

PRESS RELEASE

European Court of Auditors Confirms Geological Blind Spot in EU Raw Materials Strategy

Without exploration and geological expertise, Europe's critical raw materials ambitions risk falling short

Brussels, 6 February 2026 – The European Federation of Geologists (EFG) has recently published a [position paper](#) on the 2025 RESourceEU action plan, warning that the European Union's approach to securing critical raw materials (CRM) for the energy transition remains fundamentally weakened by the insufficient integration of geological expertise.

These concerns are now echoed by the [European Court of Auditors' Special Report 04/2026](#) on the EU's long-term security of supply of critical raw materials for the energy transition, which identifies insufficient exploration and incomplete geological baseline knowledge as major bottlenecks for increasing Europe's domestic supply.

While RESourceEU focuses on industrial resilience, supply chains and permitting, both EFG and the Court of Auditors highlight a more fundamental reality: without exploration, there can be no pipeline of projects, and without robust geological data, Europe cannot realistically meet its 2030 objectives.

Geological Bottlenecks Confirmed by the Court of Auditors

From a geological perspective, the Court's report confirms several long-standing concerns raised by EFG:

1. **No exploration, no projects:** The report underlines that Europe lacks a sufficient pipeline of exploration projects. Without sustained and coordinated exploration efforts today, future mining and processing projects simply cannot materialise within the EU's strategic timelines.

European Federation of Geologists

13, Rue Jenner, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Email: info.efg@eurogeologists.eu

Web: www.eurogeologists.eu

2. **Insufficient geological baseline knowledge:** Incomplete geological mapping and fragmented data across Member States hinder the identification of new deposits. The Court stresses the importance of national exploration programmes and better harmonised, pan-European geological data and information systems.
3. **High risk at early stages:** Early-stage exploration remains underfinanced and high-risk, discouraging private investment. The Court highlights the importance of de-risking early exploration to unlock capital and move projects from concept to development.

The Added Value of Professional Geoscientists

EFG emphasises that addressing these challenges requires the systematic involvement of qualified and certified professional geoscientists, such as holders of the [European Geologist \(EurGeol\) title](#):

- **Sound resource identification and risk reduction:** Professional geoscientists are essential for designing exploration programmes, interpreting subsurface data, and reducing geological, environmental and financial risks at an early stage.
- **Credibility, quality and public trust:** Certified geoscientists operate under recognised technical and ethical standards, strengthening the credibility of projects and increasing societal acceptance.

EFG's Call to Action

In light of both the RESourceEU action plan and the findings of the European Court of Auditors, EFG calls on EU institutions and Member States to:

1. **Embed geological expertise in governance:** Ensure the formal and systematic representation of qualified professional geoscientists in CRM-related boards, expert groups and strategic decision-making bodies, so that policies are grounded in geological reality from the outset.
2. **Make geological competence a regulatory requirement:** Require the mandatory involvement of certified professional geoscientists in permitting procedures and industrial risk assessments, ensuring that subsurface, environmental and financial risks are properly identified and managed.

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3. **Build and sustain Europe's geoscience talent pipeline:** Launch an EU-wide strategic initiative to attract new talent into the geosciences, while strengthening continuous professional development and professional recognition to secure the skills needed for Europe's long-term raw materials security.

EFG and its network of professional geoscientists stand ready to support EU institutions in translating policy ambitions into geologically sound, deliverable projects. As confirmed by the European Court of Auditors, geological knowledge and expertise are not optional add-ons – they are prerequisites for Europe's raw materials security and strategic autonomy.

This press release accompanies the EFG position paper "*EFG Position Paper on the 2025 RESourceEU*", available at: https://eurogeologists.eu/go/position_2025_RES_EU