

SUMMARY

Rare earth metals are a strategic raw material (the material of the 21st century), whose economic importance greatly increased significantly over the past few years. They are currently required to produce a modern electrotechnology and for the use of renewable resources (such as permanent magnet in generators for wind turbines). They are also used in metallurgy, glass and automotive industries (carrier catalysts). Rare earth elements are contained in more than 200 minerals, but few of them are economically important. Increased accumulation of these elements are related mainly to the peralkaline igneous rocks, carbonatites, placer and laterite deposits. The world's largest exporter of this commodity is China, for which currently accounts for 97% of world production. China gets rare earths mainly from Bayan Obo deposit, which in itself account for 70% of world reserves of this raw material. Due to high demand for this commodity, both in China and around the world, the Chinese government introduced a new pricing tariffs and export controls. In 2011 world production was 133 000 tons of oxides of rare earths, while expected, will be in demand in 2015 amount to 210 000 tons of oxides of rare earths. Due to that situation are greatly increased interests of advanced economies to provide new sources of these raw materials outside China.