ETRUSCAN SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDS AREA OF RARE EARTH POTENTIAL IN NAMIBIA

Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 15, 2009 -- Etruscan Resources Inc. (EET.TSX) announced that it has significantly expanded the area of rare earth element enriched carbonatite dykes associated with an alkaline intrusive complex on its Lofdal permit in northern Namibia (Figure 1). A surface area of some 25 square kilometers has now been mapped and sampled and includes a large, previously unmapped, carbonatite plug located in the southwest. Since the initial results from the first 242 samples were announced on October 24, 2008 (see Company press release), an additional 1,184 outcrop samples have been analysed and indicate that rare earth elements ("REEs") occur at Lofdal in sufficient total concentrations (0.5% to 8.9%) to be of potential economic significance (Figure 2). Rare earth elements constitute a group of 16 elements and industry standards are to report rare earth deposit grades as the sum of the total concentration of both the light rare earth elements ("LREEs") and heavy rare earth elements ("HREEs") plus yttrium which is typically an important accessory ("TREE+Y").

Don Burton, Vice President Corporate Development and Chief Operating Officer stated:

"These additional surface samples from Lofdal have doubled the size of area in which an economic rare earth deposit could be found. Based on airborne geophysical data the target area is roughly 150 km^2 so we still have a lot of ground to cover. We are essentially prospecting at this stage, however, the dykes which outcrop at surface provide consistent indications that we have significant concentrations of both light and heavy rare earth elements. We have also confirmed that the second carbonatite intrusion in the southwest previously referenced in our October 2008 press release is roughly 300-400 meters in diameter at surface and enriched in rare earths. The potential for an economic deposit with heavy rare earth elements is especially encouraging."

Lofdal Geology and Mineralization

A total of 1,426 selected grab samples of the dykes have now been submitted for analysis and the average grade of all dyke samples taken to date is 0.7% total rare earth elements plus yttrium ("TREE+Y"). Of the 1,426 samples taken to date, 602 were at or above the grade of 0.5% and had an average grade of 1.3% TREE+Y and 292 were at or above the grade of 1% with an average grade of 2.0% TREE+Y. **The highest individual sample graded 8.9% TREE+Y and the highest heavy rare earth (HREE) enriched sample graded 1.5% HREE.** Average grade of the 218 samples to date, collected from the new carbonatite intrusion (tentatively named the Emanya carbonatite) is 0.6% TREE+Y.

Carbonatite bodies at Lofdal occur as dykes and intrusions together with syenite and nepheline syenite bodies which constitute an alkaline intrusive complex that has intruded highly metamorphosed gneisses and schists of the Huab Basement Complex. Detailed field mapping has demonstrated that more carbonatite bodies exist than were previously mapped and in some instances previously mapped syenite intrusions are in part actually carbonatite plugs of considerable dimension. Individual dykes have been mapped over strike lengths of up to 1.3 kilometers and likely continue for up to 5 kilometers in strike. Dyke thicknesses are highly variable, from less than 0.5 meters up to 8 meters. Reconnaissance drilling from six reverse circulation holes at two locations has confirmed the dykes pinch and swell but can continue to depths of at least 100 vertical meters.

Exploration Potential at Lofdal

Etruscan's initial interest in this part of Namibia was exploration for iron oxide copper gold ("IOCG") deposits and it was believed that the rare earth occurrence at Lofdal might be associated with IOCG-type mineralization. However, the results from the on-going systematic prospecting program suggest that the potential exists to discover a stand-alone rare earth deposit of economic significance.

Rare earth deposits are commonly associated with anomalous concentrations of uranium or thorium and the REE-enriched dykes at Lofdal are characterized by anomalous concentrations of thorium. Airborne radiometric geophysical surveys are therefore a highly effective exploration tool. Wide spaced (1 kilometer) airborne data is available from the Ministry of Mines and Energy which provides a general regional picture and clearly shows a large response over the Lofdal area. The airborne radiometric anomaly at Lofdal that is associated with the REE dykes and alkaline complex covers a surface area of approximately 150 km^2 (Figure 3). Mapping and sampling to date has only covered a surface area of approximately 25 km^2.

