

**Question for written answer E-003170/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurélia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Strategic stocks of critical metals: what is the plan for the future?

On 20 October 2023, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce announced that, as of 1 December, China will require export permits for certain graphite products in order to protect its national security. This move comes at a time when many foreign governments are criticising Beijing's industrial dominance.

China is the world's top producer of graphite, responsible for 67% of the global supply of the graphite in its natural form.

Despite the Commission's proposal for a European Critical Raw Materials Act, looking ahead to the next few decades, the issue of strategic stocks has still not been addressed.

Essentially, this involves stockpiling ready-to-use critical raw materials in case there is a shock to certain supply chains. The stocks would then ensure the proper functioning of key industries and activities.

France, for example, had strategic stocks in the past, which enabled its economic reconstruction in the aftermath of the Second World War.

1. In its impact assessment of the European Critical Raw Materials Act, has the Commission assessed the issue of strategic storage?
2. Has the Commission mapped out strategic areas in the EU which could contain rare metal deposits?

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