

The Shifting Dynamics of Resource Nationalism as the Demand for Critical Minerals is Set to Soar

written by Jack Lifton | April 18, 2024

As nations like Chile and Indonesia assert greater control over their resources, the global community must navigate this new reality where resource sovereignty becomes a cornerstone of national policy.

Technology Metals Report (01.05.24): The Intensifying Competition of BYD Surprises Tesla

written by Tracy Weslosky | April 18, 2024

Welcome to the latest **Technology Metals Report (TMR)** where we highlight the Top 10 news stories that members of the [Critical Minerals Institute](#) (CMI) have forwarded to us over the last 2-weeks.

Key highlights in this **Technology Metals Report** includes Tesla's impressive Q4 delivery record, overshadowed by BYD's surge as the top EV maker, underscoring the intensifying competition in

the electric vehicle market. Energy Fuels Inc. has made significant strides, first by entering into an MOU with Astron Corporation to bolster the U.S. rare earths supply, and then by expanding its uranium production in response to favorable market conditions. Nio Inc. has made a technological leap with its innovative EV battery, boasting a 1,000km range, while global trends in the critical minerals and EV market show shifts influenced by economic and political developments. Notably, Codelco and SQM's new lithium venture in Chile represents a strategic move in the lithium market. The impact of China's rare earths export ban stands as a significant moment, compelling the U.S. to foster technological self-reliance. The landmark merger between Allkem and Livent to form Arcadium Lithium marks a major consolidation in the lithium industry. Atomionics' innovative use of AI and gravity in mining exploration showcases a technological breakthrough. The EU's ambitious goals for critical minerals, despite challenges, indicate a strong commitment to securing essential resources for its green transition. Lastly, KoBold Metals' ambitious global lithium exploration, backed by industry giants, highlights the growing importance of lithium in the clean energy sector.

The 10-stories selected for this edition of the TMR with source links to source stories for this fast-paced sector are listed chronologically for your ease and review.

Tesla delivers record Q4 cars, but China's BYD steals top EV spot (January 3, 2024, [Source](#)) – In the fiercely competitive electric vehicle (EV) market, Tesla Inc. (NASDAQ: TSLA) achieved a significant milestone by delivering a record 484,507 vehicles in the fourth quarter of 2023, surpassing market expectations and fulfilling its annual target. Despite this success, Tesla was eclipsed by China's BYD in terms of sales volume, losing its position as the leading EV manufacturer. BYD, backed by Warren Buffett, delivered 526,409 vehicles, primarily in China,

indicating a consumer preference for more affordable models in an economy burdened by high interest rates. Although Tesla's aggressive sales strategies led to a notable 11% growth over the previous quarter and a total production of 1.85 million units in 2023, it fell short of CEO Elon Musk's ambitious target of 2 million. The company's stock remained stable amidst a generally declining market. Meanwhile, BYD's strategy of price cuts appears to be paying off, gaining market share despite potential impacts on profit margins. Tesla, in a bid to boost sales, offered discounts and incentives, such as six months of free fast charging for deliveries made by the end of December. This strategy was partly in response to some models of its Model 3 sedan losing U.S. federal tax credits in 2024. Tesla's delivery performance stands out in comparison to domestic U.S. car companies, but it is also facing challenges like regulatory scrutiny over its self-driving technology and the need to adapt to changing tax credit policies.

Energy Fuels' Strategic MOU with Astron: Shaping the Future of the U.S. Rare Earths Supply Chain (December 30, 2023, [Source](#)) – [Energy Fuels Inc.](#) (NYSE American: UUUU | TSX: EFR) has recently entered into a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Astron Corporation Ltd. to jointly develop the Donald Rare Earth and Mineral Sands Project in Victoria, Australia. This collaboration, [announced](#) on December 27, 2023, marks a crucial step in establishing a U.S.-focused rare earths supply chain, vital for meeting future national needs. The project will provide Energy Fuels with 7,000 to 14,000 metric tons of rare earth concentrate annually from the Donald deposit, processed at their White Mesa Mill in Utah. This arrangement not only utilizes the mill's capacity to manage radioactive elements but also supports the production of critical minerals like uranium. The project is set to initially produce 800 – 1,000 metric tons of Neodymium-Praseodymium (NdPr) oxide by Q1 2024, with

prospects for expansion. This development is strategically important in light of the U.S. government's impending policy to restrict critical minerals sourced from Foreign Entities of Concern, effective from 2025. By fostering a sustainable, competitive, and independent supply chain, Energy Fuels' initiative is poised to significantly impact the electric vehicle and clean energy sectors in the U.S., reducing dependency on foreign sources, especially China, and bolstering national security and technological advancement.

