

# Cylib joins 25-partner German consortium to develop sodium-ion battery recycling process

10-Apr-2026 11:27 GMT

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**The SIB:DE Entwicklung project unites 25 partners to create scalable, circular sodium-ion battery technology, backed by €14.5 million in German federal funding**

Cylib is joining 25 German manufacturers and research institutes in the SIB:DE Entwicklung project to develop Europe's first industrial recycling process for sodium-ion batteries. The project, supported by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), runs from March 2026 to February 2029 with €14.5 million in total funding.



*Source: Getty Images/Bet\_Noire*

It focuses on producing large-format, market-ready sodium-ion cells and evaluating their recyclability, with the aim of building Europe's industrial foundation for next-generation batteries before end-of-life volumes exist at scale. Cylib leads the consortium's recycling efforts together with the Technical University of Braunschweig, with Till Gerlach (head of research and development) and Lisa Pillar (project lead) heading the work on Cylib's side.

For Cylib, the project reflects its principle of building recycling infrastructure before end-of-life batteries reach scale. The company has already applied this approach to lithium-ion batteries, having raised over €140 million in equity and grants and begun construction preparations at its first industrial facility at CHEMPARK Dormagen, which will be capable of processing up to 60,000 metric tons per year, equivalent to 140,000 electric vehicle batteries. As sodium-ion technology moves toward European markets, Cylib is developing recycling technology now to ensure circularity is built into sodium-ion from the start.

According to Lilian Schwich, co-CEO of Cylib, the consortium brings together the entire value chain, from battery producers and automotive original equipment manufacturers to recycling expertise, with circularity being designed into the technology from the outset rather than waiting for end-of-life sodium-ion batteries to accumulate.

The 25-partner consortium covers the entire industrial chain, including battery producers VARTA, EAS Batteries and UniverCell; electrolyte developers E-Lyte Innovations; intralogistics company Jungheinrich; machinery manufacturers GROB-WERKE and Coperion; recycling systems provider acp-systems; and lubricants and analytics company FUCHS LUBRICANTS. Eight Fraunhofer Institutes, four universities (RWTH Aachen University, the Technical University of Munich, the Technical University of Braunschweig and KIT), and ZSW provide the scientific backbone, and the project is coordinated by EDAG Production Solutions.

Cylib leads the recycling work package with a two-track approach, developing two parallel routes. The first route uses conventional mechanical and hydrometallurgical processing, while the second focuses on direct recycling, which returns active materials directly to cell production without full chemical breakdown. This direct recycling route is considered more innovative, and, for production scrap in particular, could significantly reduce processing costs while maintaining material quality, with a pilot-scale demonstration targeted for early 2029.

Schwich said that sodium-ion batteries use abundant raw materials and that recycling is what makes the technology sustainable and scalable, with the project establishing the foundation for a circular European sodium-ion value chain.

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