

**Proposal from the European Extractive Industry
to the European Commission and the Council**

A Concrete Measure for Sustainable Development

(Gothenburg Summit, 15-16 June 2001)

The European non-energy extractive industry, as represented by the undersigned associations, with 190.000 employees, more than 20.000 production sites and 2.2% of EU GDP¹, has welcomed the Commission² and the Council³ initiatives and invitations to promote *sustainable development* in its sector.

In view of the enlargement of the European Union, these initiatives will indeed be of utmost importance.

The industry, committed to the development of common and specific actions in this field, wishes to play an active role in the development of a EU strategy for sustainable development. In this respect, *the mining, quarrying and minerals industries* are particularly proud to have been chosen² by the Commission as a *pilot sector*.

However, to achieve tangible results, the extractive industry is convinced that a *work methodology* is required. This method implies on the one hand, the co-ordination of the EU policies initiated by the various services of the Commission, and, on the other hand, the means for real consultation and dialogue between the different stakeholders. In the light of the Commission and Council initiatives, the current process is not sufficient today. The non-energy extractive industry therefore unanimously requests the setting up of a

**EUROPEAN EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Scope of the Council

- Provide the means for defining and *co-ordinating* a policy for the sustainable development of the extractive industry, as well as for the necessary *dialogue* and *consultation* between the relevant stakeholders;
- Arrive at *balanced* solutions even in areas where points of view differ significantly.

Composition

With the support of the Commission, the following interest groups should be represented:

- national governmental experts,
- experts of the mining and quarrying industry as appointed by their *European organisations*, and
- other interested stakeholders' experts .

¹ Incl. industrial minerals, metallic ores mining and non-metallic mineral products, Panorama of EU Industry, 1997.

² Communication of the European Commission on the promotion of sustainable development in the non-energy extractive industry, COM (2000) 265 Final of 5 May 2000: "It invites Member States, both sides of industry, NGOs and other stakeholders to *make proposals on the objectives, constitution and format for such a framework, including the identification of the conditions for achieving tangible results.*"

³ Conclusions of the Council of 29 June 2000 (9346/00 kis MF/em): "... *Calls on the Commission to present proposals to the Council for a framework for future dialogue, in close consultation with the Member States, the industry and other stakeholders, (...) before June 2001.*"

Action Plan 2001-2010

1. **Contribute to the effective implementation of sustainable development** giving priority to concrete measures such as the definition of sustainable development *indicators*, or the improvement of the *statistical* data of the sector;
2. **Build trust and understanding** between the various concerned stakeholders;
3. **Encourage** the involvement of the sector in long-term policies developed through *voluntary initiatives*, notably in the area of *bio-diversity* or the restoration of *production sites*;
4. **Organise** the required **consultation** on issues considered to be of priority by the interest groups such as *access to mineral resources*, the amendment of *Seveso II*, or the drafting of a *mining waste Directive*;
5. **Assess** regulatory initiatives with regard to their *impact* on the sustainable development of the sector.
6. **Reinforce competitiveness** of the sector *by monitoring* all factors affecting it and by providing a stable legislative framework allowing the achievement of *long-term objectives*.
7. **Accelerate** contacts and *networking* with the concerned stakeholders in the candidate countries.
8. **Teach and learn** the best methods for implementing measures to achieve sustainable development in the mining, quarrying and minerals industries, in particular for *SMEs*.

General Organisation, Secretariat, Chairmanships and Financial Aspects

The work, its preparation and follow-up will be organised through:

- two annual plenary meetings,
- preceded by two preparatory meetings of the various interest groups,
- ad hoc working groups, with the necessary involvement of SMEs, set up according to agreed priorities and the mandates defined by the plenary sessions.

The European Commission will manage the *Secretariat* of the Council, ensuring and co-ordinating the involvement of the various Directorates General concerned through its General Secretariat.

The European Commission would chair the plenary sessions and the interest groups would chair the ad hoc groups. The experts' travel and per diem expenses will be reimbursed on the *community budget account*.

Conclusion

The undersigned associations⁴, as authors of this proposal, are committed to put in the necessary efforts to ensure, in complete transparency, its development and success. Convinced of the relevance of creating such a Council, they are willing to discuss this project with all interested stakeholders.

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