A Chinese EV company developed a battery with a 1,000km range – and its CEO tested it out on a 14-hour livestream (December 29, 2023, [Source](#)) – Chinese electric vehicle (EV) company Nio Inc., often compared to Tesla, recently showcased a groundbreaking development in EV technology by introducing a battery with an impressive 1,000km range. The company's CEO, William Li, widely regarded as China's answer to Elon Musk, embarked on a 14-hour live-streamed journey covering 1,044km from Shanghai to Xiamen to demonstrate the battery's capabilities. Despite challenging weather conditions, Li's Nio ET7, powered by the company's new 150 kWh battery with the highest energy density for a mass-produced EV battery, completed the trip with 3% charge remaining. Scheduled for mass production in April 2024, these batteries, though costly at around \$42,100, represent a significant advancement in EV technology. Nio's unique business model allows customers to buy cars without a battery, offering a subscription for battery swaps at over 2,000 stations across China. Despite financial challenges and each car resulting in a \$12,000 loss for Nio, this strategy has elevated Li's stature, drawing parallels with Tesla's Elon Musk. Li further showcased Nio's technological prowess at the annual "Nio Day," revealing the new ET9 flagship to thousands of Nio enthusiasts.

The Critical Minerals Institute Report (12.27.2023): Politics Driving Marketable Commodities into 2024 (December 27, 2023,

Source) – The December 2023 [Critical Minerals Institute](#) report highlights key global economic and political developments influencing the critical minerals and electric vehicle (EV) markets. U.S. inflation decreases and potential interest rate cuts in 2024 have positively impacted equity markets, while China's anticipated economic recovery bodes well for commodity sectors. The EV market is experiencing significant growth, particularly in China, despite challenges from U.S. and EU policies aiming to reduce dependency on foreign entities. The U.S. Department of Energy's proposed FEOC guidelines and the EU's Critical Raw Materials Act reflect a strategic shift towards stabilizing and localizing critical minerals supply chains. The report also notes significant fluctuations in the lithium market, with expectations of a bottom forming soon, and discusses the broader market dynamics of other critical minerals like cobalt, graphite, nickel, and manganese, in the context of a global economic slowdown. The performance of uranium in 2023 and the potential impact of lower interest rates in 2024 on the global economy and critical minerals demand are key areas of focus.

Chile's Codelco to control new lithium venture with miner SQM (December 27, 2023, [Source](#)) – Chile's state-owned copper miner, Codelco, has entered into a significant partnership with mining company Sociedad Química y Minera de Chile S.A. ("SQM") (NYSE: SQM), gaining majority control in a new lithium venture. This move aligns with President Gabriel Boric's directive for greater government involvement in lithium production. Chile, holding the title of the world's second-largest lithium producer, aims to revitalize its market share, which is at risk of declining due to aging mining projects and increasing global competition. The deal, marking a pivotal step in Boric's national lithium strategy, mandates public-private partnerships for all lithium projects. Set to start in January 2025, Codelco will take over

SQM's existing contracts and collaborate on increasing lithium production in the Atacama Desert. This partnership is not only a strategic move to stabilize SQM's market position but also sets a precedent for future lithium contracts in Chile, potentially reshaping the country's role in the global lithium market.

Global Rare Earths Market Heats Up as China Implements Export Ban (December 21, 2023, [Source](#)) – The recent [ban by China](#) on the export of rare earth processing technology represents a pivotal moment in the global rare earths market, particularly impacting the strategic metals sector. This ban, covering technology for extracting, separating, and producing rare earth metals and alloys, along with some magnet production technologies, has significant implications for industries like electronics, clean energy, and defense. Experts from the [Critical Minerals Institute](#), including Melissa Sanderson and Peyton Jackson, highlight the necessity for the United States to proactively respond by investing in both green technologies, such as bio-extraction, and traditional processing methods. They emphasize the risks of over-dependence on other nations and the importance of developing technological self-reliance. The U.S. government's funding of Lynas Rare Earths Ltd. (ASX: LYC) and Energy Fuels Inc.'s (NYSE American: UUUU | TSX: EFR) advanced solvent extraction system exemplifies a shift towards addressing these challenges through domestic initiatives. This strategic move is not only a reaction to China's export ban but also a step towards ensuring a more sustainable and secure future in the critical minerals sector.

