

Technology Metals Report (04.04.2025): China Tightens Critical Mineral Export Controls as U.S. Explores Strategic Congo Alliance Amid Intensifying Resource Competition

written by Tracy Hughes | April 4, 2025

Over the past week, the critical minerals sector experienced significant developments, prominently featuring China's immediate global export [restrictions](#) on critical minerals, imposed in retaliation against U.S. tariffs. China's measures specifically target samarium (Sm), gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), dysprosium (Dy), lutetium (Lu), scandium (Sc), and yttrium (Y), accompanied by a 34% tariff on all U.S. imports. These actions escalate ongoing trade tensions and pose risks to global supply chains, following [previous bans](#) on gallium (Ga), germanium (Ge), and antimony (Sb) in December 2024 and tightened export licensing [controls](#) on tungsten (W), indium (In), bismuth (Bi), tellurium (Te), and molybdenum (Mo) from February 2025.

In response to mounting geopolitical tensions and tariff disputes, the U.S. is actively considering a strategic [minerals-for-security deal](#) with Congo, potentially investing billions in Congo's mineral sector while aiding regional security stabilization. Additionally, the White House clarified its stance on reciprocal tariffs, explicitly [exempting](#) steel, aluminum, copper, and gold from further duties to avoid

disrupting critical U.S. economic sectors. However, uncertainties persist regarding future actions targeting other critical minerals predominantly sourced from Chinese supply chains.

Meanwhile, the [Critical Minerals Institute](#) (CMI) announced its fourth annual [summit](#) scheduled for May 2025 in Toronto, where industry leaders, including [Jack Lifton](#), will address the significant risks posed by scientific illiteracy within the sector. Concurrently, the U.S. achieved its highest uranium production levels in six years, driven by renewed production activities, notably at the White Mesa Mill. Additionally, Galan Lithium rejected a \$150 million buyout bid from Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt and Renault Group, underscoring the intensifying strategic competition for lithium resources amid rising global demand.

CMI		Critical Minerals Institute					
Purity			03.Apr.25	Month % Change	31.Mar.25	Year to Date % Change	Year End 31.Dec.24
99.65% fob China	ALUMINUM (Al)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$1.19	-0.2%	\$1.19	2.8%	\$1.16
	ANTIMONY (Sb)	\$ USD/ tn	\$49,648	17.7%	\$42,177	37.2%	\$36,190
	COBALT (Co)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$16.01	-0.2%	\$16.04	43.1%	\$11.19
>99.99%	COPPER (Cu)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$7.16	0.5%	\$7.13	82.5%	\$3.92
	GALLIUM (Ga)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$134.2	0.0%	\$134.2	0.0%	\$134.2
	GOLD (Au)	\$ USD/ oz.	\$3,105.0	-1.0%	\$3,137.2	18.3%	\$2,624.6
	NATURAL GRAPHITE North America (C)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$0.57	0.0%	\$0.57	0.0%	\$0.57
>99%	LITHIUM METAL (Li)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$4.85	-0.1%	\$4.86	-1.8%	\$4.94
>99%	PRAESODYMIUM (Pr)	\$ USD/ kg.	\$87.52	0.0%	\$87.52	10.8%	\$78.98
>99.5%	NEODYMIUM (Nd)	\$ USD/ kg.	\$81.30	0.0%	\$81.30	13.1%	\$71.90
	NICKEL (Ni)	\$ USD/ lb.	\$1.26	-1.9%	\$1.28	-81.6%	\$6.85
0.999	NIOBIUM PENTOXIDE (Nb ₂ O ₅)	\$ USD/ kg.	\$45.00	0.0%	\$45.00	0.0%	\$45.00
	PLATINUM (Pt)	\$ USD/ oz.	\$929.06	-6.5%	\$993.37	2.5%	\$906.76
	SILVER (Ag)	\$ USD/ oz.	\$31.77	-6.9%	\$34.11	10.0%	\$28.89

The critical minerals pricing chart is supplied by the CMI Partners – [MineralPrices.com](#)

