Redefining Rare Earths Supply Chain: A Conversation with ASM's Rowena Smith

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In a recent interview on InvestorNews, CMI Co-Chair Jack Lifton had a chance to speak with Rowena Smith, the Managing Director and CEO of Australian Strategic Materials Limited (ASM) (ASX: ASM). The conversation took a deep dive into ASM's unique positioning in the rare earths industry.

Smith was quick to clarify that ASM's metal-making business is not a joint venture, contrary to Lifton's initial impression. Instead, it's entirely an ASM venture, based on a former joint project initiated with a Korean university professor a decade ago. This venture is now wholly owned by ASM, emphasizing their dedication to innovation, especially in low-carbon metallization.

The company's metal plant in Korea is already operational, with its production feeding directly to key customers. Remarkably, ASM began delivering neodymium praseodymium metal to a Korean magnet producer in the previous year, and they've since expanded to provide specialist alloys for permanent magnets used in wind turbines and electric vehicles. Among their significant clients is Noveon Magnetics in Texas, marking a burgeoning relationship.

Lifton highlighted the rarity of ASM's achievements. Apart from Japan and China, ASM stands out as the sole known company already shipping metal and alloy in the rare earth sector. Smith added, "We've actually established an end-to-end supply chain that doesn't at any point go through China." This autonomy is crucial for the diversification and security of the rare earths

supply. To access the complete interview, click here

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