

# Battery metals attract new exploration hopefuls

The increasing demand for minerals used in the manufacture of electric batteries, namely lithium, cobalt, nickel and manganese, is leading to greater interest in Guinea's natural resources.

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Previously best known for its diamonds, Guinea's Kissidougou area near the border with Sierra Leone has shown enough potential to convince one company to explore for lithium there. On 20 April, [Global Mining Resources](#) filed an application for a permit to assess the lithium potential of the area. Another company, [NA Global Reality & Investment](#), filed a request for the Nzérékoré area, the centre of iron exploration in Guinea, in early March. Around the same time, from late March to early April, three separate companies that appear to be targeting lithium were registered in Conakry: [Guinea Lithium](#), [African Lithium Mining Resources Guinée](#) and [Guinean Lithium Ressources](#).

Little is known about these companies within the Guinean mining world, or about the country's lithium resources, which have been little explored to date. In Mali, by contrast, there are projects already in advanced phases of development, such as the Goulamina project being explored by the Australian company [Leo Lithium](#), a spin-off of the [Firefinch](#) group. There is potential for the metal, a key material in the manufacture of electric batteries vital to the global energy transition, to boost business in Guinea.

## Graphite, nickel, cobalt, manganese

For years now, investors have been interested in Guinea's abundant resources of other minerals used in batteries and other renewable energy equipment. The Egyptian billionaire [Naguib Sawiris](#)'s [La](#)

**Mancha** injected funds into graphite, developed at the south-eastern project Lola by Canada's **SRG Graphite** (AI, [23/03/22](#)). French group **Eramet** also recently showed interest in the cobalt and nickel potential of the area around Lola, while lesser-known companies are exploring these metals in other parts of Guinea. **Axis Business Management & Minerals** has applied to renew two of its three cobalt exploration permits in the prefectures of Mali and Gaoual in northern Guinea. When contacted, the company's general manager **Sonny Doumbouya** told us there was also potential for nickel, copper, titanium and gold in these permits. **Maison Kebo**, a company which was said to be linked to the **Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée**, the party of President **Alpha Condé**, who was overthrown in September (AI, [16/09/14](#)), applied for a concession in the Kissidougou area in March.

Investors also seem interested in Guinea's manganese, especially in the western area of Kindia, which is well known for its bauxite. The Indian-owned concrete reinforcement bar manufacturer **Odhav Multi Industries** (AI, [23/12/20](#)) has filed two permit requests for manganese, which it can use in its products.