METALS ECOSYSTEM AND CIRCULARITY: COPPER’S ROLE

Metals are strategically important to Europe’s value chains and at the forefront of low-carbon solutions.

Copper is a ‘carrier metal’ for a wide range of other non-ferrous metals - refining and recycling of copper is, therefore, Europe’s most important route to access precious and critical metals.

State-of-the-art recyclers are able to recover 20+ metals from complex copper products and applications.

Copper metallurgy is used as the starting point for recycling electronics waste and other complex products.

Essential carrier metals
- Highly valuable co-elements that dissolve in the carrier metal and have considerable own production infrastructure
- Valuable co-elements that have no, or limited, dedicated production infrastructure
- Co-elements that end up as residues or emissions

Copper production in Europe
- Primary (from mining): 50%
- Secondary (from recycled sources): 50%

European recycling volumes
- 2015: 1.6 Mt
- 2050: 2.7 Mt
- Are projected to increase significantly by 2050

Read more: "Metals for a Climate Neutral Europe: A 2050 Blueprint"