

Critical Metals Russell Fryer on Copper and Cobalt Plans for Production in 2024

written by InvestorNews | March 7, 2024

In a revealing interview at PDAC 2024, InvestorNews host Tracy Weslosky engaged with Russell Fryer, CEO and Executive Director of Critical Metals PLC (LSE: CRTM), shedding light on the company's strategic operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and its forward-looking goals. Fryer discussed the evolving political climate in the DRC, highlighting the peaceful presidential election in December 2023 as evidence of the country's commitment to democracy and the rule of law, which is crucial for investors considering Congo-based companies. He underscored the significance of the DRC in the global supply of cobalt, essential for green energy, and the high-grade copper reserves, vital as other regions face diminishing supplies.

BMW Probes Moroccan Supplier for Critical Mineral Compliance

written by Tracy Weslosky | March 7, 2024

BMW (Bayerische Motoren Werke AG (OTC: BMWYY)), the prominent German automaker, is currently investigating a Moroccan cobalt supplier, Managem, following a report that raised serious

concerns over labor and environmental violations at a cobalt mine in Morocco. The report, which surfaced in the German daily newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung, in collaboration with broadcasters NDR and WDR, alleged that the mining operations at Bou Azzer, southern Morocco, were releasing excessive arsenic levels into the environment. This revelation has significant implications given the critical role of cobalt in manufacturing electric car batteries, a market in which BMW is a key player.

Navigating the Critical Mineral Investment Trail in the Congo: Experts Weigh in on the CMI Masterclass

written by Tracy Weslosky | March 7, 2024

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has long been recognized for its vast mineral wealth. But with this abundance comes complexity. Recently, the Critical Minerals Institute (CMI) Masterclass series provided a deep dive into this rich, multifaceted topic, led by two individuals with considerable firsthand experience in the DRC: Melissa 'Mel' Sanderson, a Director for American Rare Earths Limited (ASX: ARR | OTCQB: ARRF), and Russell Fryer, CEO and Chairman of Critical Metals PLC (LSE: CRTM). Both Mel and Russell are members for the CMI Board, committed to education and B2B resources in the critical minerals sector.

Critical Minerals in the Congo: A Strategic Treasure Trove

written by Tracy Weslosky | March 7, 2024

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), known for its vibrant history and rich cultural fabric, is increasingly coming under the limelight for its vast mineral wealth. A deeper look into its mineral assets sheds light on global geopolitics, economic tactics, and the progression of technology.

Investor.Coffee (10.16.2023): Critical Minerals in the Congo Masterclass, Ferrari NV Embraces the Future by Rolling out Cryptocurrency Transactions

written by Tracy Weslosky | March 7, 2024

Mark Your Calendars for a CMI Masterclass

The Critical Minerals Institute Masterclass is just around the corner, scheduled for Thursday, October 19th at 11 AM EST. Centering around the intriguing topic of Critical Minerals in the Congo, this event promises enlightening discussions. Don't forget to [register](#) using the exclusive CMI member code CMC2 to avail your free entry (limited to 50). Featured speakers include CMI Board Members Melissa 'Mel' Sanderson and Russell Fryer. While Mel boasts a rich 16-year history in Congo relations through [Freeport-McMoRan Inc.](#) (NYSE: FCX), Russell is the dynamic leader of [Critical Metals PLC](#) (LSE: CRTM), a formidable name in Congo's copper industry.

Fresh Off The Press: Dive deep into the CMI October edition of the Critical Minerals Institute Report, bearing the headline [A slowing global economy continues to temper demand](#). Authored by the distinguished Matt Bohlson, an Australian-based CMI Director, he's a familiar name for many as the Senior Editor for [InvestorNews.com](#) and a distinguished voice on SeekingAlpha when it comes to critical minerals.

