

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004738/25
to the Commission**

Anne-Sophie Frigout (Pfe), Aleksandar Nikolic (Pfe), Antonín Staněk (Pfe), Julie Rechagneux (Pfe), Nikola Bartůšek (Pfe), André Rougé (Pfe), Volker Schnurrbusch (ESN), Silvia Sardone (Pfe), Ondřej Knotek (Pfe), Ondřej Krutílek (ECR), Christophe Bay (Pfe), Klara Dostalova (Pfe), Jana Nagyová (Pfe), Claudiu-Richard Târziu (ECR), Philippe Olivier (Pfe), Georgiana Teodorescu (ECR)

(1 December 2025)

Subject: Regulatory barriers to critical raw material extraction in the EU

China produces more than 90% of the EU's supply of rare earth magnets, which are crucial for a number of strategic sectors, including Europe's automotive industry. Against a tense geopolitical backdrop, China has recently restricted its chip exports. This vulnerability in the EU supply frequently causes concern in the industries involved.

The Commission has recently announced the RESourceEU plan, which is aimed at securing the supply chains. However, an approach that focuses exclusively on recycling or diversifying international partners is not enough: Europeans must also bolster their internal capacity to extract and recover these resources.

Unfortunately, the current regulatory framework — particularly for environmental aspects — is a major obstacle to the development of new mining projects in Europe, owing to administrative complexity, permit or environmental assessment deadlines, and the associated investment costs.

1. Does the Commission intend to revise the environmental rules in order to reconcile environmental protection with the urgent need to strengthen our mining and industrial sovereignty?
2. Will it encourage the European Investment Bank to support European companies involved in the extraction, processing and sustainable recovery of critical raw materials within the EU?

Submitted: 1.12.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(28 January 2026)**

The Commission adopted the RESourceEU action plan⁽¹⁾ on 3 December 2025 to secure access to alternative sources of critical raw materials (CRMs) for the European industry.

The action plan contains measures to accelerate the deployment of CRMs projects, with EUR 3 billion of EU funds mobilised for the next twelve months.

The action plan adopts a whole value chain approach, taking into account extraction, processing and recycling, which are all subject to the objectives of the CRMs Act⁽²⁾.

In RESourceEU, the Commission announces that it will review and revise the Water Framework Directive⁽³⁾ in order to promote circularity and access to critical raw materials in the EU, while protecting the environment and human health.

The Commission will also consider the operational realities of the extractive, processing and recycling sectors in the announced revision of the regulation concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals and in the current implementation and possible future revisions of the Carcinogens, Mutagens and Reprotoxic Substances Directive⁽⁴⁾, while upholding the highest level of protection for workers, health and the environment.

The Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) work closely together to support Europe's strategic objectives, including on CRM.

The EIB already finances projects across the CRM value chain — from recycling to processing and innovation. While the Commission does not direct individual investment decisions, it is in continuous dialogue with the EIB to ensure that its support effectively de-risks and crowds in financing for strategic projects in Europe.

⁽¹⁾ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/01c448d6-dc93-40d7-9afe-4c2af448d00c_en.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:02024R1252-20240503>.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:02000L0060-20141120>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32022L0431>.