

**Question for written answer E-000654/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Mineral extracts for electronics: the role of public procurement

The growing production and consumption of electronic devices, also as part of the 'green and digital transition', is directly boosting mineral extractive activity. Studies have confirmed that mineral extraction can cause pollution, land grabbing and water shortage, while undermining local communities' livelihoods.

The EU-funded Make ICT Fair Danwatch report entitled 'Our demand for electric cars and smartphones is drying up the world's most arid place'¹, proves that the extraction of lithium for the manufacturing of batteries for computers, electronic gadgets and electric vehicles exploits water resources in the Atacama Desert in Chile and threatens the livelihoods of indigenous communities and fauna by using a high volume of water. The study shows that multinationals such as Samsung, Panasonic, Apple and Tesla buy batteries made with Chilean lithium. Through public procurement, the EU institutions and other public authorities become part of the value chain of such electronic devices.

Beyond the sharing of good practices, does the Commission plan to introduce mandatory sustainable public procurement criteria or targets for electronics and textile supply chains that cover not only the circular economy, but also human rights and wider social sustainability objectives? If so, how and by when?

¹ <https://danwatch.dk/en/undersogelse/our-demand-for-electric-cars-and-smartphones-is-drying-up-the-most-arid-place-in-the-world/>