

Request for Proposals:

**Assessment of Cuba's Current
Cobalt and Nickel Reserves and
Identification of Potential
Opportunities for EU's Investments**

Date: 24 March 2026

1. CONTRACTING ORGANISATION

EIT RawMaterials GmbH	<p>EIT RawMaterials GmbH Knesebeckstr. 62 10719 Berlin, Germany Website: https://eitrawmaterials.eu/</p> <p><u>Contact email for procurement matters:</u> Catherine Bounsaythip, Senior Project Manager Critical Raw Materials Email: catherine.bounsaythip@eitrawmaterials.eu Phone: +358 40 704 2532</p>
CRM-Facility Project	<p>Project financed under the NDICI-GE from HORIZON-EIT-2024-CRM-IBA Project number: 101223585 Website: https://crmfacility.eu/</p> <p><u>Contact email for CRM-Facility Project:</u> André Ufer, Coordinator Critical Raw Materials Facility Phone: +49 162 748 2154 Email: andre.ufer@eitrawmaterials.eu</p>

1.1 Overview of EIT RawMaterials

[EIT RawMaterials](#) is a ‘Knowledge and Innovation Communities’ (KICs) created by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), aimed at promoting innovation in the raw materials sector across Europe. Established in 2015, EIT RawMaterials works to secure the sustainable supply of raw materials to the European industry by driving innovation, education, and entrepreneurship along the entire raw materials value chain.

We are a knowledge-driven business and a catalyst for industrial progress. Our offerings leverage our expertise and that of our network – the world’s largest network in the raw [and advanced] materials sector – which includes companies at every stage of evolution, from start-ups to market leaders, along with leading international universities, research organisations, and top experts and future talent from the sector.

Our activities span from mining and mineral processing to material recycling and substitution, focusing on increasing resource efficiency and fostering a circular economy.

We inform policy, apply knowledge, accelerate innovation, create opportunity, and unlock commercial value – for our partners and customers throughout the raw materials value chain to develop the raw materials sector as a strategic strength and foundation for a secure, sustainable future for Europe.

Our offerings are designed to help our partners and industry to be part of Europe’s strategic agenda to ensure supply chain security and make the ‘Green New Deal’ a reality that benefits the people of Europe and partner nations.



1.2 *About CRM-Facility Project*

The European Union (EU) has long relied on importing critical raw materials (CRMs) from non-EU countries. This has been intensified by recent technological shifts such as green energy transition, electric vehicles, aeronautics, robotics and defense, all of which require stable CRM supplies.

In response to growing geopolitical pressure to secure resilient CRM supply chains and reduce reliance on a limited number of supplier countries, the EU enacted in 2023 the Critical Raw Material Act (CRMA)¹. The Act stipulates that, by 2030, the EU must source no more than 65% of any strategic and critical raw material from a single non-EU country, ensuring diversified imports at all processing stages.

To address this challenge, the EU has formed partnerships with resource-rich countries, deploying political, financial, economic, and development tools to connect CRM value chains between these partners and European industry, thereby enhancing supply diversity.

Launched in October 2024 and coordinated by EIT RawMaterials, the **CRM Facility project** provides technical assistance to the European Commission for meeting the CRMA's targets. The project supports the EU in strengthening global partnerships and developing international projects to build sustainable and resilient CRM value chains.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

2.1 *General Objectives*

Cuba stands out as a major player in the global nickel and cobalt sector, holding the fifth largest nickel reserves—approximately 5.5 million tonnes. Despite this significant resource base, production has lagged behind, with only an estimated 49,000 tonnes of nickel produced in 2020. Cobalt extraction also reflects this trend: Cuba achieved its highest output in 2017, reaching 5,000 tonnes, while production remained steady at 3,800 tonnes in both 2018 and 2019. The country is ranked third worldwide for cobalt reserves, estimated at 0.5 million tonnes, with the mineral particularly concentrated in the Moa region in eastern Cuba. Notably, cobalt is often extracted alongside nickel, as they occur together in the same rock formations.

Recognizing the potential of these reserves, Cuba has recently taken steps to attract foreign investment. Last November, at the Havana Trade Fair, the Vice Prime Minister for trade announced new measures favoring foreign direct investment, signaling Cuba's openness to expanding its economic partnerships. Furthermore, ongoing discussions between the United States and the Cuban Government may foster additional opportunities, especially as Cuba seeks to diversify its trade and investment relationships. This environment could present new avenues for EU businesses, given that the EU is currently Cuba's largest trade and investment partner.

Against this backdrop, gaining a comprehensive understanding of Cuba's current production capabilities for **cobalt** and **nickel** is essential. Such insight will clarify the potential roles that the EU and its companies can play in developing these critical minerals, supporting both Cuban economic growth and Europe's strategic resource objectives.

¹ [CRM Act](#) (2023), provides a list of 34 critical raw materials (CRMs) in Annex II

More detailed description can be found in the **Term of Reference** in **Annex 1**.