Valuation of Rare Earth Elements

The grade alone does not provide sufficient information upon which to determine the economic value of REEs. One must also know the exact mix and concentrations of elements that occur in the deposit. A rare earth deposit can therefore comprise a highly variable mix of these 16 elements and the economic value of the deposit will be determined by the respective concentrations and current market pricing of each element.

Rare earth elements are subdivided into light rare earths ("LREEs") and heavy rare earths ("HREEs"). LREEs comprise the lighter atomic number elements lanthanum, cerium, praseodymium, neodymium, promethium and samarium whereas the HREEs comprise europium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, holmium, erbium, thulium, ytterbium and lutetium. LREEs and yttrium fetch moderate prices in the range of $4 - $30 per kilogram whereas **HREEs command much higher prices in the range of $100-$800 per kilogram with thulium and lutetium selling between $2000-$3500 per kilogram.** Rare earth deposits that contain relatively high abundances of HREEs can therefore be very valuable at lower grades. **The REE carbonatite dykes at Lofdal are enriched in HREEs.**

For comparative purposes the following tabulation presents the relative proportion of REEs in the 1,426 Lofdal samples versus known rare earth deposits:

Rare Earth Element Distribution of Lofdal Dykes Compared to Some Major Rare Earth Deposits

(percent distribution calculated from oxides)

	Element	Atomic Symbol	Lofdal Dykes [1] (%)	Emanya Carbonatite [2] (%)	Mt. Weld [3] (%)	Mountain Pass [4] (%)	Hoidas Lake [5] (%)
LREE	Lanthanum	La	25.9	28.8	21.9	33.0	19.8
LREE	Cerium	Ce	40.9	43.9	46.4	49.0	45.8
LREE	Praseodymium	Pr	3.9	4.3	4.9	4.0	5.8
LREE	Neodymium	Nd	12.0	13.4	17.3	13.0	21.9
LREE	Samarium	Sm	1.8	1.6	2.5	0.5	2.9
HREE	Europium	Eu	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.1	0.6
HREE	Gadolinium	Gd	2.1	1.6	1.7	0.2	1.3
HREE	Terbium	Tb	0.3	0.2	0.2	Insig	0.1
HREE	Dysprosium	Dy	1.6	0.7	0.9	Insig	0.4
HREE	Holmium	Ho	0.3	0.1	0.1	Insig	Insig
HREE	Erbium	Er	0.9	0.4	0.3	Insig	0.2
HREE	Thulium	Tm	0.1	0.1	0.1	Insig	Insig
HREE	Ytterbium	Yb	0.7	0.4	Insig	Insig	Insig
HREE	Lutetium	Lu	0.1	0.1	0.0	Insig	Insig
	Yttrium	Y	9.0	4.1	3.1	Insig	1.3
	Total %		100.0	100.0	99.9	99.8	99.9

[1] Etruscan Resources 1,208 samples of carbonatite dyke

[2] Etruscan Resources 218 samples of the new carbonatite intrusion

[3] Lynas Corporation Website

[4] Molycorp Website

[5] Great Western Minerals Website

Uses and Occurrence of Rare Earth Elements

Rare earth elements are specialized commodities and some background information is necessary to appreciate the significance and potential of this development for Etruscan in Namibia.

Rare earth elements are used for a number of specialized “green” or high technology applications including “super” magnets for electric motors and rechargeable batteries in hybrid cars, automotive catalysts, mobile phones and video display screens. **The rare earth commodity market is controlled and dominated by China which produces over 95% of the world supply. China has recently imposed export quotas and tariffs on rare earth elements. With the single exception of the Mountain Pass operation in the United States, there are no primary rare earth deposits in production outside of China.** Only a handful of rare earth deposits are being considered for development and the reader is encouraged to visit the websites of the following companies which provide excellent background information on rare earth deposits and applications in general: Mt. Weld (Lynas Corporation) and Nolans Bore (Arafura Resources) in Australia,, Thor Lake (Avalon Ventures) and Hoidas Lake (Great Western Minerals Group) in Canada, and Mountain Pass (formerly held by Chevron/Molycorp) and Bear Lodge (Rare Element Resources) in the United States.

