

Inside Out

New report on renewable energy and the future of mining

Press Release

New York, NY – Friday, April 17, 2020 –

A new report by JFI Lead Independent Researcher [Francis Tseng](#) provides one of the most comprehensive surveys to date on the relationship between a transition to renewable energy infrastructure and the myriad harms of mining. As the Trump Administration recently issued an [executive order](#) encouraging private US mineral extraction in space, and the State Department [stakes a claim](#) to other rare earth minerals, the piece provides a timely look at the future of mining and issues of outsourced harm that such mining can entail.

The [full report](#) is accompanied by a [shorter summary](#) on our blog, [Phenomenal World](#). Some key points include:

- *Transitioning to renewable energy will increase global reliance on metals, in particular rare earths, some of which could be in limited ready supply without problematic extraction*
- *The global industry in minerals production is rife with conflict and environmental and human rights impacts*
- *Looking to the future, private industry and governments are exploring radical, and quite possibly misguided, alternatives to terrestrial mining—including sourcing minerals in the deep sea and outer space*
- *Grappling with the complications of minerals production is necessary as we look toward a post-carbon future*

Much discussion about renewable energy, the Green New Deal and climate change more broadly lacks a deeper examination of the raw earth minerals required to make renewable energy feasible, the contexts in which those minerals are found, their supply, and key issues of resource ownership. This report provides robust detail to fill that gap in emerging renewable energy conversations.

About the Jain Family Institute:

The Jain Family Institute (JFI) is a nonpartisan applied research organization in the social sciences that works to bring research and policy from conception in theory to implementation in society. Founded in 2015 by Robert Jain, JFI focuses on building evidence around the most pressing social problems. The *Phenomenal World* is JFI's independent publication of theory and commentary on the social sciences.

Contact:

jficomunications@jainfamilyinstitute.org