bringing together all kind of stakeholders to discuss the future of materials, using them "smarter, less and longer".

Moderator Bas de Leeuw and project coordinator Mathias Schluep (both WRF) finally thanked the audience for the active participation in the event and emphasised again the need for a platform like FORAM to centralise the dialogue for a sustainable use of natural resources at a global level. The project consortium will now analyse the inputs received from stakeholders during the pilot event and present a roadmap and key recommendations for a structured approach by October 2018, when the project will officially end.