

Mineral Mania: Canada's Critical Mineral Opportunity

written by James Lautens | June 4, 2025

At an increasing rate, critical minerals are at the forefront of international relations. Critical minerals are a hot topic not only in the business sphere but also the defense sphere. This is especially true now, with President Donald Trump pushing Ukraine to [sign over](#) its critical mineral rights to the United States. This demand is presented as payment for the military aid the United States has provided the nation during its ongoing struggle against Russian invasion. Such a demand would deprive Ukraine of its ability to rebuild itself after the war, as critical minerals have been globally highlighted as being foundational for [future technological and economic development](#). The United States sees this, and has begun increasing domestic production, with Trump using emergency powers to [increase production](#) of critical minerals. Looking abroad, China is a superpower that has [massive influence](#) in the trade of critical minerals especially in regards to [critical minerals processing and supply chain creation](#). The U.S. wanting to increase output is designed to challenge their newfound international influence.

As such, it is crucial that countries everywhere begin to contemplate what they can do with their critical minerals, especially Canada. Canada has a wealth of critical minerals it can harness to not only pursue a greener economy, but also secure its national security. In 2022, the Canadian Federal Government has outlined a [critical minerals strategy](#). In this report, six minerals are listed as an initial priority for exploitation: [lithium, graphite, nickel, cobalt, copper, and rare earth metals](#). Each of these metals has a variety of uses,

like cobalt's role in manufacturing [batteries, jet engines, and hydrogen fuel cells.](#)

The strategy goes on to assert that “critical minerals represent a generational opportunity for Canada’s workers, economy, and net-zero future” and as such, Canada must pursue critical minerals as an industry. The strategy [specifically](#) looks to generate economic growth for a sustainable future and enhance global security. It makes clear that in a rapidly changing world, critical minerals – and those who can exploit them – will remain cutting edge. While China currently [dominates](#) this market, Canada has the opportunity to emerge as a [major player.](#)

Yet, there have been some criticisms of Canada’s Critical Mineral Strategy. While the strategy is designed with sustainability in mind, a federal audit conducted in November 2024 highlighted that the federal government was not giving enough consideration to the [environmental impact](#) of critical mineral mining. The audit has stated that the infrastructure needed to mine these critical minerals has not been properly [assessed](#), and as such might increase environmental degradation. The Federal Government accepted these recommendations yet other, no less crucial questions still remain.

Primarily, the paradoxical nature of acquiring critical minerals is of special note. Canada has thirty-one critical minerals that it can exploit [scattered](#) throughout the country. To acquire these minerals, not only would the government of Canada have to [incentivise](#) an increase in exploratory measures, but they would also need to establish the [necessary infrastructure](#). However, without accessing these minerals, Canada will not be able to transition to a fully sustainable economy.

Not only could this help Canada, both economically and defensively, but it could also assist **NATO**. Canada could export its critical minerals to key allies in Europe to help curb Russian influence. Not only that, but by exporting critical minerals, Canada can help other economies transition towards sustainability. Such a measure would not only help slow global warming, but elevate Canada's status on the international stage.

Therefore, Canada currently has an opportunity to forge itself into an international critical mineral supplier, while also meeting its own interests. The exploitation of critical minerals is crucial to ensure we transfer from a fossil fuel-based economy to a green one.