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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

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Chinese Ministry of S&T takes action against unethical academic practices

In an investigation conducted by the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology (S&T), several unethical academic practices by Chinese scientists were identified in key national R&D projects. The investigation report underscored [plagiarism in project proposals](#) from other approved projects in terms of “main indicators, research content, research methods and main innovations.” In addition, [unethical practices by scientists](#) were identified during the peer review process. To maintain scientific research integrity, the Chinese Ministry of S&T terminated the funding and issued a notice to those scientists prohibiting them from undertaking or participating in any scientific and technological activities for 3 years.

Scientific Collaboration Projects

To protect plant and animal species, particularly the Marco Polo sheep in the Pamir Plateau, a joint collaboration was initiated by the Sino-Tajikistan Joint Laboratory for Conservation and Utilization of Biological Resources. [Yang Weikang, Deputy Director at the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography](#), stated that through joint survey it was able to identify the core habitat of the Marco Polo

sheep in the Pamir, essential to establishing ecological corridors to protect the species. The Marco Polo sheep, also known as the Pamir Argali sheep, is listed as threatened on the IUCN Red List.

Separately, a research team from the Institute of High Energy Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, has discovered the highest-energy gamma-ray spectral line ever seen, with an energy level peaking at 37 million electron volts. The research team lead [Xiong Shaolin](#) noted the discovery will significantly advance understanding of gamma-ray bursts. It was detected through joint observations by China’s space-based and ground-based telescopes. The first gamma-ray burst was discovered in 1967.

Scientific Research Breakthrough and Discoveries

Chinese geologists have discovered two new niobium-scandium minerals in the Bayan Obo deposit in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. The new minerals have been named ‘Oboniobite’ and ‘Scandio-fluoro-eckermannite’. On the significance of the discovery of the new minerals, [Li Xianhua](#), Institute of Geology and Geophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, stated that they are extremely rare and strategically critical minerals, which will mainly be used in special steel, superconducting materials and aerospace industries, solid oxide fuel cells and aluminum-scandium alloys.

China Science Diplomacy

The [12th China-ASEAN Joint Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation](#) was held on 16 July in Chengdu, Sichuan. The meeting was presided over by Chinese Vice Minister of Science and Technology, Chen Jiachang, who assured member states of China's keenness for joint scientific projects, both at governmental and non-governmental levels. Hu Xianheng, Deputy Secretary of States, Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology and Innovation of Cambodia and current Chairman of the ASEAN Science and Technology Committee, stated that scientific and technological innovation should be the cornerstone of sustainable development and economic growth among the member states. In the meeting, the member states conducted in-depth discussions on the pros and cons of the implementation of the first batch of joint research projects identified at the China-ASEAN Leaders' Summit and also clarified key areas for future collaboration.

To strengthen scientific and technological cooperation [between China and Switzerland](#), Wan Gang, President of the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), held a meeting on 23 July in Beijing, with a visiting delegation from the Swiss Academy of Engineering Sciences (SATW) headed by Benoit Dubuis, President of SATW. In-depth

discussions on joint Artificial Intelligence projects were held between the two sides.

On 4 July [Chinese Ministry of S&T Yin Hejun](#) held a meeting with Silvia Diaz, Chairperson of the Chilean National Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation Commission in Shanghai. Both sides exchanged views on future scientific collaborations, including exchange of scientists.