



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 2 May 2024
(OR. en)

9477/24

LIMITE

COMPET 497
IND 237
POLCOM 177
RELEX 587
AUS 3

'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and Australia on a strategic partnership on sustainable critical and strategic minerals <i>- Authorisation to sign a non-binding instrument</i>

1. On 4 October 2023, the Commission informed the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry) about its intention to enter into discussions to draw up a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the European Union to establish a partnership on raw materials with Australia¹.

¹ WK 12605/2023.

2. The partnership, as a non-binding instrument, aims in particular to promote the following areas of collaboration:
- integration of sustainable raw materials value chains, including networking, joint facilitation of projects (e.g. via joint ventures), creation of new business models and promotion and facilitation of trade and investment linkages, ensuring the well-functioning, sustainability and resilience of these critical supply chains;
 - cooperation on research and innovation along the raw materials value chains, including on minerals knowledge and the minimisation of environmental and climate footprint;
 - cooperation to promote high environmental, social and governance criteria and improved policy alignment, driven by high regard for worker conditions and worker safety, and the importance of sustainable and secure production of critical minerals.
3. On 23 October 2023, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the Union, the Memorandum of Understanding to establish a partnership on raw materials with Australia².
4. On 23 April 2024, the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry) received an information note from the Commission on the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed on behalf of the European Union with Australia, establishing a strategic partnership on sustainable critical and strategic minerals, with the draft text of the Memorandum of Understanding in an attachment³.
5. The Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and Australia on a strategic partnership on sustainable critical and strategic minerals, set out in document 9479/24, would constitute a non-binding instrument. The Memorandum of Understanding sets forth the intentions of both partners. It is not legally binding upon the partners.
6. The Memorandum of Understanding is planned to be signed by the Commission on behalf of the Union on 29 May 2024.

² 14026/23.

³ WK 5863/2024 + ADD 1.

7. The Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry), at its meeting on 29 April 2024, examined the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and Australia on a strategic partnership on sustainable critical and strategic minerals. Delegations generally welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding and indicated overall support to the Commission's proposal to sign it on behalf of the Union.
8. Following the examination by the Working Party, the Permanent Representatives Committee is asked to:
- confirm its agreement on the text of the Memorandum of Understanding as set out in document 9479/24;
 - recommend that the Council authorises the Commission to sign, on behalf of the Union, the Memorandum of Understanding, as set out in document 9479/24, as an 'A' item on the agenda of a forthcoming Council meeting.
-