Allkem shareholders approve \$10.6 billion Livent lithium merger (December 19, 2023, [Source](#)) – Australian lithium producer Allkem Limited (ASX: AKE | TSX: AKE) and U.S. company Livent Corporation (NYSE: LTHM) have agreed on a significant [\\$10.6 billion merger](#), marking a major move in the lithium industry. This decision, approved by 72% of Allkem's voting shareholders,

will result in the formation of Arcadian Lithium PLC (NYSE: ALTM | ASX: LTM), a formidable entity in the global lithium market. The merger, which has received all necessary regulatory approvals, positions Arcadium Lithium as one of the world's largest lithium companies, with operations spanning Australia, Argentina, and Canada. The new company will be integral in supplying lithium, a critical component for electric vehicle batteries, to various battery manufacturers. Under the terms of the deal, Allkem shareholders will exchange their shares on a one-for-one basis for shares in Arcadium Lithium, owning 56% of the new company, while Livent shareholders will receive 2.406 shares in Arcadium for each of their shares. Livent CEO Paul Graves is set to lead the new company, which will be the world's third-largest lithium producer. The merger comes amidst a surge in dealmaking activity in the lithium sector and is recommended by independent financial advisors and proxy firms. Additionally, Livent plans to expand its operations in Western Australia's prominent lithium districts.

Singapore's Atomionics taps gravity, AI in hunt for critical minerals (December 19, 2023, [Source](#)) – Singapore-based startup Atomionics is transforming the mineral exploration industry with its innovative technology, Gravio, which combines gravity detection and artificial intelligence. This "virtual drill" technique offers a more precise and efficient method for locating ore bodies of critical minerals like copper, nickel, and zinc. Atomionics has already engaged with three major mining companies and is implementing its technology in Australia and the U.S. The technology's real-time data processing significantly accelerates the task of defining ore bodies, offering a cost-effective alternative to traditional exploration methods. The ability to build an accurate virtual picture of mineral deposits before physical drilling can greatly reduce costs, as exploratory drilling is expensive and often misses the

target. Atomionics aims to decrease these unsuccessful attempts by at least half. This innovative approach holds the potential to be a game-changer in the mineral exploration sector, presenting a low-cost alternative to traditional methods and contributing to the energy transition.

EU sets critical mineral goals, but faces struggle to hit them (December 18, 2023, [Source](#)) – The European Union (EU) has ambitious targets for securing critical minerals essential for its green transition, as outlined in the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), which aims to mine, recycle, and process significant portions of its annual needs for key materials like lithium and cobalt by 2030. These efforts are crucial for manufacturing clean technology products and reducing dependence on China, the dominant player in global mineral processing. However, the EU faces considerable challenges, including funding shortages, high energy costs, local opposition, and the need to expedite project permits. Additionally, the EU's efforts are comparatively underfunded compared to massive investments in green subsidies by countries like the U.S. The situation is further complicated by higher EU energy costs leading to reduced metal production and delays in mining projects in Portugal and Serbia. Despite these hurdles, there are positive signs, such as potential projects meeting EU supply needs and innovations to minimize material use. The EU also seeks to diversify imports and forge global partnerships, aiming to position itself as a clean tech leader by focusing on high-value manufacturing and relying on reliable allies for mineral sourcing.

Billionaire-backed KoBold Metals widens lithium hunt across four continents (December 14, 2023, [Source](#)) – KoBold Metals, a California-based startup financially backed by prominent billionaires including Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos, is broadening its search for lithium, a crucial component in the clean energy and electric vehicle sectors, across four continents. Utilizing

advanced artificial intelligence technology, CEO Kurt House announced plans to explore for lithium in regions such as South Korea, Quebec, the United States, Australia, and Africa, with specific emphasis on Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Previously focused on nickel and copper, with successful ventures in Quebec and Zambia, KoBold is now transitioning to include lithium in its mining portfolio. This strategic move aligns with their long-term goal to become the leading supplier of critical metals within 10 to 15 years. The startup, supported by Breakthrough Energy Ventures, collaborates with major players like BHP Group and Rio Tinto on projects in Australia and Canada. This expansion reflects KoBold's ambition to fill the exploration void left by larger mining firms, which have recently prioritized operational efficiency and shareholder returns over new mineral discoveries.