A Glance at InvestorNews.com's Recent Critical Mineral Highlights:

- **WATCH:** [Nano One's Partnership with Sumitomo: Sustainable Cathode Materials for EV](#)
- **READ:** [Ara Partners Acquires Vacuumschmelze: Mission Critical in the Electric Vehicle Landscape](#)
- **WATCH:** [Russell Fryer on Critical Metals PLC's Strategic Moves in the DRC and Global Expansion](#)
- **WATCH:** [Mark Billings on Auxico's critical minerals project advancements in Bolivia and Colombia](#)

- **WATCH:** [Donald Swartz's insights on ARR's Halleck Creek Project unlocking America's rare earth potential](#)
- **WATCH:** [Ian Fraser on Fathom Nickel's Exploration Progress and the Critical Mineral Potential in Saskatchewan](#)

A Quick Scan of Global Markets

Canadian futures are on a notable rise, drawing momentum from burgeoning copper prices. The U.S. market witnesses a cautious optimism, with futures making modest gains ahead of this week's crucial corporate announcements and economic revelations. European shares are rallying, with mining stocks taking the lead, all thanks to growing enthusiasm over Chinese demand, although the looming Middle East tensions remain a concern. Over in Asia, Japan's Nikkei grapples with a setback, predominantly influenced by the slump in chip-related stocks.

Corporate Chronicles

Chevron Corporation (NYSE: CVX) finds itself amidst a brewing storm. Initial peace agreements seem to crumble as unions at their Australian LNG setups gear up for renewed [strikes](#). The pivot for this unrest? Chevron's alleged retreat from prior commitments.

In a groundbreaking move, Ferrari NV embraces the future, rolling out [cryptocurrency transactions](#) for their luxury vehicles in the U.S. Europe is next on their radar. This initiative aligns with their ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality by the close of 2030.

Ford Motor Company (NYSE: F) encounters turbulence in its dealings with the United Auto Workers. In an anticipated move towards resolution, the union found itself presented with a deja

vu, receiving an offer identical to one from two weeks earlier.

General Motors Co. (NYSE: GM) breathes a sigh of relief up north, as Canadian labor union Unifor members give a nod to a new contract. This positive stride contrasts with the simmering unrest led by hourly workers in the U.S.

Investor.Coffee Daily Updates are intended to hit a few business news highlights for the day.

Congo expert shares the formula on how DRC mining may offer a real win-win

written by Melissa (Mel) Sanderson | March 7, 2024

For those who saw the Democratic Republic of the Congo ('DRC') President Etienne Tshikedi at the recent FT Africa Summit, you might have been struck by the curious mix of bellicosity and naiveté in both the substance and tone of his remarks. In his defense, Tshikedi, widely regarded as the illegitimate victor of the 2018 contested Presidential election, has trouble sounding credible in presenting a positive future for Congo, always "the land of great promise" where a prosperous tomorrow seems somehow illusive. However, he outdid himself when, close to the end of an interview with an FT reporter, Tshikedi declared that "investors shouldn't wait until we are perfect to invest, they should invest to make us perfect." Laying aside perfection, the key question is whether it is possible to build and operate a profitable modern mine in DRC. My answer? It isn't easy but with

the right people and procedures, it can be done.

A quick snapshot of modern DRC history: Independence from Belgium in 1960 quickly leads to the assassination of Congo's controversial but popular PM Lumumba, the rise of infamous kleptocrat General Mobutu Sese Seku, over-thrown by Laurent "Muzee" Kabila and his Rwandan allies in 1997, Kabila's assassination in 2001 unleashes "Africa's WWII," intervention by the international community leads to a power-sharing transition government in 2003 headed by Joseph Kabila, son of Muzee, elections in 2006 and 2011 enshrine Kabila's Presidency, then in 2018 Tshikedi emerges as President (after negotiations with Kabila) from an election widely judged to have been won by opposition leader Martin Fayulu.

It wasn't all doom and gloom though. Kinshasa's lovely tree-shaded boulevards and highrises, its lively music and café scenes earned it the sobriquet "Paris of Africa," the country was the breadbasket of Central Africa and beyond, American companies such as GM were producing cars for the burgeoning African market and the US military had a base in the southwest where it was providing training to Congolese military.

Why the history lesson? To be successful in Congo it's important to understand the pattern of exploitation and corruption which has run through the country for 60 years, shaping both experiences of Congolese and perceptions of foreigners.

It is equally important to realize Congolese know they have been great and that they aspire to be so again.

