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PRESS RELEASE

Urban Mining Takes Centre Stage at the European Parliament During EU Green Week 2025

Brussels, 4 June 2025 — As part of EU Green Week 2025, the European Parliament today hosted the high-level breakfast debate *“Urban Mining: Unlocking Secondary Resources for a Circular Economy”*, under the patronage of **MEP Susana Solís Pérez**. This EU Green Week Partner event was co-organised by the **European Federation of Geologists**, **RemTech Europe**, the **Geological Survey of Belgium**, **Geologica Belgica Luxemburga Scientia et Professionis**, **UNICALCE**, and the **Horizon Europe FIC-Fighters project**.

With the **Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA)** now in force, the EU aims to secure at least **15% of strategic raw materials from recycled sources by 2030**. The debate brought together leading voices from policymaking, science, and industry to explore how urban mining can play a pivotal role in achieving this goal and advancing Europe’s transition toward a **circular, resource-resilient economy**.

Cities as Europe’s Next Strategic Resource Hubs

In the opening remarks, moderated by **Pierre De Geest** (Geologica Belgica Luxemburga Scientia et Professionis), **MEP Susana Solís Pérez** underscored the urgency of unlocking the potential of Europe’s urban areas, describing urban mining as *“not a concept for the future, but a necessity for today.”*

Key messages from MEP Solís included:

- **Geologists are essential** to identify, map, and certify urban deposits. “No waste is the same,” she noted, highlighting the importance of trusted and certified professionals and data-driven approaches.
- **Regulatory simplification** is needed to unlock secondary raw materials—starting with permitting procedures. While the CRMA has laid the groundwork, its scope must expand to include a broader range of circular projects.
- **Scaling up through public-private partnerships**, EU-funded projects like FIC-Fighters, and improved coordination across EU institutions, Member States, and local authorities is critical to industrialise urban mining.

She concluded with a strong commitment: *“Urban mining must be fully embedded in our industrial policy, environmental agenda, and funding frameworks.”*

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From Geoscience to Actionable Policy: Expert Interventions

EFG President and Unicalce Sustainability Project Manager **David Govoni** reinforced the role of geoscientific expertise in shaping local circular economy strategies:

“Geologists can help turn every city into a strategic resource hub—making Europe’s circular ambitions a reality. But this requires institutional recognition, investment in geodata infrastructure, and embedding geoscientific audits into urban planning and land reclamation policies.”

Govoni called on policymakers to:

- Integrate **geoscientific audits** into urban regeneration and demolition projects.
- Require **subsurface screening** in land reclamation initiatives.
- Recognise **certified geoscience professionals** as *Competent Persons* for quantifying urban reserves, as it is done in mining.

Spotlight on Innovation: Showcasing Cutting-Edge Solutions

During the roundtable moderated by **Rudi Ruggeri** (National Council of Geologists of Italy), experts presented innovative solutions across soil remediation, waste valorisation, and secondary resource recovery:

- **Christian Burlet** (Geological Survey of Belgium) demonstrated how geological techniques can help identify valuable materials within urban environments.
- **Marco Falconi** (RemTech Europe & IMPEL Network) showcased Italy’s *Guidelines on Backfill Materials*, highlighting the link between remediation and circularity.
- **Marta Cerati** (Atlantic Copper) shared insights into how the company’s CRMA Strategic Project is recovering copper from waste.
- **Nino Tarantino** (Italian Government Sub-Commissioner & IMPEL) highlighted best practices in managing contaminated soils through material recovery and permanent safety measures.
- **Vanessa Montoya** (Environmental Scientist) introduced the *FIC-Fighters Horizon Europe* project and its pioneering work on resource recovery from phosphogypsum waste.

A Call for Permanent Dialogue and Institutional Recognition

Silvia Paparella, General Manager of RemTech Expo, emphasised the need for ongoing collaboration:

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“We must establish a permanent dialogue between experts, technologies, and political institutions. Europe has the knowledge, the competence, and the tools—we need common strategies and a shared vision.”

She announced that **RemTech Expo 2025 in Ferrara** will launch the **International General States of Mining and Urban Mining and Resources**—a forum designed to give urban mining a permanent institutional home.

Looking Ahead: From Policy to Implementation

Speakers unanimously agreed: Europe's circular future depends on mainstreaming urban mining into **policy, planning, and investment frameworks**. The forthcoming **Circular Economy Act (2026)** and updates to the **Waste Framework Directive** offer timely opportunities to do so.

With strong political will, geoscientific leadership, and cross-sector collaboration, urban mining can deliver on Europe's climate, resource, and economic goals.

“We need to act at every level—and we need to act together.” — **MEP Susana Solís Pérez**

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