InvestorNews Critical Minerals Media Coverage:

- January 3, 2024 – Rare earths company stock price has had a ‘meteoric’ rise of over 21x the past 15 months <https://bit.ly/3vo6Xn3>
- December 29, 2023 – Energy Fuels announces an MOU for a \$122M investment in Astron that will supply a “new U.S.-based supply chain for decades” <https://bit.ly/3tzBfm9>
- December 29, 2023 – Hallgarten Initiates Coverage of Edison Lithium: Pivoting to Sodium-Ion Battery Technology <https://bit.ly/3tG08wq>
- December 27, 2023 – The Critical Minerals Institute Report (12.27.2023): Politics Driving Marketable Commodities into 2024 <https://bit.ly/48sqnVU>
- December 21, 2023 – Global Rare Earths Market Heats Up as China Implements Export Ban <https://bit.ly/3TAClsv>
- December 21, 2023 – Setback for U.S. Rare Earth Industry: China Tightens Export Laws on Key Technologies, Impeding

American Efforts to Gain Independence Despite Financial Incentives <https://bit.ly/4aGvQdQ>

- December 20, 2023 – An update on the graphite sector and what to expect in 2024 and beyond <https://bit.ly/3v8xLHG>
- December 19, 2023 – Australia updates their Critical Minerals List and Adds a second, introducing the Australian Strategic Materials List <https://bit.ly/3RQx7aG>

InvestorNews Critical Minerals Videos:

- December 30, 2023 – Jack Lifton with Mark Chalmers on Energy Fuels Rare Earth Deal and Increasing US Uranium Production <https://bit.ly/3TM5wsK>
- December 30, 2023 – Mark Chalmers of Energy Fuels Discusses Increasing Uranium Production in the United States <https://bit.ly/3TDPH7k>
- December 30, 2023 – Energy Fuels' Strategic MOU with Astron: Shaping the Future of the U.S. Rare Earths Supply Chain <https://bit.ly/41PPujp>
- December 18, 2023 – Ucore's Strategic Leap: Pat Ryan Discusses the First Mover Advantage in Rare Earths Processing at Louisiana's Strategic Metals Complex <https://bit.ly/3GKa2jL>

Critical Minerals IN8.Pro Member News Releases:

- January 4, 2024 – Ucore Acquires Alexandria, Louisiana, Facility for Rare Earth Element Processing Plant <https://bit.ly/3RJC00s>
- January 2, 2024 – Panther Metals PLC Corporate Summary: Positioned to Succeed <https://bit.ly/3tDKS0I>
- January 2, 2024 – First Phosphate Closes Second Tranche of Oversubscribed Private Placement for Total Current

Financing of \$7.5 Million <https://bit.ly/48jDCbP>

- December 29, 2023 – Panther Metals PLC: Obonga Project Awkward East Claim Purchase Agreement <https://bit.ly/3NKBeTr>
- December 28, 2023 – Appia Rare Earths & Uranium – A Year in Review <https://bit.ly/48xo3gh>
- December 28, 2023 – Kraken Energy Receives Permit to Resume Phase I Drill Program at Harts Point and Provides Corporate Update <https://bit.ly/48pALxM>
- December 27, 2023 – Energy Fuels Enters into MOU to Secure Near-Term, Large-Scale Australian Source of Rare Earth Minerals to Supply New U.S.-Based Supply Chain for Decades <https://bit.ly/47lDF5v>
- December 27, 2023 – Ucore Comments on China's Ban on the Export of Rare Earth Technology <https://bit.ly/3RYiimD>
- December 27, 2023 – Appia Announces Closing of Non-Brokered Flow-Through Private Placement <https://bit.ly/41EDIbJ>
- December 27, 2023 – Defense Metals Completes Geotechnical Field Data Collection for Wicheeda Rare Earth Element Project Preliminary Feasibility Study <https://bit.ly/3RGLehB>
- December 27, 2023 – F3 to Spend \$16 Million on Drilling at PLN <https://bit.ly/4aCQwDc>
- December 22, 2023 – First Phosphate Announces Closing of Initial Tranche of Private Placement Financing Along with Date of Second Tranche Closing <https://bit.ly/48LgHWR>
- December 22, 2023 – Ucore Announces Extension of Debt <https://bit.ly/3S7KAev>
- December 22, 2023 – Fathom Nickel Announces the Closing of the First Tranche of Private Placement <https://bit.ly/3S6aCyF>
- December 21, 2023 – Imperial Mining Closes \$1M Critical Minerals Flow-Through Private Placement