Rare earth elements are actually widely distributed in rocks, however, unlike base and precious metals they are rarely found in sufficient concentrations that would constitute an economic mineral deposit. In addition to the 15 REEs (also referred to as lanthanides), the element yttrium is also commonly associated and reported with REE deposits (Table 1). Deposit grades are typically reported as percentages of total rare earths (“TREE”), or total rare earth oxides (TREO”) plus or minus yttrium.

Rare earth and yttrium analyses was performed by ALS Chemex, Vancouver, Canada using lithium borate fusion with an acid dissolution with an ICP-MS finish. K. Kirk Woodman P.Geo., Etruscan's Chief Project Geologist, is the Qualified Person overseeing Etruscan's exploration programs in West Africa and Namibia and has reviewed and approved this press release.

About Etruscan Resources Inc.

Etruscan Resources Inc. is a gold focused Canadian junior mining company with dominant land positions in district scale gold belts covering more than 13,000 square kilometers in West Africa. Its principal mine development projects include the **Youga Gold Project in Burkina Faso** (latest press release dated December 4, 2008), the **Agbaou Gold Project in Côte d'Ivoire** (latest press release dated December 18, 2008), and the **Finkolo Gold Project in Mali** (latest press release dated July 2, 2008)**.** Advanced and early stage exploration projects are on-going in Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana (see press release dated June 10, 2008) and Namibia (see press release dated October 24, 2008). See press release dated May 6, 2008 for a comprehensive update of explorations projects. Etruscan also has a 52.1% interest in Etruscan Diamonds Limited which has a dominant land position in the Ventersdorp Diamond District located in South Africa. (latest press release dated December 12, 2008). The common shares of Etruscan are traded on the TSX Exchange under the symbol "EET". More extensive information on Etruscan can be found on its home page at http://www.etruscan.com

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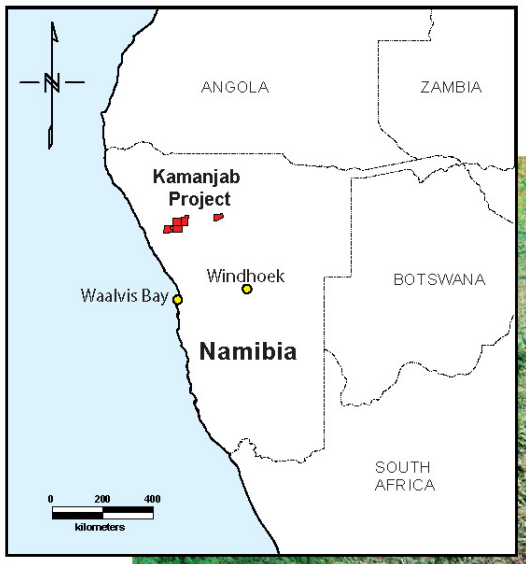
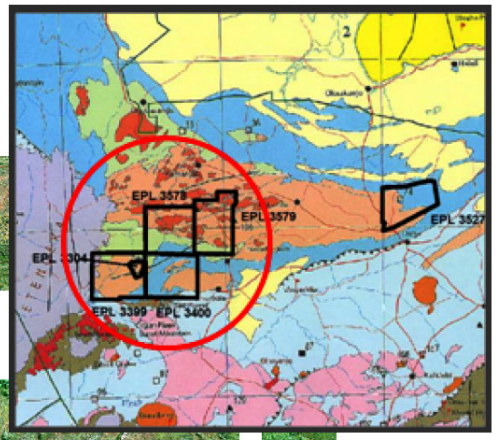
Figure 1 - January 15, 2009