The Technology Metals Report (TMR) is a weekly compilation of the top stories selected by the Critical Minerals Institute (CMI) Board of Directors. For access to this board, [click here](#), or to become a Critical Minerals Institute (CMI) Member and have the TMR emailed to you weekly, [click here](#)

□China Retaliates Against US Tariffs with Immediate Global

Export Restrictions on Critical Minerals (April 4, 2025, [Source](#)) – China announced immediate global export restrictions on critical minerals in response to U.S. tariffs, targeting samarium (Sm), gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), dysprosium (Dy), lutetium (Lu), scandium (Sc), and yttrium (Y), alongside a 34% tariff on all U.S. imports, escalating trade tensions and threatening global supply chains. These measures follow earlier global export bans on gallium (Ga), germanium (Ge), and antimony (Sb) in December 2024, citing national security concerns, and February 2025 controls requiring export licenses for tungsten (W), indium (In), bismuth (Bi), tellurium (Te), and molybdenum (Mo), reinforcing China's strategic dominance over critical mineral markets.

Jack Lifton to Address Critical Risks of Scientific Illiteracy in the Critical Minerals Industry at CMI Summit IV (April 3, 2025, [Source](#)) – The Critical Minerals Institute (CMI) will host its fourth annual summit, CMI Summit IV, on May 13-14, 2025, at The National Club in Toronto. This event will gather global leaders to discuss the sustainability and security of critical mineral supply chains. Jack Lifton, Co-Chair of CMI, will deliver a keynote on the urgent need to combat scientific illiteracy in the sector, emphasizing its impact on global economic and technological development. The summit aims to address the competitive dynamics of critical minerals and facilitate strategic discussions, networking, and collaboration among industry leaders.

After tariffs, US dangles billions of dollars in Congo mineral investment (April 3, 2025, [Source](#)) – The United States is considering investing billions in Congo's mineral sector while aiding in resolving the conflict in the country's eastern regions. Amidst newly imposed U.S. tariffs, this move comes as part of a proposed minerals-for-security arrangement initiated by Congo. Although details remain undisclosed, the U.S.

expressed a commitment to transparent operations involving American companies, aiming to boost local economies. The discussions, reported during a visit by U.S. senior adviser Massad Boulos to Congo, also highlight U.S. intentions to establish peace in areas affected by M23 rebel activities, emphasizing the link between security and economic prosperity.

US Excludes Steel, Aluminum, Gold From Reciprocal Tariffs (April 3, 2025, [Source](#)) – The White House announced that steel, aluminum, copper, gold, and other metals will not face “reciprocal” tariffs, easing pressure on domestic buyers and highlighting a cautious approach to commodities crucial to the U.S. economy. This exemption includes all base and precious metals, alongside other niche materials, ensuring these will not incur additional duties on top of country-specific tariffs. The decision aims to prevent market disruptions seen recently in the global copper market, although uncertainties remain concerning future commodity regulations. Critical minerals, particularly those dominated by Chinese supply chains, might still be targeted for tariff investigations under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act.

U.S. uranium production in 2024 was highest in six years (April 2, 2025, [Source](#)) – In 2024, U.S. uranium production reached its highest level in six years, primarily driven by higher uranium prices. The Domestic Uranium Production Report–Quarterly highlighted increased output from two in-situ recovery facilities in Texas and Wyoming, and the restarted production at White Mesa Mill in Utah, the nation’s sole operational uranium mill. Notably, fourth quarter production in 2024 surpassed total annual production from each year between 2019 and 2023. Energy Fuels Inc. (NYSE American: UUUU | TSX: EFR), which operates White Mesa Mill, plans to continue its focus on uranium production in 2025. Uranium concentrate is used mainly in civilian nuclear reactors and medical applications.