<https://bit.ly/4aEEsSh>

- December 21, 2023 – Western Uranium & Vanadium Provides Market and Company Updates <https://bit.ly/3tyzFAP>
- December 21, 2023 – Ucore Completes RapidSX(TM) Demo Plant Commissioning – Begins US Department of Defense Demonstration Program <https://bit.ly/3tjI4Iz>
- December 21, 2023 – In Response to Surging Prices, Supportive Government Policies, and a Domestic Focus on Security of Supply, Energy Fuels Has Commenced Production at Three of its U.S. Uranium Mines <https://bit.ly/3Ru3Lxv>
- December 20, 2023 – Panther Metals PLC: Financing Update <https://bit.ly/410C3jB>
- December 20, 2023 – Critical Metals PLC advances the Molulu Copper-Cobalt Project in DRC <https://bit.ly/3ts5TxH>
- December 19, 2023 – Auxico Announces Board Decisions on Key Assets and Filing of Technical Reports <https://bit.ly/3TyNxFY>
- December 19, 2023 – Automotive OEM Validates Nano One LFP and Kicks Off Tonne-Scale Evaluations <https://bit.ly/48g4KZ6>

Molybdenum – securing a domestic supply of the vital but underappreciated mineral

written by | April 18, 2024

Element 42 on the periodic table is Molybdenum (Mo), commonly referred to in the industry as the easier to pronounce moly.

Most of the world's moly production comes as a byproduct from copper or tungsten mining. Most people know it as a lubricant. The main use of moly is in steel production as it gives weather and acid resistance in certain steel alloys, particularly stainless steel. This is an element largely overlooked as current production is in the range of 290,000-300,000 metric tonnes per year, which makes it a \$10 billion annual business at its current pricing of \$16/lb. Pricing earlier this year reached \$20 per pound. Those are prices that have not been seen since 2008. Two years ago, the price was under \$8 per pound.

According to the CPM Group, there are 76 mines globally that produce moly and 36 are inside China, with China producing over 40% of the world's output. Between 70-80% of that output is from copper mines. In 2021 the world's top 10 moly producing countries were:



Outside China, there are only two pure moly plays, and both of these are in Colorado and operated by Freeport-McMoRan (NYSE: FCX) subsidiary Climax Molybdenum. 90% of western-sourced moly comes from copper production. This means that the main driver for moly production is copper production, so output and pricing can be counterintuitive. An example of this was in 2020 when prices dropped 30% but production went up, while in 2021 prices climbed 96% but production went down.

According to a World Bank report on the impact of low carbon technologies (LCT) in 2018, 21 million tonnes of copper were produced compared to 0.3 million tonnes of moly, or about 1 tonne of moly per 7,000 tonnes of copper. Moly is used in wind turbines, with one megawatt of output requiring 130 kilograms of moly. A typical offshore turbine is 12MW, which requires 1.56 tonnes of molybdenum.

One of the issues facing the industry is Chile's production. According to CPM, moly production in 2021 dropped 7.5% from 2020. The main drop was from Codelco, a state owned Chilean company, whose production declined 24%. A presentation by Codelco in 2019 indicated they needed new investment, otherwise production would fall by 74% by 2029. The Chilean government has asked Codelco to find \$1 billion in annual savings and make a \$8 billion cut in planned investments. This may delay investments. The Chilean government is talking about privatizing the mining industry and taking a royalty of up to 12%. These steps will likely give companies pause for thought on new investments. Based on this, the CPM Group is looking at a deficit position for moly over the next five years.

