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BUILDING THE HISTORY OF CRITICAL MINERALS IN BRAZIL

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By Thiago Amaral, country manager at St George Mining

The year 2025 marked Brazil's consolidation on the global map of critical metals. The strengthening of geological knowledge and the advancement of new projects positioned the country among the strategic players in an international chain seeking to diversify the supply of inputs for the energy transition. It is in this context that the Araxá Project, by St. George Mining in Minas Gerais, is gaining increasing importance.

Since beginning operations in Brazil, St. George has acted in an integrated manner, combining the geological potential of the Araxá region with the development of a technological chain capable of generating added value and promoting local development. In this sense, the company has established significant partnerships, such as the investment in the implementation of a technology center on the Araxá campus of CEFET-MG, and structured cooperation agreements with institutions such as CIT SENAI. In the Magbras project, we were the first company to deliver rare earth oxides produced with Brazilian raw materials for the development of the complete national permanent magnet supply chain.

Valuing local knowledge is another pillar of the project. All leaders of the Araxá Project are experienced professionals with a consolidated track record in operations in the region. More than that, we are part of the local culture itself; we are proud Araxá residents. We integrate professionals with decades of experience with young talents with new technical skills, promoting an intergenerational corporate environment. The company also prioritizes regional hiring and the strengthening of a network of local suppliers, stimulating economic development and generating opportunities. In the social area, St. George has expanded its relationship and dialogue mechanisms through initiatives such as the ASA (Araxá Socio-environmental Action) program, which supports local projects in the areas of education, sustainability, and culture.

In the financial area, in 2025 we achieved an important milestone with the strategic entry of Hancock Prospecting, one of the largest economic groups in Australia. Furthermore, we signed a binding memorandum of understanding with REAlloys, a supplier of magnetic materials to the United States government. Under the agreement, the American company will be able to secure an offtake contract for up to 40% of the rare earth production from the future mine. These alliances demonstrate the project's viability and its ability to attract relevant partners. Our focus now is to consolidate the venture as a global benchmark in the extraction and processing of niobium and rare earths.

The results obtained so far confirm this potential. The samples indicate high and continuous levels of Nb₂O₅ and TREO, with characteristics favorable to commercial exploration and future industrialization. The extent was demonstrated both by identification one kilometer west of the certified deposit and also to the east. To understand the relevance of the reserve, it is enough to observe that we are on the same level as the two commercial rare earth operations of significant scale existing outside of China: the Mountain Pass Mine in the United States (operated by MP Materials), and the Mount Weld Mine in Australia (operated by Lynas Rare Earths).

The challenges facing the mining sector in Brazil, of course, remain evident. However, 2025 demonstrated that the country is prepared to lead a new generation of global mining, based on corporate responsibility, management efficiency, and production innovation.

By 2026, St George will continue to move forward with its commitment to transforming the Araxá Project into a landmark for critical minerals, capable of demonstrating that it is possible to combine economic competitiveness, territorial development, and best environmental management practices.

Photo: St George Mining/Press Release