

Common Issues with Outdoor Data Centers in Chile



AI Overview

Outdoor data centers in Chile face significant challenges related to water scarcity, energy demands, environmental impact, and limited local employment benefits.

Water Scarcity and Environmental Impact One of the most pressing issues is excessive water consumption. Data centers in regions like Quilicura, near Santiago, rely heavily on water for cooling, consuming billions of liters annually. For example, Google's facilities alone have rights to extract 50 liters per second, amounting to over 1.5 billion liters per year, which exacerbates the ongoing megadrought in central Chile and contributes to the drying of wetlands. Local activists have raised concerns that these operations turn the territory into a form of extractivism, where water is diverted from communities and ecosystems without adequate compensation.

Energy Demands Outdoor data centers also place a high demand on electricity, particularly in hot, dry regions where water-based cooling is resource-intensive. AI-focused facilities, which require continuous high-performance computing, can consume significantly more energy than traditional storage centers, putting pressure on the local power grid.

Regulatory and Legal Challenges Environmental regulations have become a source of contention. Chilean courts have partially reversed permits for data centers, requiring companies to consider climate change impacts and revise cooling systems to reduce water usage. This reflects growing scrutiny over the sustainability of large-scale data center projects in water-stressed areas.

Social and Employment Concerns Despite promises of job creation, the actual local employment impact is modest. Investigations show that many data centers hire only a small number of full-time staff locally, with highly specialized roles often filled by non-residents. For instance, out of 17 projects reviewed, only 1,547 full-time positions were directly e...

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Data centers bring environmental concerns, like excess

Amazon, Google, and Microsoft are building water-guzzling data centers in Chile. Local residents and activists are pushing back.

Chile: Tech giants build dozens of data centers while activists raise ...

After all, he has spent the past two years monitoring data centers in Chile — including those operated by Amazon, Google, and Microsoft — and found them to have a significant impact on

"What you see here is a wetland without water": how the datacentre

Chile's push to become the regional tech hub now faces backlash as datacentres have drained water from drought-stricken wetlands, consuming billions of litres annually.

Google says it will rethink its plans for a big data center

Google on Tuesday said it would halt plans to develop a major \$200 million data center in Chile to address environmental concerns, a decision

Google's Chile Data Center Redesign Sparks

Google's decision to revamp its \$200 million data center project in Santiago, Chile, highlights growing environmental concerns. As other Latin

Divergent Futures in a Damaged Territory: The Rise of Data Centers

Through a case study grounded in interviews and citizen mobilization, we analyze how divergent sociotechnical imaginaries confront each other in debates over water consumption,

Chile Data Center Market 2025 | Datacenters

Discover why hyperscalers are betting on Chile's green energy edge. Learn how Santiago is becoming a top hub for renewable-powered data center

"What you see here is a wetland without water": how the datacentre

In Chile, this is most commonly done with water-based systems, which are cheaper than air-cooling systems. Jara adds that datacentres for AI often use up to 10 times more water than

Datacenters meet resistance over environmental concerns as AI boom ...

Magically, that means that datacenters are not going through environmental impact assessments in Chile any more, which was the reason why communities understood what were the

Thirsty Forests and Expansive Droughts: The

To do so, we present two Latin American case studies situated in Quilicura (Chile) and Queretaro (Mexico). Both sites are emerging as key data

Amazon's Chile data center moves ahead after

So too has opposition over fears that the energy and water consumption required by data centers could drain resources, and that data

Divergent Futures in a Damaged Territory: The Rise of Data Centers

ABSTRACT As promises surrounding artificial intelligence (AI) and data-driven decision-making increasingly shape debates on innovation and technological development in Chile, data centers have

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Chile Information Technology Data Centers

Chile's Data Center plan accelerates cloud-based services and artificial intelligence related demands, presenting commercial opportunities for U.S. companies.

Data Center Industry in Chile: Opportunities and Challenges

The data center industry in Chile has grown exponentially over the last few years, as it has demonstrated competitive advantages that make investments in infrastructure and data

Chile's megadrought evaporates wetlands as data

Aerial images of a once-marshy wetland outside Santiago, Chile, are drawing renewed attention online as activists warn that the country's fast-growing

The Cloud vs. drought: Water hog data centers threaten Latin America ...

Droughts in Uruguay and Chile have led residents to question the wisdom of their governments allowing transnational internet technology companies to build water-hungry mega-data

Chile partially reverses Google data center permit over

A Chilean environmental court has partially reversed Google's permit to build a \$200 million data center in Cerrillos, Santiago. The court told the

Inside the data center boom that's consuming Chile's

Microsoft and Brazilian company Ascenty claim that some of Chile's data centers are air-cooled, and Google recently claimed that a Quilicura data

Chile: Google to halt data centre project in Santiago to address ...

Initially approved in 2020, the project faced backlash over its substantial water usage, a critical issue in a region grappling with a prolonged drought. The project, slated for the Cerrillos

Chile's Data Center Boom Puts Country and

For years, Chile has been at the forefront of Latin America's data center industry. The digital-first mindset of successive governments, coupled

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