



PRESS RELEASE

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University and Geological Survey join together in a critical alliance

In response to growing unease over supply of critical metals for high-tech manufacturing and green technologies, the British Geological Survey (BGS) and the University of Exeter have agreed to join forces in a new initiative to improve research capability in this vital area.

The 'Critical Metals Alliance' agreement signed on 13 December 2011 consolidates long-term links between the British Geological Survey and the University of Exeter/ Camborne School of Mines (CSM). The collaboration is intended to improve the research capability of both organisations to address growing concerns in the UK and Europe over security of supply of critical metals. The research will build on existing complementary skills and expertise in the geology of rare earths, the platinum group elements and other elements including niobium, tantalum, tungsten and indium. It will help us find new ore deposits and use the ones we have in a more resource efficient and environmentally friendly way.

"The processes responsible for the formation of many critical metal deposits are poorly understood" says Andrew Bloodworth, Head of Minerals and Waste at the BGS "Both organisations have already made a strong commitment to joint research on this topic through a PhD studentship investigating rare earth mineralisation in Malawi which began earlier this year".

At the heart of the new alliance is a BGS-sponsored research post based at CSM in Falmouth. Head of Camborne School of Mines, Professor Frances Wall says "We are delighted to welcome Dr Kathryn Moore as our BGS Lecturer in Critical and Green Technology Metals. From March 2012, Kate will lead a research team drawn from both organisations who will work to improve understanding of the geological origins of these important raw materials."

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For further details or to arrange media interviews please contact:

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Notes for Editors

The following are available for interview:

- Andrew Bloodworth, Head of Minerals and Waste, British Geological Survey
- Professor Frances Wall, Camborne School of Mines, University of Exeter

For additional information go to: www.bgs.ac.uk

The University of Exeter and University College Falmouth are founding partners in the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC), a unique collaboration between six universities and colleges to promote regional economic regeneration through Higher Education, funded mainly by the European Union (Objective One and Convergence), the South West Regional Development Agency and the Higher Education Funding Council for England, with support from Cornwall Council.

The British Geological Survey

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is the nation's principal supplier of objective, impartial and up-to-date geological expertise and information for decision making for governmental, commercial and individual users. The BGS maintains and develops the nation's understanding of its geology to improve policy making, enhance national wealth and reduce risk. It also collaborates with the national and international scientific community in carrying out research in strategic areas, including energy and natural resources, our vulnerability to environmental change and hazards, and our general knowledge of the Earth system. More about the BGS can be found at www.bgs.ac.uk.

The University of Exeter

The University of Exeter is a leading UK university and in the top one percent of institutions globally. It combines world class research with very high levels of student satisfaction. Exeter is ranked 10th in the UK in *The Times Good University Guide 2012* and 11th in the *Guardian University Guide 2012*. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 90% of the University's research was rated as being at internationally recognised levels and 16 of its 31 subjects are ranked in the top 10, with 27 subjects ranked in the top 20.

The University has over 17,000 students at three campuses. The Streatham and St Luke's campuses are in Exeter and the Cornwall Campus (known locally as Tremough) is near Penryn. In an arrangement that is unique in the UK, the Cornwall Campus is owned and jointly managed as the Tremough Campus with University College Falmouth. At the campus, University of Exeter students can study programmes in Geology, Mining and Minerals Engineering, Renewable Energy, English, History, Biosciences, Geography and Politics.

The University of Exeter is currently developing its campuses in Exeter and Cornwall with almost £350 million worth of new facilities due for completion by 2012. www.exeter.ac.uk/cornwall