Australia's Galan Lithium declines \$150 million buyout bid for Argentine assets (April 2, 2025, [Source](#)) – Australia's Galan Lithium Ltd. (ASX: GLN) has rejected a \$150 million cash buyout proposal from Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt Co and Renault Group for its Argentine assets, including the Hombre Muerto West (HMW) and Candelas projects. The company labeled the bid as "opportunistic" and an "undervalued" assessment of its holdings. Following the announcement, Galan's stock surged 38.1% to A\$0.145, reaching its highest price since early January, while the broader market index fell by 1.5%. Notably, last August, EnergyX also made a similar \$150 million offer for these assets.

China's Tariff-Dodging Move to Mexico Looks Doomed (April 1, 2025, [Source](#)) – Chinese companies, in response to the U.S. tariffs initiated by President Trump, have heavily invested in Mexico to manufacture goods tariff-free under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Billions of dollars have been spent on establishing factories that produce a variety of products for the American market. Despite this, the U.S. is considering additional tariffs to close this loophole, which could complicate global supply chains and increase costs for manufacturers and consumers. Mexican industrial parks, like Hofusan, have seen significant investment and growth, creating thousands of jobs and transforming local economies. However, the future of these investments hinges on ongoing trade negotiations and potential new tariff impositions by the U.S. government.

Uranium Market Freezes as Trump Tariff Threats Rattle Buyers (April 1, 2025, [Source](#)) – The North American uranium market has slowed significantly due to fears stemming from President Trump's tariff threats, leading to a substantial drop in US utility purchases of nuclear fuel. As tariffs on Canadian energy exports loom, US nuclear operators are postponing contract renewals and purchases, awaiting the outcome of the tariff situation. This cautious approach has impacted the uranium

market, with significant declines in both uranium futures and the stocks of major producers like Cameco Corp. (TSX: CCO | NYSE: CCJ). Despite existing inventories ensuring sufficient supply for the near future, the uncertainty is causing market instability and delaying new investments and contracts in the sector.

Russia, US discussing rare earth metals projects, Putin envoy says (March 31, 2025, [Source](#)) – Russia and the United States have begun discussing collaboration on rare earth metals and other projects in Russia, with several companies showing interest, according to Kirill Dmitriev, President Vladimir Putin's investment envoy. These talks follow Putin's suggestion that the U.S. might explore Russian rare earth deposits. Meanwhile, President Donald Trump threatened tariffs on Russian oil if he deems Moscow uncooperative in ending the war in Ukraine. Russia reportedly holds the world's fifth-largest reserves of rare earth metals, which are crucial for defense and other industries. Further talks may occur in mid-April.

Water shortage threatens the world's most abundant lithium reserves (March 31, 2025, [Source](#)) – A recent study published in the journal Communications Earth and Environment highlights a severe freshwater shortage in the Lithium Triangle, a key area spanning parts of Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile, which holds over half the world's lithium reserves. Researchers have discovered that the available freshwater for lithium extraction is significantly less than previously estimated, complicating future prospects as global lithium demand is projected to increase dramatically. The study calls for the lithium industry to minimize freshwater use to avoid disrupting both mining operations and the ecological balance of the region, which sustains unique wildlife and local communities. The need for improved water efficiency and additional research into the hydrology of lithium-rich areas is emphasized to support the

growing demand for lithium essential for electric vehicles and renewable energy storage.

Siemens announces \$150 million R&D battery facility investment in Canada (March 31, 2025, [Source](#)) – Siemens is investing \$150 million over five years to create an AI-focused manufacturing R&D facility for battery and electric vehicle production in Canada. The project will operate at Siemens Canada's Oakville headquarters, as well as in Toronto and Kitchener-Waterloo. It aims to develop AI manufacturing technologies that boost battery quality, reduce waste, and enhance workforce productivity. The Canadian and Ontario governments are supporting this initiative, which includes collaboration with higher education institutions and battery manufacturers. Siemens expects the new center to strengthen Canada's position in battery production and contribute to the growth of the national EV ecosystem.

