



[Home](#) > [Business and industry](#) > [Trade and investment](#)
> [UK-Japan Critical Minerals Memorandum of Cooperation](#)

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Business & Trade](#)

Policy paper

Memorandum of Cooperation between the Department for Business and Trade of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry of Japan on Critical Minerals

Published 28 October 2023

Contents

[Paragraph 1 – Scope](#)

[Paragraph 2 – Areas of cooperation](#)

[Paragraph 3 – Implementation and monitoring](#)

[Paragraph 4 - Commencement, Duration, Modification and Discontinuation](#)



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The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as represented by the Department for Business and Trade, and the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) of Japan (hereinafter referred to respectively as “a Participant” and collectively as “the Participants”)

Recognising that resilient, transparent and sustainable critical mineral supply chains are essential to supporting industries, delivering our net zero commitments and enabling a clean energy transition and protecting national security and defence capabilities in the United Kingdom and Japan;

Noting a shared policy interest in ensuring the diversification of supply chains to address risks of concentration and dependence and a common desire to prevent negative impacts, including human rights abuses and violent conflict, through the responsible sourcing of minerals;

Seeking to build on the enhanced global strategic partnership between the UK and Japan as outlined in the Hiroshima Accord and existing close working on critical minerals in relevant international fora;

Have approved this Memorandum of Cooperation (“MoC”) to establish a framework for deepening cooperation and promoting dialogue between the UK and Japan in the field of critical minerals as follows:

Paragraph 1 – Scope

The scope of this MoC will cover, but not be limited to:

1. Activities to strengthen the entire value chain of both primary and secondary raw critical minerals. The Participants will cooperate in the field of industry exploration for and evaluation of minerals, mining and processing, manufacturing. In addition, for secondary raw minerals, the cooperation will cover the recycling of secondary raw minerals, electronic scrap, and waste disposal.
2. Information sharing on the United Kingdom and Japan’s respective criticality assessments with a view to identify specific critical minerals and/or supply chains of shared interest for targeting cooperation.
3. The expansion of business opportunities between both Participants, as well as a deeper knowledge of the requirements governing market access.

Paragraph 2 – Areas of cooperation

Participants will cooperate in the following areas:

1. Integrated **research and innovation collaboration** across (1) responsible critical raw material acquisition and processing; (2) building resilient, transparent, and sustainable supply chains; (3) identifying alternative materials, manufacturing and recycling technologies and business models to achieve a circular economy.
2. Cooperation to develop well-functioning and transparent markets, through information sharing and improved **data and traceability**.
3. Encouraging partnerships between companies and industrial bodies of both Participants in order to diversify supply chains and leveraging private finance to conduct **shared investments** into critical mineral projects in the UK, Japan and globally.
4. **Sharing information on critical minerals infrastructure projects** designed to provide companies with confidence to invest and to do so responsibly in third countries.
5. **Cooperation to support** sustainable and responsible mining practices and grow midstream capabilities of **developing producer countries**, including through delivering training programmes and university exchanges.
6. **Cooperation on international standards**, including through (1) work in relevant fora to **ensure** consistency and coherence across frameworks setting **the highest standards of Environmental, Social and Governance** dimensions, and to facilitate their implementation across critical minerals in practice, and (2) work to **improve consistency and harmonisation in technical standards** (relating to measurements and analysis of physical properties of raw materials and their traceability) in order to reduce frictions within the global trading system.

Paragraph 3 – Implementation and monitoring

1. The Participants intend to implement the MoC through existing channels of engagement, bringing in relevant senior officials and experts as needed and where relevant.
2. Meetings will be held to review progress against the MoC, either in person or virtually on an ad hoc basis.

3. Any dispute arising out of the implementation of this MoC will be settled amicably through consultation and negotiations between the Participants.

Paragraph 4 - Commencement, Duration, Modification and Discontinuation

1. This MoC is not intended to create rights or obligations under international or domestic law.
2. This MoC will commence on the date of its signature by the Participants.
3. This MoC will continue for a period of 3 (three) years. It will then automatically renew for another 3 (three) years unless either Participant discontinues this MoC by giving the other Participant written notice at least 90 days before the intended date of discontinuation.
4. This MoC may be modified at any time by the joint written consent of the Participants. Such modification will form an integral part of this MoC.
5. The discontinuation of this MoC will not affect the ongoing collaboration activities unless otherwise decided by the Participants.

The foregoing represents the decision reached between the Participants on the matters referred to in this MoC.

Signed in duplicate in Osaka, Japan on 28 October 2023 in English, both texts having equal value.

[↑ Back to top](#)

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