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Initiative for Responsible Renewable Energy Value Chains

Background

The Copper Mark is the world's leading assurance framework for responsible and sustainable production in the copper industry. Nearly 40% of all mined copper comes from sites receiving the Copper Mark. The Copper Mark also covers an increasing number of sites in other metals, in particular Molybdenum, Nickel and Zinc.

As pressures and demands on industry change an increasing number of downstream actors want to understand and map their supply chains and gain greater transparency on responsible production practices throughout their value chains. The Copper Mark is developing a Responsible Metals Value Chain Platform, including a number of sector-focussed initiatives and projects to increase engagement, transparency and chains of custody from mines to end-users.

A priority sector for this work is the renewables energy industry including the wind and solar power sectors.

Initiative for Responsible Renewable Energy Value Chains

Renewable energy is a major consumer of copper and other metals and is a growing market for these materials. Copper is needed across energy generation and transmission including in wiring and cables, turbines, solar panels, inverters and grid connections. Our aim is to develop leading responsible value chain projects to cover the copper value chain in the wind and solar energy market.

The project will cover actors in the copper value chain including, mines, smelters, refineries, recyclers, fabricators, cable and component manufacturers, OEMs and Transmission System Operators (TSOs), Distribution System Operators (DSOs). Other key stakeholders such including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), regulatory experts and academics will also be invited to join and contribute to the project.

The Copper Mark aims to work alongside leading industry associations and other initiatives on this project.



Ambition:

The initiative will support participants to map value chains, understand ESG risks, and provide solutions to enhance responsible and sustainable value chains in the renewable energy sector.



Goals:

- 1 Identify and deliver chain of custody pilots for responsibly produced copper through the full value chain – from mine to end consumer.
- 2 Map value chains and identify opportunities to enhance transparency and sustainability at different points in copper supply chains.
- 3 Identify issues and needs in the value chain, such as customer, consumer or regulatory demands which are not yet being sufficiently met, such as reducing GHG footprints or traceability, and develop tools and programmes to help companies meet these.
- 4 Enable a forum for information exchange about actions of mining industry and other value chain actors to achieve objectives with downstream companies.

These goals will be achieved through a combination of direct engagement (for example chain of custody), research and reports (value chain mapping), and meetings and events (information exchange and developing tools).

Timeline and Development

We aim to launch the Initiative for Responsible Renewable Energy Value Chains at an event, in collaboration with the IRBC Agreement for the Renewable Energy Sector. This Launch event will be held on 30 October in The Hague, Netherlands with online participation also possible. As part of this event, industry, experts and stakeholders from the full value chain will discuss key topics and identify priorities and work areas for the future.



In 2026 the Copper Mark will launch a new Responsible Metals Value Chain Platform. It is hoped that the discussions and actions from these leadership initiatives will help to inform and shape this wider platform in the future.