In my 20 year experience with Congo, first as Political Counselor/Deputy Chief of Mission/Charge d'affaires of the US Embassy and then as VP for Africa of a major US mining company which built one of the world's largest copper-cobalt mines in Katanga, I've seen positive changes. Transportation and energy

Infrastructure, key elements for the mining sector, have become more widely available and more reliable – although still spotty. DRC always has had an educated youthful workforce, and specifically in Katanga province, generational mining expertise. Violence remains a problem in parts of Eastern Congo with the same old militia and terrorist elements proving difficult to eradicate. On the other hand, given that Congo is the size of the US east of the Mississippi and from Maine to Florida, vast tracts of the nation are mostly peaceful – and hold largely untapped resources.

So, with the mixed bag of elements, why mine in DRC? The grades of materials ranging from copper to cobalt to coltan to gold continuously amaze – and elements in high demand to support global transformation such as lithium, graphite, rare earths and uranium are abundant. Particularly with the large deficit curves in virtually every critical material, DRC offers an abundance of possibilities for good return on investment.

One major pending rail project would further improve the ability of miners to export products and import materials from/to eastern Congo through Angola, opening a new and potentially faster channel. Likewise, a long-pending major energy project is again under discussion which could enhance the power grid through the eastern part of the country.

Speaking from experience, a company interested in doing business in DRC needs to understand the necessary investments up front, including ‘hard’ investments in energy and roads, and ‘soft’ investments in social programs and, most importantly, relationships. These relationships include with NGOs and Embassies to ensure that production isn’t complicated by poor monitoring of supply chains or allegations of human rights abuses. Above all, appropriate relationships with Congolese authorities and social leaders are key to avoiding the

entanglements of corruption, a snare ever ready to trap the unwary. Knowledge of and adherence to laws such as the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and similar laws in the EU and UK is key.

Bottom line? Doing business in DRC isn't easy, but can be done profitably and well. Politically, there is more continuity than may be evident or understood. There is more social unity than suggested sometimes by Congo's 252 tribal languages and "swahiliphone/lingalaphone" debates. There is dogged determination to overcome obstacles.

With the right people working in the right way, everyone can win.

CBLT's Clausi on selling assets for a profit.

written by InvestorNews | March 7, 2024

"As we all know it is a difficult mining market out there. There are many companies whose values are not reflected in their share price. You can either sit around and whine about it or you can do something about it. My board told me to do something about it. We bought non-core assets, packaged them, went to Australia, met with anybody who would meet with us and was able to sell these assets to create a profit for CBLT back in Canada. In essence we did a hard \$1 million dollar financing without any fees on top." States Peter Clausi, President, CEO and Director of [CBLT Inc.](#) (TSXV: CBLT), in an interview with InvestorIntel Corp. CEO Tracy Weslosky.

Tracy Weslosky: How does it feel to be a junior that is actually making money? Can you tell your shareholders and investors out there a little bit about what you are doing right now?

Peter Clausi: Sure. As we all know it is a difficult mining market out there. There are many companies whose values are not reflected in their share price. You can either sit around and whine about it or you can do something about it. My board told me to do something about it. We bought non-core assets, packaged them, went to Australia, met with anybody who would meet with us and was able to sell these assets to create a profit for CBLT back in Canada. In essence we did a hard \$1 million dollar financing without any fees on top.

Tracy Weslosky: While you were in Australia we had a couple of investors in town last week they are telling me that Australia is experiencing a gold rush and they are redirecting their attention towards the resource sector. Is this correct? Is this consistent with your own conclusions having just gotten back from Australia?

Peter Clausi: Australia does not have the same kind of risk capital market that Canada or the United States has. They do not have a cannabis market. They do not have a crypto market. The risk capital has stayed in junior high-tech, junior mining, junior oil and gas. It has not fragmented so there is more capital available. Yes, there have been a couple of recent discoveries in the gold sector that have juiced the market generally. Plus the rebirth of rare earths and lithium, we will call it 2.5 because we are not quite at lithium 3.0 yet, has also helped to excite the market. George and his buddies at Northern have done a real good job of bringing that project to market. They were a big hit when they were traveling in New York and it has helped to re-excite the rare earths market.

Tracy Weslosky: Peter I have to tell you, I do not know if you have seen how Neo's stock has moved. There is a lot of interest in electric cars as you know. We do not have the cobalt that we need. I do not understand why people are not lined up around the block to have your conflict-free mineral source of cobalt here in Canada. What is going on there? What is the disconnect between the cobalt demand, as we know there is a real shortage, and the interest in CBLT for instance?

