

EN
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Answer given by Mr Breton
on behalf of the European Commission
(15.4.2021)

The Commission has taken various measures to ensure secure supply of primary and secondary raw material needed for batteries.

The Commission has launched a dialogue with Member States on raw materials policies and on sustainable mining principles. In 2018 and 2019, the Commission with the Member States mapped domestic EU sourcing of battery raw materials proving geological potential to diversify the supply chain and become more autonomous¹.

In September 2020, the Commission adopted the Communication on Critical Raw Materials with an action plan for securing a sustainable supply of raw materials to the EU². Lithium was included in the critical raw materials list. In October 2020, the European Raw Materials Alliance was launched with an aim to secure sustainable access to critical and strategic raw materials, advanced materials, and processing know-how.

The Commission fosters development of sustainable and responsible domestic sourcing of lithium and aims to diversify external sources by establishing strategic partnerships with lithium-rich countries, including Ukraine and Serbia.

The Commission proposal for a Regulation on batteries and waste batteries adopted on 10 December 2020³ promotes access to secondary raw materials by setting requirements on recycled content, recycling efficiency and material recovery⁴. The proposal also lays down requirements for ethical and sustainable sourcing of raw materials used for batteries placed on the EU market, regardless of their origin.

The environmental impact of every mining project is part of permitting procedures, which are administered by the Member States.

¹ Resources and reserves were for the first time compiled in a harmonised way using the United Framework Classification System (UNFC), developed by the United Nations.

² COM(2020) 474.

³ COM(2020) 798/3.

⁴ Idem.