

Project in Biobío would be the first to produce Rare Earths cleanly

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Copiapó was the venue for the 2030 Mining Challenges seminar , which this year had the circular economy, the energy future and the climate crisis as its central theme. Among the exhibitors, one of the most promising green mining projects at a national and global level stood out: the proposal for the **clean production and harvest of Rare Earth minerals** , by the company [Aclara](#) .



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Rare earths are a **group of 17 metallic elements on the periodic table** that are used in a wide variety of technological applications and are key in the **manufacture of high-performance permanent magnets for electric vehicles**. Large companies in the automotive sector have already shown their interest in the **Penco Module** project, located in the Biobío Region. One of them is Rolls-Royce, whose director Paul Adams is also a member of the Aclara Resources board. He visited the company's Rare Earth Demonstration Center a few days ago.

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The production of these elements, added to that of lithium, copper and green hydrogen, **places Chile in a strategic position** for the development of green technologies, becoming a key player in the global fight against climate change.

Nelson Donoso, General Manager of Aclara, affirmed that the project, which requires an initial investment of US\$130 million, will produce a paradigm shift. "Chile has a unique opportunity to provide the world with clean and traceable rare earths. Normally, the extraction of rare earths in other countries is usually complex and with a high environmental impact. In our case, we aspire to develop this project in Penco, where we have found ionic clays formed by the climatic and geological conditions of the area." It is this type of deposit that, according to Donoso, allows these elements to be produced superficially and with a minimal environmental footprint.

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Donoso said that they will work with an exclusive Aclara process called **Circular Mineral Harvesting**, which does not require explosives or grinding. In addition, it uses recycled water from treated household sources and recirculates 95% of the water used.

«In our project we will extract rare earths from ionic clays at a superficial level, up to the first 30-40 meters of depth. Then we return the processed material to the land to later reforest with native species. In addition, our closed loop process allows us to obtain a product that does not contain radioactive elements. Really, this is seen as something new, unique, in the context of how mining processes are developed in Chile," Donoso said.

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The General Manager of Aclara assured that Aclara's rare earths can neutralize the equivalent of five years of all the CO2 that Chile produces, based on the fact that 18 million electric vehicles could be produced with the company's rare earths.

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