Peter Clausi: There are a lot of reasons for it. It is a market that still lacks credibility. There is a group in Australia that reports in "cobalt equivalent" by taking a little bit of copper and a little bit of gold and a little bit of silver and doing some magic and increasing their cobalt number. Things like that hurt all of us. I wish they would stop doing it. The other problem we have is, cobalt is a bizarre metal. It is only found in a few places around the globe in mineable quantities. 60% of it comes from the Congo so anything that happens in the Congo affects cobalt globally...to access the complete interview, [click here](#)

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Cobalt Blockchain on changing the way the world sources

conflict minerals

written by InvestorNews | March 7, 2024

July 4, 2018 – “Today minerals are traced in the Congo. You have got tin, tantalum, tungsten, cobalt, which are considered conflict metals. The early incumbent system is all paper-based log books. We think that blockchain is a significant way to improve mineral provenance and certify where it has come from, how it is produced and essentially it is a distributed ledger and it is really facilitating and automating trust between counterparties in the supply chain. We are the intermediary between artisanal miners and our offtake partner.” states Lance Hooper, President & COO and Director of [Cobalt Blockchain Inc.](#) (TSXV: COBC), in an interview with InvestorIntel Corp. CEO Tracy Weslosky.

Tracy Weslosky: Lance I think you are basically going to be the first ethical supplier of DRC cobalt. Is that correct?

Lance Hooper: Yeah, that is our plan Tracy in the next quarter. We have put a number of the building blocks in place; initial supply agreement. Right now we are building out depot infrastructure and implementing the mineral traceability system that we have developed in the last 3 months.

Tracy Weslosky: InvestorIntel audience, here is what we have. We have cobalt, which is in demand around the world and, of course, we have technology with blockchain. Can you explain to us a little bit more about how you are utilizing blockchain technology to change the cobalt industry?

Lance Hooper: Sure. Today minerals are traced in the Congo. You have got tin, tantalum, tungsten, cobalt, which are considered conflict metals. The early incumbent system is all paper-based log books. We think that blockchain is a significant way to

improve mineral provenance and certify where it has come from, how it is produced and essentially it is a distributed ledger and it is really facilitating and automating trust between counterparties in the supply chain. We are the intermediary between artisanal miners and our offtake partner...to access the complete interview, [click here](#)

Disclaimer: Cobalt Blockchain Inc. is an advertorial member of InvestorIntel Corp.

Peter Clausi on the global cobalt market

written by InvestorNews | March 7, 2024

March 14, 2018 – “There is a limited supply of cobalt. The supply chain out of the Congo is weak. There are not many other places in the world that produce it and as a result demand has been going up.” states Peter Clausi in an interview with InvestorIntel’s Andy Gaudry.

Andy Gaudry: Peter, why has cobalt gone up over 400% over the past 2 years?

Peter Clausi: Basic economics of supply and demand. Demand is increasing. Supply is falling and at risk in the supply chain.

Sixty per cent of the world’s cobalt comes out of the Congo. I do not know if there is anybody who suffered more on the planet than the Congolese. Since King Leopold showed up in the late 1800’s, that poor area of the world has had just the life beat out of it.

It is having the life beat out of it because there is so many minerals in the ground that that the imperialists are fighting for it. Right now, it is copper and cobalt.

There is a limited supply of cobalt. The supply chain out of the Congo is weak. There are not many other places in the world that produce it and as a result demand has been going up.

Demand is also increasing because cobalt is used in the cathode of lithium-ion batteries. You think we are going to sell fewer or more electric cars next year? The answer is more. Electric toothbrushes, power tools, laptops, anything that has a lithium-ion battery in it for rapid charge / discharge needs cobalt. There is more cobalt than lithium in your cell phone battery. The world needs cobalt. Basic laws of supply and demand have just pushed the price up.

Andy Gaudry: Where is it going to go and where is it going to end?

Peter Clausi: Cobalt is up almost 400%, as you say, since February of 2016. Our call is for roughly \$50 by the end of the year. The wild card here is the supply chain. Amnesty International and The Enough Project are agitating for the imposition of an external ethical supply Chain. We have recently seen Apple indicate that they will only buy cobalt from ethical sources. If the formalization of an ethical supply chain takes place then there really is no cap on where cobalt will go. That ethical supply chain will knock so much of the cobalt out of the supply chain, prices will spike...to access the complete interview, [click here](#)