Kamanjab Project and Location of the Lofdal Permit





EPL-3579
Sebra

EPL-3578
Freyer

EPL-3399
Noute

EPL-3304

EPL-3400
Lofdal

Lofdal
Carbonatite

0 15
kilometers

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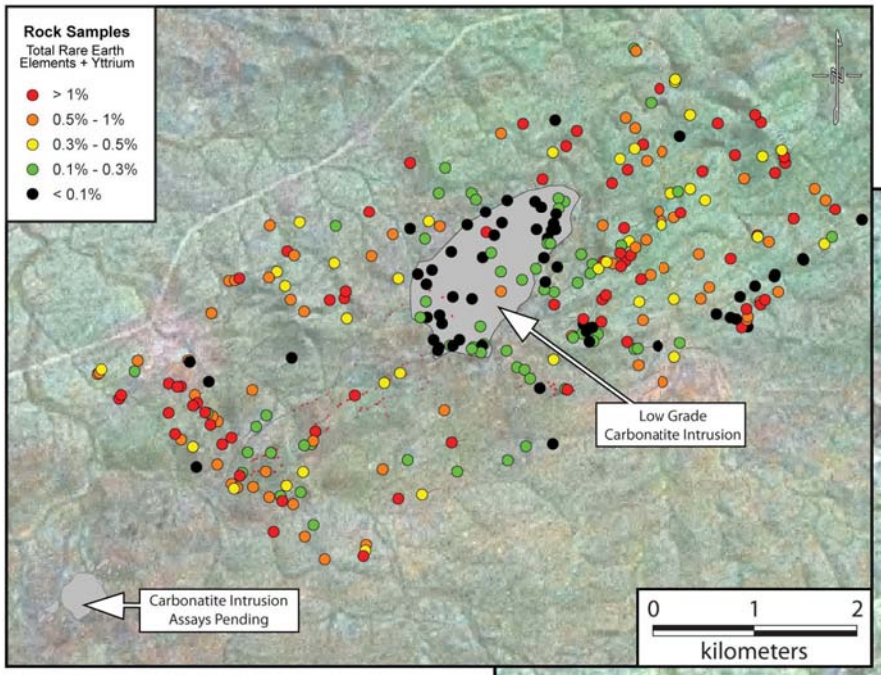
Figure 2 - January 15, 2009

Kamanjab Project: Distribution of Total Rare Earths in Lofdal Carbonatite Dykes and Intrusives Sampled to Date



