

New lithium plant inaugurated in Argentina

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Eramet CEO Christel Bories said the plant would produce up to 24,000 tons of battery-grade lithium carbonate per year at full capacity.

French mining group Eramet and China's Tsingshan on Wednesday inaugurated a lithium production plant in Argentina to supply the booming electric car industry.

The site in the northwestern province of Salta represents an [investment](#) of \$870 million dollars, Eramet said.

The plant is not a traditional mine nor one of the environmentally damaging salt flats from which the metal used in [electric batteries](#) is normally extracted in South America's so-called lithium triangle of Argentina, Bolivia and Chile.

Instead, it uses an innovative "direct extraction" method, according to Eramet.

The plant is expected to produce up to 24,000 tons of battery-grade lithium carbonate per year at full capacity, Eramet CEO Christel Bories told AFP—enough for 600,000 electric vehicle batteries.

In 2021, when Eramet announced it was reviving the [project](#) with Tsingshan, delayed by the coronavirus pandemic, Bories said the plant was expected to meet 15 percent of Europe's lithium needs.

Production is planned to start in November with 350 employees.

Argentina is the fourth-biggest producer of the so-called "white gold", after Australia, Chile and China.

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