Recommendations for the Ethical Production of Rare Earth Elements

Activists Group

Prepared in Advance of the Summit

Main Concerns of the Activists Group:

- The mining and production of rare earth elements affect local communities and natural habitats, and negotiations should prioritize protecting people and the environment over increasing production.
- Producing rare earths can be a valuable opportunity for economic development, but pollution has seriously harmed the health of people who live near historical sites of rare earth production. Producing rare earth elements in new places must avoid the harm caused by past bad practices.
- Local communities, not just mine owners and product manufacturers, must benefit from the production of rare earths. The rare earth industry needs to create safe and well-paid jobs for people who live near sites of production and return profits to local communities.
- An adequate supply of rare earths may be necessary for producing lower-carbon energy technologies such as wind turbines. While current rare earth separation processes contribute to climate change and local water pollution, using rare earths can also help provide alternative energy sources to fossil fuels.

Recommendations Based on Activists Group Concerns:

- Producers should establish systems to monitor the area around their operations for pollution; these systems should be run in cooperation with local communities and should publish complete data from those monitoring systems for the public.
- Producers should hire health experts to monitor the health of local residents who may be harmed by pollution from rare earth production; they should also give the public access to reports on the health of local populations.
- Manufacturers should join with producers to create end-to-end transparency, allowing tracking of rare earth metals from the start of their production until their delivery to consumers.
● Producers wishing to be certified must pay at least a living wage to all employees to ensure that everyone involved in the rare earth economy receives a fair share of the benefits.

● Producers and manufacturers should take steps to reduce carbon pollution and local air and water pollution in an effort to reduce the planet-wide harms caused by climate change.