Samples as of October 2008

Samples as of January 15, 2009

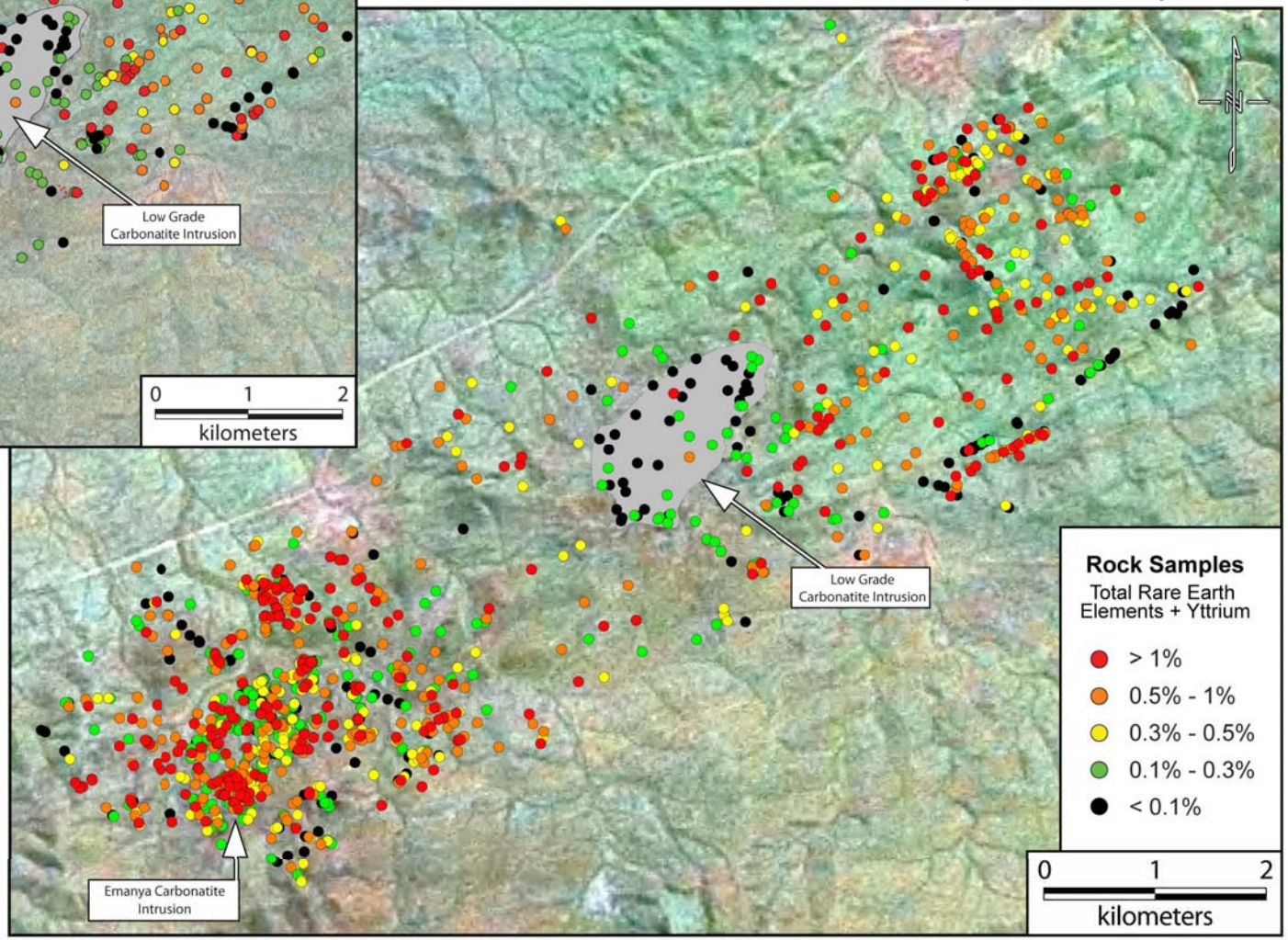


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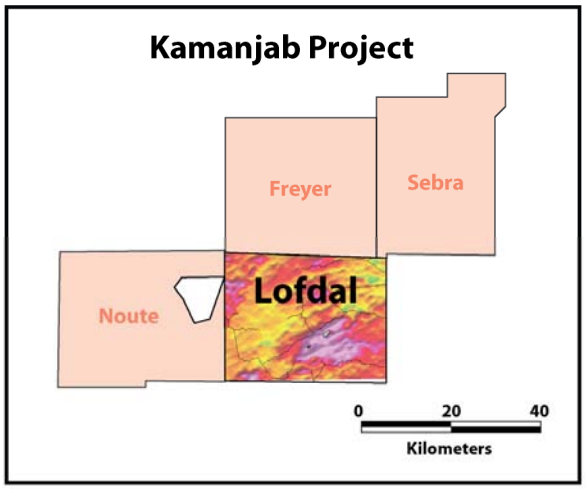
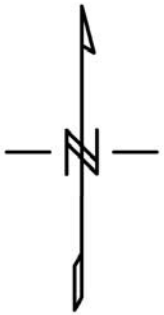
Figure 3 - January 15, 2009

Kamanjab Project: Airborne Radiometric Survey (Thorium) Showing Lofdal Anomaly and Area Prospected to Date





