Trainings' Key Takeaways

Through these trainings, project promoters were prepared to classify their project proposals using UNFC within the Strategic Projects Form for the CRMA. The trainings highlighted the critical aspects of the classification process, ensuring that project promoters are well-equipped to present their projects for Strategic Project recognition.

UNFC for Strategic Projects as per CRMA

Under the EU Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), Section 2 "Strategic Projects", Article 7 "Application and recognition", project promoters are mandated to classify their raw materials projects using UNFC. This classification aids in the recognition of Strategic Projects by providing evidence of the project's environmental, social, and economic viability, technical maturity, and confidence in product estimates. The UNFC classification, which applies to extraction, processing, recycling, and substitution of raw materials, supports a comprehensive assessment and monitoring process. While the UNFC class is not a decisive factor for project recognition, it provides insights into the project's strengths and areas for improvement, guiding effective policy interventions. The classification process involves an initial classification by project promoters and a subsequent review by the European Commission with the assistance of UNFC experts.

UNFC (2019)

The UNFC is a principles-based tool that classifies resource projects based on three fundamental criteria: environmental-socio-economic viability (E), technical feasibility (F), and degree of confidence in the estimate (G): E axis (Environmental-Socio-Economic Viability): Indicates the degree of favorability of conditions, including market prices and regulatory, social, environmental, and contractual factors.

- F axis (Technical Feasibility): Reflects the maturity of technology, studies, and commitments necessary to implement the project, ranging from early conceptual studies to fully developed projects.
- G axis (Degree of Confidence): Represents the confidence in the estimates of the quantities of products from the project.

The Categories and Sub-categories are the building blocks of the system, and are combined in the form of "Classes" (Viable, Potentially Viable, and Non-Viable). A Class is uniquely defined by selecting from each of the three criteria a particular combination of a Category or a Sub-category (or groups of Categories/Sub-categories). Since the codes are always quoted in the same sequence (i.e. E; F; G), the letters may be dropped and just the numbers retained.

UNFC for Primary and Secondary Raw Materials

The UNFC is applicable to both primary and secondary raw materials:

- Primary Raw Materials: Relates to minerals projects such as extraction, processing, and substitution.
- Secondary Raw Materials: Pertains to anthropogenic resources projects such as recycling.

Supplementary specifications for minerals and anthropogenic resources provide detailed guidelines for applying UNFC to these projects. These specifications define the UNFC Categories and Sub-Categories in the context of minerals projects, ensuring a clear and precise classification.

Top-down Methodology for UNFC Application to Strategic Projects

The training sessions emphasized a systematic, top-down approach to UNFC classification for raw materials projects:

1. UNFC Class Classification: The process starts with assigning a broad UNFC Class (Viable, Potentially Viable, Non-Viable) to the project.
2. Sub-Class Identification: This step provides detailed insights into the project's activity status, enhancing understanding of its development stage.
3. Categories and Sub-Categories: The classification drills down into specific Categories and Sub-Categories, covering aspects such as geological knowledge, technological feasibility, and environmental-socio-economic viability.
4. Overall Classification and Verification: A holistic assessment ensures the coherence and accuracy of the classification. This involves verifying the assigned E, F, and G Categories and Sub-Categories, supported by detailed UNFC documentation.
5. Linkage with Strategic Projects Form: The classification is linked to the fields specified in the Strategic Projects Form for CRMA, which act as "Controlling Factors" (CFs) for the UNFC axes. These CFs encompass critical factors affecting project viability and maturity.

This structured approach enables project promoters to effectively evaluate and demonstrate their projects' viability and maturity, aligning with CRMA's requirements for Strategic Project recognition. Participants also learned the importance of the Strategic Projects Form's requirements and documentation, which play a pivotal role in the UNFC classification process. These requirements and documents, acting as CFs, must be clear and complete to ensure accurate classification, with a balanced judgment on their importance based on the project's specific context.