2.2 Detailed Scope of Work

The expert is expected to conduct the following studies:

- Assess the current state of the Cuban Cobalt and Nickel reserves (production, financing, partners, exports).
- Evaluate financing needs of identified mining projects.
- Recommend potential opportunities for EU investment especially in terms of EU positioning against current and potential competitors, and how EU could play a role in the further development of Cobalt and Nickel mining.
- Assess the existing legal framework and EU comparative advantages (current positioning, environmental and labour legislation).
- Develop a succinct roadmap for potential EU actions under **Global Gateway** to pave the way for EU investment.

More detailed description can be found in the **Term of Reference** in **Annex 1**.

2.3 Deliverables

The assessment should deliver a report following the estimate timeline below:

1. Initial findings and structure of the report: **2 weeks** after project start
2. **Full draft report: 3 weeks** after the project start
3. **Final report** (about 40 pages max, including summary): **5 weeks** after the project start
4. **PowerPoint presentation** for the stakeholders
5. **Data sheet** shall also be delivered.

The estimate effort should be around **25 person days**. The timeline is as follows:

Report on Cuban Cobalt & Nickel Reserves + Investment Opportunities for EU	Start week	End week	1	2	3	4	5	
V.1: Initial findings & Overall structure	1	2	■	■				
EC/EUD feedback	2			▲				
V.2: Full draft report	2	4			■	■		
EC/EUD feedback	4					▲		
V.3: Final clean version	5	5					■	▲

▲ Delivery of report by email on Friday end of business day (eob).

Regular follow-up meetings shall be expected every second week, ad-hoc meeting with EU Commission or EU Delegation may be expected.

3. PROPOSAL PROCESS

3.1 Participation

Participation in this proposal procedure is open to all tenderers, a sole tenderer (**freelancer**) or as a **joint tender** (registered company) or a **consortium**. The tenderer can rely on the capacities of **subcontractors** or other entities that are not subcontractors.

In case of **joint tender**, group members must appoint a **Group Leader**, and a single point of contact authorised to act on their behalf in connection with the submission of the tender and all relevant questions, clarification requests, notifications, etc., that may be received during the evaluation, award and until the contract signature.

All participants must sign the Tenderers' declaration form attached and submit it with the proposal. Please note that the tenderer may not modify the text, it must be submitted signed as provided by EIT RawMaterials attached to this request for proposal document.

3.2 Process Timeline

EVENT	DATE (Calendar dates)
Publishing the RFP on EIT RawMaterials website	25 March 2026
Deadline for requesting clarification from EIT RawMaterials	27 March 2026
Deadline for submitting proposals	31 March 2026
Intended date of notification of award	2 April 2026
Intended date of contract signature	7 April 2026

3.3 Submission of Proposal

Proposals must be sent by email in English to the following address:

Contact name: **Catherine Bounsaythip**, Senior Project Manager Critical Raw materials
E-mail: **catherine.bounsaythip@eitrawmaterials.eu**

The proposal shall contain:

1. the technical response to the requested services (section 2), including the financial offer (the price for the services.) The financial offer must be presented in Euro. Prices must be indicated as net amount + VAT.—Please refer also to the provided template in **Annex 2**.
2. Information on GDPR compliance, if applicable.
3. an indication of supplier's insurance coverage. The proposal must specify whether the supplier has taken out a company liability insurance and/or professional liability insurance including the maximum amount of coverage in Euro per event per insurance.
4. Tenderers' declaration form (**Annex 3**).

Proposals must be concise and clear. The tenderer's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. Tenderers are, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually. Subsequent modifications and counterproposals shall, if applicable, also become an integral part of any resulting contract.

The tenderer represents that the individual submitting the natural or legal entity's proposal is duly



authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted. The tenderer also affirms that it has read the instructions to tenderers in this RfP document and that it has the experience, skills and resources to perform, according to conditions set forth in this proposal and the tenderers' proposal.

3.4 Requests for additional information or clarification

In case the tenderers need additional information or clarification, please address it to the address below. All information requested or answered may only be done through written communication – email only. All questions should be sent prior to the deadline for requesting clarification as specified in section 2.2.

Contact name: for the attention of:

- **Catherine Bounsaythip**, Senior Project Manager Critical Raw materials
- E-mail: catherine.bounsaythip@eitrawmaterials.eu

3.5 Validity of the proposals

Tenderers are bound by their proposals 90 days after the deadline for submitting proposals.

3.6 Costs for preparing proposals

No costs incurred by the tenderer in preparing and submitting the proposal are reimbursable. All such costs must be borne by the tenderer.

3.7 Ownership of the proposals

EIT RawMaterials retains ownership of all proposals received under this procedure. Proprietary information identified as such, which is submitted by tenderers in connection with this procurement, will be kept confidential.

