

China to raise rare earths production this year

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(AP) -- China said Thursday it will increase this year's production quota for rare earths but gave no sign it might reverse plans to cut exports of the exotic metals needed by high-tech industry.

China accounts for most rare earths production and has alarmed global manufactures by reducing exports of the ores as it tries to develop its own producers of lightweight magnets and other high-tech goods that use the metals.

This year's production quota will be 93,800 tons, the Ministry of Land and Resources said on its website. That would be an increase of about 5 percent over 2010.

The ministry also said no new licenses for rare earths, tungsten or antimony mines would be granted before June 30, 2012.

The announcement made no mention of altering plans announced in December to reduce export quotas for the first half of this year by about 11 percent from a year earlier to 14,446 tons.

Rare earths are a group of 17 minerals used in manufacturing flat-screen TVs, mobile phones, batteries for [electric cars](#) and [wind turbines](#).

[China](#) has about 30 percent of rare earths deposits but accounts for 97 percent of global production. Rising global demand, coupled with the decline in Chinese exports, has prompted companies in the United

States, Canada and Australia to announce plans to develop or reopen rare earths mines.

Last week, the government announced a tax increase on [rare earths](#) in another move to limit exports.

More information: Ministry of Land and Resources:
<http://www.mlr.gov.cn/mlrenglish>

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