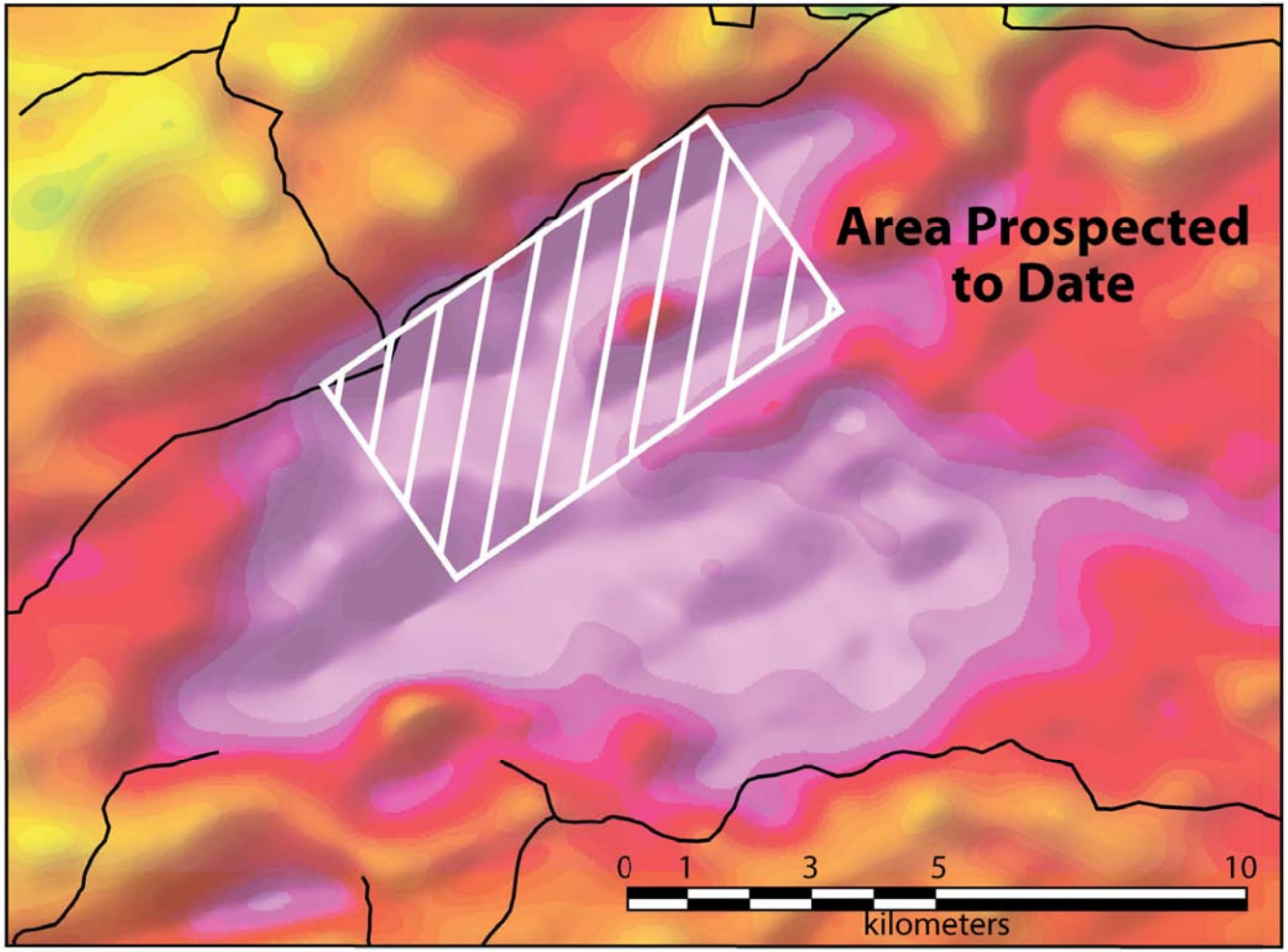


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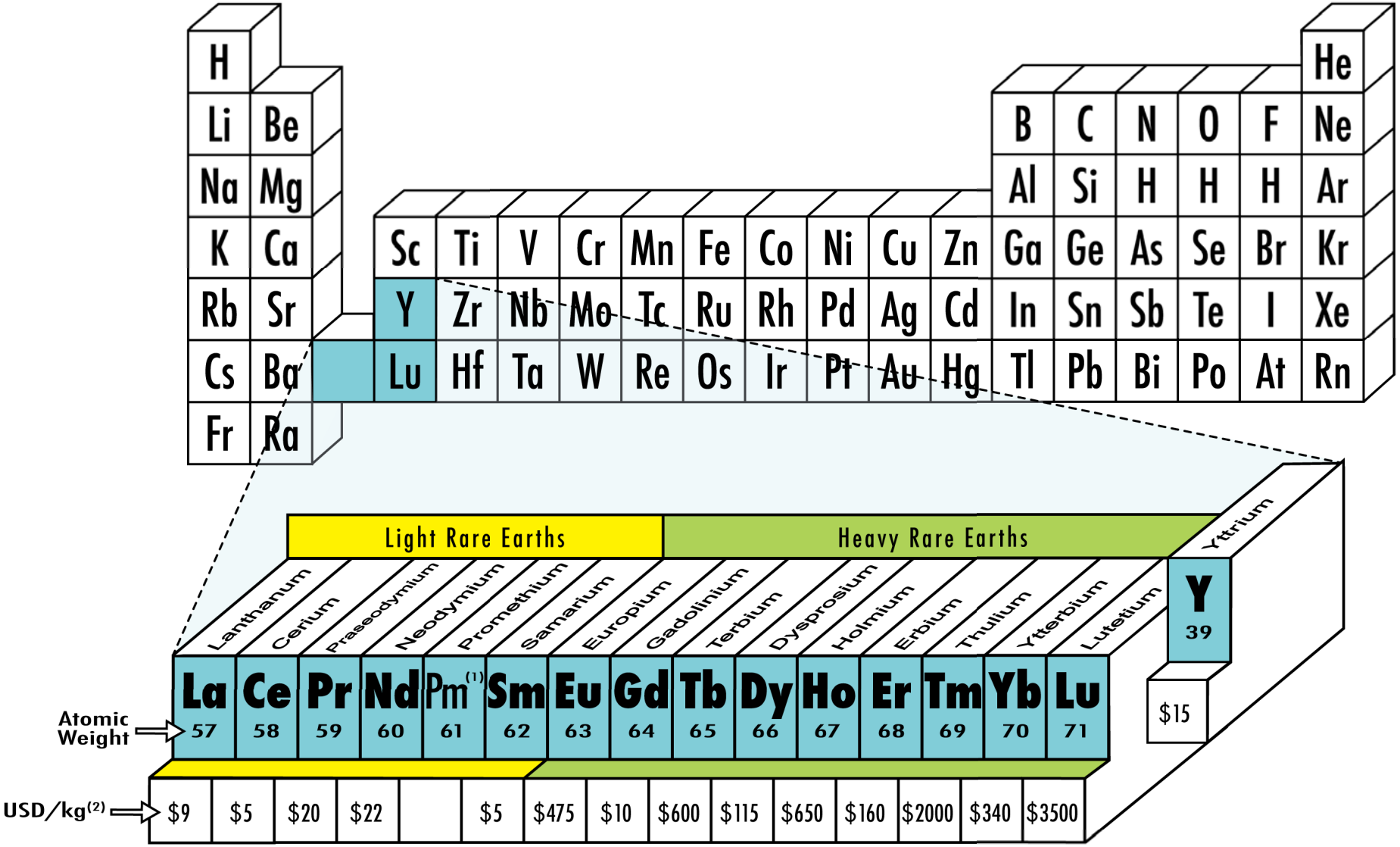
Table 1 - January 15, 2009

Periodic Table and Rare Earth Elements



(1) Does not occur naturally on Earth.

(2) Sources for metal prices: La, Ce, Pr, Nd, Sm, Eu, Gd, Tb, Dy and Y = Metal Pages 2008/10/14 and Ho, Er, Tm, Yb and Lu = USGS 2006 Minerals Yearbook