

China issues 2025-2026 action plan to drive growth in non-ferrous metals sector

Source: Mysteel Sep 30, 2025 04:10 🔄

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China has rolled out an action plan for the country's non-ferrous metals industry, setting growth targets and outlining key priorities for 2025-2026. The plan, released on September 28 by eight government bodies including the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, calls for annual growth of around 5% in industrial added value and 1.5% in the output of ten major non-ferrous metals. It also sets a target of lifting yearly production of secondary metals to over 20 million tonnes.

Resource development and recycling

A core priority of the plan is to strengthen resource development and utilization. Strategic initiatives will target breakthroughs in the exploration of key minerals such as copper, aluminum, lithium, nickel, cobalt, and tin. Regions with favorable conditions will be encouraged to establish renewable resource recycling bases, while efforts will be made to enhance the utilization of non-ferrous metal scraps, particularly for copper and aluminum.

High-end innovation

The plan highlights innovation in high-end metal products to meet demand from key industries such as information technology and electric vehicles. It specially calls for advances in ultra-high purity metals, copper alloys, precious metal functional materials, high-end rare earth materials and improvement of integrated performance of aluminum alloys and magnesium alloys, while also promoting wider application of high-strength, high-toughness, and corrosion-resistant aluminum materials.

Project investment

To foster efficient investment, the government will streamline approval procedures for mineral resource projects in accordance with laws and regulations. New projects in alumina, copper smelting, and lithium carbonate will be planned "scientifically and rationally" to prevent repetitive construction.

Green and smart transition

The plan targets a low-carbon and digitalized transformation of the non-ferrous industry. Energy-saving, pollution-control, and carbon-reduction measures will be rolled out across alumina refining and the smelting of aluminum, copper, lead, and zinc.

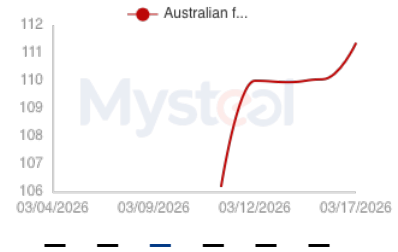
The industry will establish a low-carbon public service platform, digital platforms for energy and carbon management and carbon footprint tracking systems and promote the certification of low-carbon products such as renewable-energy-based primary aluminum. To accelerate digitalization, the government will launch an "artificial intelligence + non-ferrous metals" initiative, including the creation of an AI model for the sector.

Quality management standards for core products such as copper and aluminum will be developed as well, covering quality traceability, grading, and control systems.

Global cooperation

To stabilize foreign trade and deepen international collaboration, China will guide and support enterprises in

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metals like recycled copper and aluminum will also be supported.

The plan also pledges efforts to steadily promote the construction of overseas non-ferrous metal projects, attract foreign processing firms to establish operations in China, and broaden international cooperation in low-carbon transformation and new materials development.

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