

“The problem is everybody wants to build a Gigafactory but nobody wants to mine”

As a part of their **green mandate**, it seems many banks, especially European ones, are shying away from mining investments. Awkwardly, however, we need the copper, lithium, rare earth elements etc from mining to grow in order to provide the raw materials for the [energy transition](#).

“They don’t want the reputational risk of being involved in mining projects,” said my source. You can get “green loans” for **Gigafactories**, but not for the other side of the supply chain. And by the time the shortage becomes acute, it might be hard for production to catch up with demand. It can take up to 20 years to find, explore and permit a [copper mine](#), as opposed to 2 years to build a Gigafactory.

The same sentiment that dries up investment for mining is also drying up talent. The young people don’t want anything to do with mining, which they regard as environmentally questionable. Some universities in Australia simply shut down their mining program altogether due to lack of enrollment.

On one hand, this is a deeply ironic illustration of how dysfunctional things can become when we put virtue signaling ahead of taking care of business. On the other hand, it’s also true that the [mining industry](#) hasn’t always been the most scrupulous and environmentally sensitive. What’s needed is a holistic re-evaluation that acknowledges the necessity of mined resources to power our **green tech** and rewards the industry to extract those resources while putting the least amount of pressure on the planet.