

Harmonizing information at the EU level: UNFC in the Critical Raw Materials Act



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT WEEK 2023

**ASSURING SUSTAINABILITY IN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT**

Maurizio Schiaparelli, UNECE



UNECE

CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS ACT

Legality of the Act proposed by the Commission

Binding in their entirety on all EU countries, and Member states do not need to create their own legislation to bring this EU legal act into force.

UNFC was mentioned **4 times** in the CRM-Act proposal:

- strategic projects (also in the recitals)
- exploration
- monitoring
- extractive waste

UNFC IN EU CRM – ACT

Chapter 1 (11) provides that:

In order to ensure the sustainability of increased raw material production, new raw materials projects should be implemented sustainably. To that end, the Strategic Projects receiving support under this Regulation should be assessed taking into account international instruments covering all aspects of sustainability highlighted in the [EU principles for sustainable raw materials](#) [...] To provide project promoters with a clear and efficient way of complying with this criterion, [compliance with relevant Union legislation, international standards*](#), [guidelines and principles or participation in a certification scheme](#) recognised under this Regulation should be considered sufficient.

**implied that the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources is furtherly mentioned under this point as a 'recognised international standard' under this regulation as laid out in Article 6 (1) (b).*

(12) “Any promoter of [strategic raw materials project](#) should apply for the recognition of their project as a [Strategic Project](#). To **better** assess the [social, environmental, and economic viability](#), the [feasibility of the project](#) as well as the [level of confidence in the estimates](#), the project promoter should **also** provide a classification of the project according to the [United Nations Framework Classification for Resources](#), and to allow for objective validation, they should support this classification with **relevant evidence**.”



(35) In light of the global dimension of critical raw materials supply chains as well as their complexity, **the Commission should develop a dedicated monitoring dashboard** assessing critical raw materials' supply risks and ensure the availability of the information gathered for public authorities and private actors, thereby increasing synergies amongst Member States. *

**Can UNFC provide support to this monitoring dashboard which will be created, or will UNFC as a standard be part of the information collected for the monitoring dashboard.*

(55) In order to support the implementation of tasks pertaining to the development of Strategic Projects [...] and to advise the commission appropriately, **a European Critical Raw Materials Board should be established**. The Board should be composed of Member States and of the Commission, while being able to ensure participation of **other parties as observers**. To develop the necessary expertise for the implementation of certain tasks, the Board should establish standing sub-groups on financing, exploration, monitoring and strategic stocks, that should act as a network by gathering the different relevant national authorities

** Possible inclusion of EGRM and other bodies as 'observers' as specified in paragraph (55) line 6 → 'The Board should be composed of Member States and of the Commission, while being able to ensure participation of other parties as observers.'*





STRATEGIC PROJECTS:

Chapter 3: Strengthening the Union raw materials value chain

SECTION 1: STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Article 5: Criteria for recognition of Strategic Projects

“Applications for recognition of a raw material project as a **Strategic Project** shall be submitted by the project promoter to the Commission. The application **shall** include: a classification of the project according to the **United Nations Framework Classification for Resources**, supported by appropriate evidence”

**Under Article 6(4) ECRM Board will discuss and issue an opinion on the completeness of the application and whether the project fulfills the criteria set out in Article 5(1)
Article 6(2) defines the ‘**template**’ to be used by project promoters*



Article 18: National exploration programmes

“**Member States shall** make the information on their **mineral occurrences** containing **critical raw materials** gathered through the measures set out in the national programmes referred to in paragraph 1 publicly available on a free access website. This information shall, **where applicable**, include the classification of the identified occurrences using the **United Nations Framework Classification for Resources**”

Article 20: Information obligations for monitoring

“**Member States shall**, as part of the report referred to in Article 43, provide information to the Commission on any new or existing **raw material project** on their territory that is relevant regarding to Article 19(1), point (d), including **a classification of new projects** according to the **United Nations Framework Classification of Resources**”

**information to the commission is already happening on a voluntary basis, this provides an obligation on all states to provide for reporting obligations of Member States*

Article 26: Recovery of critical raw materials from extractive waste

Similar aspect, provides a similar, minimum obligation to include in the database a classification of the closed **extractive waste facilities** according to the **United Nations Framework Classification for Resources**





Main takeaways: harmonizing and coordinating regional requirements

- General objective is to ease the information exchange through UNFC, internally, between EU countries & beyond
- Ease of information, this normative framework, as currently designed by the EU Commission and if approved by the EU parliament and Council provides a substantial shift towards bringing UNFC to becoming a globally accepted standard, through the international objectives addressed by the strategic projects, which are key to the legislation
- Widespread application alongside a necessary and crucial harmonization of information, in all the key areas of the act where the ties with UNFC are present; in the exploration obligations for member states, in the information obligations for monitoring and from the recovery of raw materials from extractive waste