There is one potential new moly mine opportunity that is intriguing – [Stuhini Exploration Ltd.](#) (TSXV: STU) based in British Columbia. The CEO, David O'Brien, pulls a monthly salary of \$2,000 which is different than a lot of junior mining companies. The share structure is very tight with 26.1 million shares issued and fully diluted at 28.3 million shares. Insiders hold 43% and Eric Sprott is a strategic investor.

Stuhini's project is in Northwestern British Columbia and is called Ruby Creek. It has an option to earn 100% interest with a 1% NSR. There is a \$22 million road built by a previous operator so there is access to the site. The mine was under construction by Adanac Molybdenum Corp. when it went bankrupt because of the 2008 financial crisis. This is a pure moly play, like the two mines in Colorado. A resource was released earlier this year with a measured and indicated resource of 433 million pounds. This gives an in situ value of \$6 billion at current prices.

Additionally, there are gold and silver indications on the property. Interestingly the market cap is \$14 million while the previous operator had a market cap of \$300 million.

It bears keeping an eye on this moly as low carbon technologies expand and what decisions Chile makes over the next few years. At present pricing, it can support new mines but there are few stand-alone opportunities. It is well worth keeping an eye on this market.

Copper, Lithium, and a Presidential Election in Chile, why does it matter?

written by InvestorNews | April 18, 2024

Now that COP26 has concluded perhaps some other items will begin to show up in the news cycle. However, unless you dig deep you may not be aware that on November 21st Chileans go to the polls to elect a new president. You may be wondering why I picked an election in Chile as something to pay attention to given all the things going on in the world today. I have to admit that I'm a little concerned about the build-up of Russian troops on the Ukrainian border in response to complaints of increasing NATO activity in the region. And you just never know what's going to happen when the Chinese and U.S. get together to discuss economic and military tensions. Yet despite all that I think the Chilean election could have greater global ramifications depending on the outcome...or it could be a non-event.

The reason for having a look under the hood at Chile's election is two-fold. One is that the leading candidates in the polls are currently from the far left and the far right, neither are from Chile's mainstream political parties. The second is Chile's

contribution to two very top-of-mind commodities at present: copper and lithium. Has this information started to pique your curiosity? If it hasn't then it should and here's why.

In today's economic reality, as we move towards a cleaner, greener world with less carbon emissions, we are going to need a lot of copper to build out all the electrical infrastructure and of course lithium has been termed as the gasoline of the future. We've covered the macro necessity of both these commodities enough at InvestorIntel, so I won't get into the weeds on everything regarding copper and lithium. However, I will say that Chile is the world's largest miner of copper by a long shot. Mine production in Chile is approximately [28% of all copper mined](#) in the world and the country is estimated to contain [23% of global copper reserves](#). Those are the kind of numbers copper investors need to pay attention to.

As for lithium, it's almost as impressive with Chile being part of the renowned Lithium Triangle. The Lithium Triangle is a lithium-rich region in the Andean southwest corner of South America, spanning the borders of Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile. Roughly 58% of the world's lithium resources are found in these three countries, according to the 2021 [USGS Mineral Commodity Summary](#). Although Chile only accounts for an estimated 11% of global lithium resources, they are currently the world's second-largest producer with approximately 22% of the world's lithium production. Again, this is enough material so that any sort of disruption to order or rule of law could have serious ramifications that ripple around the world.

As much as I like to brag about Canada being rich in commodities, Chile is knocking it out of the park when it comes to copper and lithium. Hence the reason I'm paying attention to this election given the importance to a nation's commerce of an orderly transfer of power.

Now let's take a closer look at the background heading into this election. This is the first election since widespread protests over inequality rocked Chile in 2019. Some of those protests turned violent, with riots, arson attacks, looting and violent clashes with police, all sparked after the government increased public transportation fares. Things were bubbling below the surface for a while and this was the ignition point. Needless to say Covid impacts to the economy and its people further exacerbated these issues. This led to Chileans voting in a referendum in October, 2020 to rewrite Chile's constitution which appeared to be the writing on the wall for the center-right coalition government that is currently in power. Then in May of this year, Chileans voted again in an election for delegates who would rewrite the constitution. The ruling coalition failed to pick up the one-third of seats necessary to block radical changes to the constitution. Meanwhile, the center-left, which has dominated politics since the end of Augusto Pinochet's 1973-1990 military dictatorship, garnered less support than leftists who have been pushing for wholesale change to the 'Chilean model' that has been credited with fomenting growth, but also with deep inequality.