White House weighs executive order to fast-track deep-sea mining, sources say (March 31, 2025, [Source](#)) – The White House is considering an executive order to expedite permitting for deep-sea mining, which would allow bypassing a U.N.-backed review process. This initiative, part of President Trump's efforts to access international mineral deposits, would enable mining companies to apply directly through the U.S. Department of Commerce's NOAA. The proposed order would sidestep the International Seabed Authority, which has been slow to finalize mining standards in international waters. The order is under discussion and could change before finalization. Environmental concerns remain, as various groups warn against potential marine life risks.

InvestorNews.com Media Highlights

- April 04, 2025 – China Retaliates Against US Tariffs with

Immediate Global Export Restrictions on Critical Minerals
<https://bit.ly/4lgDh03>

- April 03, 2025 – Navigating Tariff Turbulence: Strategic Actions for Mid-Market Public Companies to Thrive Amid Market Volatility <https://bit.ly/4cg30ah>
- April 03, 2025 – Jack Lifton to Address Critical Risks of Scientific Illiteracy in the Critical Minerals Industry at CMI Summit IV <https://bit.ly/43DwXtB>
- April 03, 2025 – American Tungsten Corp. Joins The Critical Minerals Institute <https://bit.ly/3G3KmBg>
- April 02, 2025 – Hallgarten + Company's March 2025 Monthly Resources Review: "Embracing the Zeitgeist" <https://bit.ly/3QZ457z>
- April 02, 2025 – The Saudi mining gambit: from Oil Kingdom to Mineral Might? <https://bit.ly/4jcu4o3>
- April 01, 2025 – The Inevitable Train Wreck from Scientific Illiteracy in the Critical Minerals Industry <https://bit.ly/43xUjku>

InvestorNews.com Video Highlights

- April 01, 2025 – Frank Basa on Nord Precious Metals' Breakthrough Silver Discovery in Ontario's Historic Cobalt Camp Sets the Stage for a New Era in Canada's Silver Resurgence <https://youtu.be/Td99xUo7i1Y>

InvestorNews.com Member News

- April 4, 2025 – Ucore Comments on China's Immediate Restrictions on Rare Earth Exports <https://bit.ly/4i74Vu5>
- April 4, 2025 – Neo Performance Materials and Globe Metals & Mining Sign MOU for Offtake of Critical Metals from the

Kanyika Project's Phase 1 Production in Malawi
<https://bit.ly/3DWmlM6>

- April 3, 2025 – Nord Precious Metals Closes FT Unit Private Placement for Critical Minerals
<https://bit.ly/3R01UAL>
- April 3, 2025 – Scandium Canada Announces Closing of the First Tranche of its Private Placement
<https://bit.ly/422LSMU>
- April 3, 2025 – Scandium Canada announces results of a new Mineral Resource Estimate for its Crater Lake project
<https://bit.ly/42kSBRf>
- April 1, 2025 – Scandium Canada Announces Amendment to its Private Placement <https://bit.ly/4iRWgg8>
- April 1, 2025 – Voyageur Completes Human Testing of Barium Contrast Products and Prepares for Canadian Market Launch
<https://bit.ly/4hR7b8B>
- April 1, 2025 – Neo Completes Sale of Majority Equity Interest of China Rare Earth Separation Assets
<https://bit.ly/4jgfrQF>
- April 1, 2025 – Australian Strategic Materials Limited: Extension of Letter of Interest from Export Development Canada <https://bit.ly/42bAL2V>
- March 31, 2025 – Nord Precious Metals Engages Ronacher McKenzie Geoscience to Complete 3D Geological and Structural Model for Castle East High-Grade Silver Property <https://bit.ly/4hSiqhf>

The upcoming **CMI Summit IV**, themed *The War for Critical Minerals and Capital Resources*, is scheduled to take place in Toronto, Ontario, on May 13-14, 2025. This event aims to unite industry leaders to tackle pressing issues in the global critical minerals market. To learn more about the **CMI Summit IV**, [click](#)

[here](#) – or to secure a **CMI Summit IV** 2-day Delegates Pass, [click here](#)

