



## PRESS RELEASE

### **S&B announces its participation as coordinator in a €8.3 million research project, co-funded by the EU, for the development of innovative and high added value perlite products**

S&B Industrial Minerals S.A. announces its participation as coordinator in a €8.3 million research project, €5 million of which will be funded by the European Commission / Research Directorate-General, within the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. The objectives of the project, with the code name “ExPerl”, include: (1) The development of perlite micro-particles with special insulating and mechanical properties highly exceeding those of conventional perlite; (2) The development of innovative end-products based on perlite to be used in the Construction, Manufacturing and Chemical industries. The project will be carried out over the next 4 years by a network of 12 industrial partners, universities and research centers from Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain, Norway, and Israel. S&B, will have the lead, acting as the coordinator of the project and, from the EU co-funding, will receive a total of €0.95 million.

This project will be implemented within the framework of the “*Raw Materials Initiative: Meeting our critical needs for growth and jobs in Europe*”, an effort in accordance with the EC Vice President Günter Verheugen’s declaration of 4/11/08 concerning the current situation of the EU minerals’ industry. ExPerl addresses a very important topic of this initiative on the need of developing “*innovative concepts and processes for strategic mineral supply and for new high added value mineral-based products*”.

It is noted that expanded perlite products are used for their thermal and insulation properties in acoustical tiles, plasters and mortars, as well as for their cellular structure in hydroponics, beverage filtering and various other industrial uses. The ExPerl project aims at developing new, innovative and of higher added value products, that will offer even better mechanical and environmental performance characteristics, such as new insulating products (bricks, vacuum panels, boards, facades) and functional fillers (coatings, paints, plasters, plastics and joint compounds). At the same time, the aim is to reduce the perlite “fine” rejects by transforming them into saleable products. In other words, “ExPerl” is a research and development project that will hopefully lead to new and more eco-efficient products.

Efthimios O. Vidalis, Chief Executive Officer of S&B, commenting on the ExPerl project noted: “*We are proud that our deeply knowledgeable and experienced perlite team, along with our other network partners, were the first to have put together and gained the approval for a project at the forefront of the technology platform of the new EU Raw Materials Initiative. S&B’s coordinating role reflects the top rank market position our Perlite Division already holds, both in Europe and worldwide, and its commitment for continuously improving both our production processes and the solutions we can offer to our customers and the environment. The ExPerl project is indicative of our unfailing focus, despite the current adverse economic environment, on innovation, new ways of thinking, new and environmentally friendlier processes and products.*”

Corporate Social Responsibility & Communication  
July 21, 2009

**S&B Industrial Minerals S.A.** is a multinational Group of companies, its purpose being to provide innovative industrial solutions by developing and transforming natural resources into value creating products. Utilizing the multiple properties of industrial minerals, S&B offers a portfolio of customized solutions for a broad range of applications (including foundry, steel-making, construction & building materials, metallurgy and horticulture), operating responsibly and adhering to the principles of sustainable development. It holds leading positions in its main sectors (bentonite, perlite, bauxite and casting fluxes). S&B was established in Greece in 1934, is listed on the Athens Stock Exchange (ticker:ARBA), is active in 21 countries across 5 continents. In 2008 it had a Group turnover of over Euro 450 million, and employed approximately 2,050 people worldwide. For more information, please visit S&B’s website at [www.sandb.com](http://www.sandb.com).