

The European Commission on Enterprise and Industry has received its June 2010 report from the Raw Materials Supply Group. The Commission recommended that the initiative draw up a list of critical materials. It defines there "high tech" metals (or as we call them TREM) as having significant economic importance for key sectors, high supply risks and a lack of substitutes.

The introduction of the report highlights the problem beautifully:

Of greater relevant are changes in the geopolitical-economic framework that impact on the supply and demand of raw materials. These changes relate to the growing demand for raw materials, which in turn is driven by the growth of developing economies and new emerging technologies. Moreover, many emerging economies are pursuing industrial development strategies by means of trade, taxation and investment instruments aimed at reserving their resource base for their exclusive use. This trend has become apparent through an increasing number of government measures such as export taxes, quotas, subsidies etc. In some cases, the situation is further compounded by a high level of concentration of the production in a few countries.

The report studied 41 metals and elements and concluded that 14 of them are critical due to supply risk (political-economic stabilit and such), or environmental risk due to poor national policies. The elements (or groups) considered critical are:

- Antimony
- Beryllium
- Cobalt
- Fluorspar
- Gallium
- Germanium
- Graphite
- Indium
- Magnesium
- Niobium
- PGMs (Platinum Group Metals)
- Rare earths<sup>2</sup>
- Tantalum
- Tungsten

Read the well written report here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/raw-materials/critical/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/raw-materials/critical/index_en.htm)