That's the macro reasoning but layered on top of that are a couple of micro issues that investors should also be aware of. The country is debating a controversial mining royalty bill which could sharply hike tariffs on the sector. The royalty bill, under discussion in Congress, could shut down the country's private miners by slapping a 3% royalty on sales of copper with a sharp escalator as copper prices rise. As well, there is a new glacier protection law, which could impact some key mines.

The people of Chile want change and it looks like they will get it with the polls being led by far left hopeful Gabriel Boric and ultra conservative front-runner, Jose Antonio Kast. Thus far

both candidates have kept their powder dry on mining during the campaign. Left-wing candidate Boric has discussed royalties while Kast has proposed vague changes to mining property law to rev up the sector, including opening up state miner Codelco to more private investment. At this point, it's difficult to understand what either candidate could mean to Chile's future as a mining powerhouse. Nevertheless, investors should be putting this election on their radar as there is potential for a lot more downside than upside, in my opinion. With that said, my hope is that this election is a non-event and results in an orderly transfer of power from one democratically elected party to another.

It should be noted that if no candidate gets a simple majority this coming Sunday, the top two will compete in a head-to-head ballot on Dec. 19. The polls suggest this is likely the next date you'll have to mark in your calendar if you feel, as I do, that it could be important to know who is the next President of Chile.

Wealth Minerals President on hitting the lithium market full force

written by InvestorNews | April 18, 2024

June 6, 2018 – “Every single brine asset in the world is visible from outer space. Everyone knows where they are. You are competing with everyone. There is no way you have a competitive advantage in terms of finding these things because everyone

knows where they are. Your competitive advantage is in understanding the paradigm shift that is happening in the world first, picking a jurisdiction where you have competitive advantage and then basically hitting it with full force.” states Tim McCutcheon, President of [Wealth Minerals Ltd.](#) (TSXV: WML | OTCQX: WMLLF), in a recent presentation at the 7th Annual InvestorIntel Summit – Buds, Batteries & Blockchain 2018.

Tim McCutcheon: We will go through obviously the disclaimers and forward looking statements. The key thing about Wealth Minerals and, again, I think in the interest of time in having it be a little more focused, I have a tendency to skip around a little bit so please forgive me on that, but the idea really is to give you an understanding of what Wealth Minerals is and where we are going. The company has been around for a while obviously, but its current form in terms of being involved in the lithium space, started about 2 years ago. Market cap, anywhere between \$150 and \$170 million dollars. As I am sure you are probably aware that the volatility in the lithium market right now is quite high, lithium equity market, so things are moving all over the place. In general we are well north of a \$100 million dollar market cap, which means that we are already getting interest from institutional investors and, sort of, out of the retail space and now into the institutional space. Four lithium projects, all of them in Chile. I think the key thing that we like to present about ourselves is, Chile as jurisdiction is a great place to be. It is a mining friendly place. It has a proven track record of over decades of being fair to investors, being stable, both on a macro level, on a fiscal level. It is not a country you go to wake up the next morning and find something horrible happened in newspapers. It is a fairly predictable place. As far as our team goes we have an unparalleled ability to operate within Chile in part because of the track record of the team. Our country manager is Marcelo

Awad. He was the CEO at Antofagasta, one of the world's largest copper mining companies and he was an Executive Vice President at Codelco, which is a state mining company for Chile, obviously a major player in that country. There are a bunch of other reasons as well, but, again skipping on. As a timeline, as we just spoke about, about 2 years ago the company got started in the lithium space. Our basic idea was to put together a platform. That platform was put together in the beginning of 2016. Use that platform to acquire assets. Again, what I mentioned in the panel a little bit earlier, the lithium space, at least in where we are focused, which is South America a triangle for salars, brine assets. Every single brine asset in the world is visible from outer space. Everyone knows where they are. You are competing with everyone. There is no way you have a competitive advantage in terms of finding these things because everyone knows where they are. Your competitive advantage is in understanding the paradigm shift that is happening in the world first, picking a jurisdiction where you have competitive advantage and then basically hitting it with full force...to access the complete presentation, [click here](#)

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