

# LIMITING DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE EXTRACTION OF MINERAL RESOURCES

Over the past decade, mining has grown exponentially, partly encouraged by the growing demand for raw materials for the energy transition. As a consequence, the pressure from mining activities in areas with vulnerable ecosystems is growing. Together with local partner organisations, we encourage governments, businesses and financial institutions to strengthen the policy frameworks for responsible mineral governance, and in that way to limit the damage to people and nature caused by mining activities.

## TRANSPARENT RAW MATERIAL CHAINS

The responsible extraction and use of raw materials starts with transparency throughout the value chain, from decision making for the issuing of permits through to the extraction and processing of the materials themselves. Via International Responsible Business Conduct Agreements (IRBC), we assist businesses in the metal sector to improve their value chain risk assessment.

## INSIGHT INTO LONG-TERM IMPACT

In particular in areas where mining takes place, transparency is vital. To guarantee the rights of communities and to secure essential ecosystem services, citizens and local governments must be informed in good time of plans for new mines and be given an objective insight into the expected consequences in social, economic and ecological terms. In that way, they can make effective use of their right to consultation.

It is against that background that via our local partner organisations we are working to improve access to the relevant information so that all groups

of stakeholders in the area surrounding (planned) mines are informed, with specific attention for groups with limited literacy.

## PUBLIC DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

We encourage public debate on the long-term consequences of different development scenarios. In this way, we hope to ensure that the revenues from the extraction of these raw materials benefit the local communities *and* that future generations continue to be able to enjoy critical ecosystem services, such as for example clean water.

“Together with all stakeholders in the landscape, we chart out the positive and negative effects of mining and oil extraction. With all the positives and negatives weighed, mining is only a good development option if the long-term societal impact turns out to be positive.”

Mark van der Wal, expert responsible mining at IUCN NL

## COMPLYING WITH LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

Our goal is not only to ensure access to information about future operations. Together with our local partner organisations, we inform the stakeholders about the relevant legislation and regulations and the international standards that apply for mining operations. That knowledge helps ensure better compliance to legal and performance standards.

## GUARANTEES FOR PRESERVING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

If existing legislation and regulations are not enough, we call for better laws that offer guarantees for good quality nature protection. In this way, we ensure that crucial ecosystem services, such as soil fertility, drinking water and protection against extreme weather are preserved.

## BEYOND THE LAW: HIGH-LEVEL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

In addition, we encourage businesses to publicly commit to voluntary sector standards and guidelines, such as those issued by the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). They often have stricter sustainability requirements than national laws and regulations, and promote operating methods that are less harmful to people and nature.

Do you want to help IUCN NL to promote responsible mining? Visit our [website](#) for detailed information and more example projects or contact our expert [Mark van der Wal](#).

## Example of our work

### Knowledge exchange between Madagascar and the Philippines

Madagascar is renowned for its unique biodiversity but far less for its mineral wealth. Over the past 10 years, a number of large mines along the north-western coast are in early stages of planning and development. Without a sound policy framework, the development of a mining industry and the support infrastructure will represent huge risks to people and nature.

The Philippines are already conversant with these risks. Because of the long history of destructive mining, civil society organisations in the Philippines have built up considerable expertise on the negative effects of mining, and on how to organise the mining sector in a way that it generates a maximum benefit for society while keeping the associated, current and future risks to a minimum.

Because of this experience with the sector, IUCN NL organised a visit to the Philippines for local NGOs, government officials and representatives of mining companies from Madagascar. They exchanged on how to improve governance of the sector, to include stakeholders and to ensure that environmental legislation is enforced and complied with. One year later, civil society organisations and government representatives from the Philippines were invited to share their expertise in Madagascar with the Madagascan Ministry of Mining, the Ministry of the Environment and the Chamber of Mines, as well as the two largest mining companies.

## COLLABORATING WITH IUCN NL

IUCN NL supports partner organisations worldwide that are working to improve the entire raw material value chain. We act as facilitators and mediators with the aim of reducing the impact of the mining sector on nature and biodiversity. We share our knowledge and networks and assist local nature conservation groups to develop lobbying skills.