The potential or actual supplier should accept that during the implementation of the contract and for four years after the completion of the contract, for the purposes of safeguarding the EU's financial interests, EIT RawMaterials may transfer the proposal and the contract of the supplier to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel or to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

3.8 Clarification related to the submitted proposals

After submission, proposals shall be reviewed for compliance with formal requirements as set forth in this RfP document. Where information or documentation submitted by the tenderers is or appears to be incomplete or erroneous or where specific documents are missing, EIT RawMaterials may request the tenderer concerned to submit, supplement, clarify or complete the relevant information or documentation within an appropriate time limit. All information requested or answered may only be done through written communication – email only.



3.9 Negotiation about the submitted proposal

After reviewing the formal compliance of the tenders, EIT RawMaterials may negotiate the contract terms with the tenderers. In this negotiation EIT RawMaterials will request all tenderers to adjust the proposal or specific sections of the proposal within an appropriate time limit. In case of negotiations, EIT RawMaterials shall provide further information about the proceedings and timing.

4. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

4.1 Exclusion Criteria

The Tenderers will be excluded from participating in the current procedure, if:

- a) it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Tenderer is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Tenderer is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the Tenderer belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
 - i. fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract;
 - ii. entering into agreement with other Tenderers with the aim of distorting competition;
 - iii. violating intellectual property rights;
 - iv. attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;
 - v. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon its undue advantages in the procurement procedure;
- d) it has been established by a final judgment that the Tenderer is guilty of fraud, corruption, or money laundering.

The above criteria are also included in the Tenderer's Declaration Form to be filled, signed and attached to the proposal.

4.2 Award Criteria

Each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria. The award criteria will be applied in accordance with the requested services indicated in section 2 of this RfP

document. The Contracting Organization will award the contract to the tenderer who submitted the proposal that is the most advantageous technically and financially based on best value for money.

1 Technical criteria	SCORE
<p>Description of the methodology to conduct the tasks set out in Section 2 (Scope of the Work), with a detailed description of the service, tools and timeline and associated milestones and deliverables.</p> <p>The methodology combines desk research, financial analysis, targeted stakeholder consultations if relevant and regular exchanges with the EU Commission shall be included to ensure alignment with policy and operational needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Excellent (comprehensive, well-integrated, efficient): 30 points</i> • <i>Strong (clear and relevant): 20 points</i> • <i>Adequate (meets requirements but lacks depth): 10 points</i> • <i>Weak (unclear or generic): 5 points</i> 	<p>Max. 30 points</p>
2. Team's experience and expertise criteria	SCORE
<p>The team is multidisciplinary with experience relevant to the assignment as set out in the term of Reference (Annex 1) such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong expertise in mining economics and geopolitics of Cobalt/Nickel mining value chain. • Proven experience with writing skills with focus on data analysis. • Relevant experience with Cuba and knowledge of the region (legal framework, environmental and labour legislation). • Familiarity with EU Global Gateway initiative will be an asset. • Fluent in English and Spanish languages. <p>Team members' expertise and experience are evidenced by proven similar work conducted as well as CV's of assigned project staff and clearly outline their role in this project.</p> <p>Based on this evidence the tenderer will be scored as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>15+ years' experience shall receive 30 points</i> • <i>10-14 years' experience shall receive 15 points</i> • <i>5-9 years' experience shall receive 10 points</i> • <i>1-4 years' experience shall receive 5 points</i> 	<p>Max. 30 points</p>
3. Financial criteria	SCORE
<p>The budget must be broken into the following categories with justification aligned with the proposed methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal/Salary costs 	<p>Max. 40 points</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of Goods and Services • Travel expenses • Equipment • Subcontracting. <p>Prices must be indicated as net amount, excl. VAT, in Euros. Lowest offered price shall receive the highest score (40); others shall be calculated in relation to that in linear equation.</p>	
Total maximum score	100

4.3 Signature of contract

The successful and unsuccessful tenderers will be informed in writing (via email) about the result of the procedure.

4.4 Appeals/complaints

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the tender procedure may file a complaint. Appeals should be addressed to EIT RawMaterials. EIT RawMaterials is only able to address complaints before the contract is awarded to the successful tenderer.

4.5 Cancellation of the procedure

EIT RawMaterials reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, EIT RawMaterials may refrain from concluding the contract.

In the event of cancellation of the procedure, EIT RawMaterials will notify the tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT RawMaterials be liable for whatsoever, including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected to the cancellation of the procedure.

4.6 Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices

The Tenderer shall take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest (“conflict of interests”). The tenderer should inform EIT RawMaterials immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.

Furthermore, the tenderer acknowledges and accepts the Code of Conduct of EIT RawMaterials which can be downloaded via www.eitrawmetarials.eu



Annexes

Annex 1: Term of Reference

Annex 2: Example of proposal template

Annex 3: Tenderers' Declaration form