

International Lithium Standards AFNOR calls on French companies to speak up

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is taking the lead in developing voluntary standards intended to structure the lithium market. If China is in charge, France has every interest in taking an active part, via AFNOR.

Paris, November 17, 2020 - Corollary of the rise of robotics, the glass industry and ceramics and today the majority of the electric vehicle market, lithium is at the heart of intense negotiations from Asia to the American continent. Its consumption shows growth of 20% per year worldwide; in Europe, our needs in 2030 will be multiplied by 18, then by 60 in 2050.

The intensification of commercial relations requires the use of shared criteria, which do not exist today, whether on a French, European or international scale! China, the main manufacturer of lithium in the world today, has therefore put more than 100 nationally developed standards on the ISO table.

From production to operation: everyone is interested

France and Europe have every interest in taking part in this project, in particular to face the challenge of relocating our supply of mineral raw materials. “ Suppliers *but also battery users are interested, starting with the automotive sector* ,” explains Patrick D'Hugues, director of the mineral resources and circular economy scientific program at BRGM. *Defenders of renewable energies also see it as a way to define guarantees that the lithium in a battery, for example, is traceable, and that it has been manufactured in good social and environmental conditions.* »

International standards will cover the extraction, concentration, separation and processing of lithium into useful compounds/ materials (including oxides, salts, metals, master alloys, lithium-ion battery materials, etc.). “ *The first issue is the designation, to clarify the market and not exclude any material* ,” insists David Krupka, AFNOR standardization project manager. The delivery conditions, but also the chemical analysis methods useful for determining the compositions, or the testing methods favoring the comparability of the results: each point will be debated. It is by participating in this project that French organizations will be able to get a head start.

[Fourteen countries](#) have already responded favorably to this call from ISO. The first working meeting at the national level in the first quarter of 2021, thus moving France from the status of “observer” to that of “member” of the project: [professionals wishing to participate can register](#).

Normalize, an action of influence

The 2020 edition of the international standardization barometer shows France in 2nd place on the European scene (CEN-CENELEC) and 3rd place on the international scene (ISO-IEC). At the ISO, France returned to 5th place in the ranking, tied with Japan, with 76 secretariats, a figure it had not reached since 2008.

Standardization in China: a state affair

The Chinese Head of State, Mr. This objective is systematically expressed in the national standardization strategy and an impressive number of all-out initiatives, orchestrated at the highest level, and supported by almost perfect coordination between the Chinese state and its companies; illustration of “state capitalism” supported by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communications Party, the Chinese state uses all the levers at its disposal: taking positions in global governance, harmonization/multiplication of standards, opening of borders/protectionism, controlled economy/ free competition and relies on the critical size of its market to promote its standards internationally and among its

subcontractors.

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About AFNOR

AFNOR is the French reference organization for voluntary standards. It manages the collection of existing documents and leads the work of interested parties for the creation and revision of standards and to identify subjects that could provide material for developing new ones. Launched at the initiative of market players, the voluntary standard is a reference framework which aims to provide guidelines, technical or qualitative requirements for products, services or practices serving the general interest. Anyone can participate in its creation and any organization may or may not use and refer to it. This is why the standard is called voluntary. As coordinator of standardization in France, AFNOR has one ambition: to contribute to the dissemination of good practices and effective solutions, for the benefit of all.

www.normalisation.afnor.org