**Manufacturers Group: You are an Owner of a Catalytic Converters Company**

**Your Background and Biography**

You grew up in an industrial town in Ontario, Canada, where you were raised around factories that produced automotive parts. Your parents both worked in the auto-parts industry, and together they built a company that manufactured catalytic converters. They instilled in you a respect for rules and a commitment to treat people fairly. When they retired, you stepped into the role of owner.

Business has been steady because catalytic converters, which use the rare earth element cerium, are required in automobiles according to government-regulated emissions standards. However, in 2010, when the price of cerium skyrocketed, the survival of your company became uncertain. For a year or so you were paying 30 times more for cerium than you had in the past.

As the market readjusted, you started to pay attention to where your cerium came from. You learned about rare earth production in China that was not sanctioned by the government. This “black market” production is sometimes especially polluting or harmful to local residents. Was the cerium your company used sourced illegally? You couldn’t be sure. You vowed to change your purchasing practices so your company would help solve the problem, not make it worse.

In your negotiations you are pushing for a Sustainability Seal that helps promote an ethical supply of rare earth elements. You’re particularly interested in ensuring that the origin and chain of custody of rare earth elements can be traced so that you can be confident your company isn’t buying material that has harmed people.

**Your Mission**

Your goal at this hearing is to convince the Stewardship Council to include the Manufacturers Group’s recommendations in its final Sustainability Seal guiding values. To make this argument effectively, you must do the following:

- Complete the assigned readings listed at the bottom of this page.
- Work closely with the other members of your group to develop clear answers to the Stewardship Council’s questions.
• Use as much specific information as possible to develop strong arguments for your position that changing consumer demands require businesses to pursue creative problem solving and innovation in resolving the pressing issues caused by rare earth element mining, supply chains, and manufacturing.
• Read as much as you can about your position and the positions of the other groups.
• Complete written reflections on your character, interest group, and readings as assigned.

Your Victory Objectives

• **You will receive 10 points** if the Stewards select your group’s proposal as the final Sustainability Seal guiding values.
• The Stewards will rank the interest groups by how well their goals are represented in the final Sustainability Seal guiding values. **You will receive between 1 and 4 points** based on how the Manufacturers Group is ranked and how well the Sustainability Seal guiding values reflect your goals.

SOURCES

Group Sources

• Manufacturers Case Study: “Using the Rare Earth Elements”

Individual Sources

• Liu, Hongqiao. “Rare Earth Black Market: An Open Dirty Secret.” China Water Risk, June 2016. (This is a web-formatted excerpt from the white paper “Rare Earths: Shades of Gray.”)