

Can Africa develop an integrated lithium supply chain for batteries?

In this report, we summarise the potential for developing an integrated lithium supply chain for batteries in Africa. Lithium is a moderately abundant element in the Earth's crust, and is predominantly concentrated into three types of mineral deposit: pegmatites and granites; sedimentary deposits; and brines (Bowell et al., 2020).

Where do lithium batteries come from?

This report will focus specifically on lithium. Global supply chains of lithium for batteries are currently dominated by sources in South America, Australia and China, with processing and manufacturing of the battery compounds and components focused in China, Japan and South Korea (Grant et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2019).

Why is a lithium supply chain important in Africa?

Understanding of lithium supply, demand and markets is essential for development of the Li supply chain in Africa. Energy security. Lithium mineral processing is highly energy intensive, and so secure energy supplies are essential for industrial engagement in the lithium supply chain.

Why is lithium extracted from Africa exported?

Africa has very little capacity for lithium mineral processing, further refining of lithium chemicals, or manufacture of battery components. As a result, lithium mineral concentrate is typically exported from Africa. Value is added outside Africa and products using lithium-ion batteries are then imported.

Which country exports lithium batteries to South Africa and Tunisia?

It is noted that China in lithium battery exports to South Africa and Tunisia is the undisputed leading economy, followed by Japan. However, in the case of exports from South Africa and Tunisia, there is not a great recipient country, because they differ in the application components analyzed.

What is lithium supply chain?

This report focuses specifically on lithium, one of the major battery raw materials, for which demand is expected to grow rapidly in the coming decades. Lithium supply chains are complex and commonly global in their extent, with steps that include exploration, mining, processing, manufacturing, use and recycling.

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completed earlier this year, with the 43,000 tons from its newly ...

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