24 March 2026

Free Trade deal a positive outcome for Australian critical minerals

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) welcomes today's announcement on finalisation of a Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the European Union (EU), particularly the removal of tariffs on critical mineral products supplied to the EU.

AMEC Chief Executive Officer, Mr Warren Pearce said, "This is a really positive outcome for Australian critical minerals producers looking to access the European Market and ensures Australian companies can compete on a fair basis.

"AMEC commends Minister Farrell and the Federal Government on securing this important outcome - particularly at a time of geopolitical uncertainty."

The agreement reinforces Australia's position as a trusted, long-term supplier of critical minerals to global markets, with the EU representing a key destination as it accelerates its clean energy and advanced manufacturing ambitions.

It also acknowledges Australia's exemplary environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards and makes us a supplier of choice.

"Europe is rapidly expanding its electric vehicle and clean energy manufacturing capabilities, and that requires secure and stable supply of critical minerals.

"Australia is well placed to meet that demand. Our strong ESG standards give international partners confidence that our minerals are produced responsibly," said Mr Pearce.

Behind China the EU is the world's second largest electric car manufacturing region, producing 2.4 million cars in 2024. Today's agreement helps strengthen Australia's supply chain resilience by diversifying the distribution of our critical minerals.

The removal of tariffs also creates new opportunities for Australian producers and emerging developers to scale operations and attract investment.

Mr Pearce added, "Improved access to European markets sends a strong signal to investors that Australia is open for business and ready to play a leading role in global supply chains.

"This deal is an important step in strengthening Australia's trade relationships and supporting the long-term growth of our critical minerals sector."

AMEC will continue to work with government to ensure Australian explorers and producers are well positioned to take advantage of the opportunities created through this free trade agreement.

ENDS

FAQs

What does the Australia–EU Free Trade Agreement mean for critical minerals?
The agreement removes tariffs on Australian critical minerals exported to the European Union, making it easier and more competitive for Australian producers to access one of the world's largest manufacturing markets.

Why is the EU an important market for Australian critical minerals?
The EU is rapidly expanding its electric vehicle and clean energy manufacturing sectors and is the world's second largest electric car producer. This creates strong demand for reliable, responsibly sourced critical minerals from countries like Australia.

How does this deal strengthen Australia's position in global supply chains?
By improving access to European markets and reducing reliance on single markets, the agreement enhances supply chain resilience and positions Australia as a trusted, long-term supplier of critical minerals globally.

What role do ESG standards play in Australia's competitiveness?
Australia's strong environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards make its critical minerals highly attractive to international partners, ensuring they are produced responsibly and sustainably.

What opportunities does this agreement create for Australian mining and exploration companies?
The removal of tariffs opens new opportunities for producers and emerging developers to scale operations, attract investment, and play a greater role in global clean energy and advanced manufacturing supply chains.

For further information or to interview Warren Pearce contact:
Ryan Rampling, Nation Manager – Media & Communications – 0419 809 341 | ryan.rampling@amec.org.au