

PRESS RELEASE

**GREEK NATIONAL POLICY
FOR THE EXPLOITATION
OF MINERAL RESOURCES**

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The political leadership of the Greek Ministry of Environment Energy & Climate Change, in a conference held in Athens on 29-2-2012 announced the Greek National Policy for the Exploitation of Mineral Resources.

As mentioned, in «cooperation with the State, the society and the enterprise of the extractive industry sector, we lay down an Integrated National Mining Policy with the objective to develop an economy that shall utilize, while respecting, the National resources of the country thus contributing to upgrading the quality of life of the local communities. The available natural resources allow us to exploit them in order to face both the financial crisis and climate crisis change».

In the conference were presented the main concept, policy axes and goals as follows:

“The National Policy (NP) for the strategic planning and exploitation of the mineral resources acknowledges the importance of the Mineral Raw Materials (MRM) that contribute to progress and development, ensure a high living standard and create a competitive national and regional economy and new job positions. The NP must also ensure that the MRM are produced and distributed to the society in conformity with the constitutional principle of sustainable development.

The NP must be stable and transparent; it must also be able to be adjusted depending on the social and economic conditions or with a view of protecting the natural and anthropogenic environment.

Moreover, it must also be in harmony with the other National Policies, mitigating the conflicts that hinder the growth of the National Economy. Such a policy and all its different aspects of implementation can only be the outcome of a wide dialogue, information and public consultation both at a national, regional and local level. Additionally, this policy requires as a basic tool a simplified, codified and updated regulatory framework.

The main goals of this policy are the following:

- The sufficient and constant supply of MRM to the society in a sustainable financial way that is harmonized with the national sectoral development policies of other activities.
- The enhancement and implementation of the best practices that prevent or reduce and, finally, rehabilitate, to the greatest extent possible, the impact of the extractive industry to the environment and human health.
- The MRM saving through best eco-efficient production practices.
- The upgrade and support of all University departments and faculties of geosciences through the adequate funding by all types of available programs of the Ministry of Education, the General Secretariat of R&D, the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), etc.
- The ensuring of the use of MRM for the longest possible time through effective use practices, an extension of their life-cycle and recycling.
- The maximization of the development benefit and minimization of the negative effects of the mining activity.

- The harmonization of the specificities and needs of the local societies with the development potential created by the mining activities at a local and regional level. The adoption of policies and measures that shall maximize the benefits from the actions at a local level in many ways (and not merely in terms of finance and employment).
- The arrangement of the quarry and mining sites in such a way as they may be suitable for other planned uses after the completion of the extractive activities.
- The land use planning for the raw materials processing, when it is carried out outside the mines or quarries.

Also, the NP for the exploitation of the MRM must:

- Be based on the knowledge about the country's mineral reserves. This knowledge presupposes that all deposits of MRM are registered in a documented way and the relevant data are available in functional geospatial information system, which is compatible with the European MRM geological database.
- Take into account the specificities of the mining activity affecting decisively the location and the "sustainable" management of the activity requiring special interventions stemming from a) their localization in positions chosen by Nature itself b) the fact that the MRM are only 'renewable' at a geologic time scale and c) the fact that the exploitation of MRM leads to a visible footprint whose impact must be minimized.
- Take into account that the mining industry is vulnerable and inextricably linked to the national and international economic and political conditions and thus take into consideration the trends and variations of the international market of raw materials.
- Follow the European developments on issues related to the orientations and conditions of the MRM strategic development.
- Develop reliable and adequate conditions for attracting investments aimed to the best exploitation of the country's mineral resources".

Details and documents on the site www.sme.gr