
International Governance for Environmentally Sound Supply of Raw Materials – Policy Options and Recommendations

Final Report

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This research report of the Ecologic Institute addresses how Germany can contribute, through international governance, to reduce the environmental impacts of mining activities outside its territory. It provides a stocktake of existing governance approaches at the international level or with transboundary effect. It then develops specific policy options and recommendations for the German federal government to strengthen international governance for an environmentally sound supply of raw materials.

The scope included the extraction of abiotic raw materials up to processing and smelting. In terms of impacts, it included social impacts where they are linked to the environment.

Mineral extraction activities can have significant impacts on the environment during all stages of the life cycle of a mine, from exploration to construction and operation, and up to closure. Impacts also occur along the value chain of raw materials, including processing, treatment and transport. With the demand for raw materials increasing worldwide and value chains spreading across different countries, international approaches can contribute to making mineral extraction adhere to environmental standards.

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International treaty law, customary law, raw materials, permanent sovereignty, natural resources, transboundary environmental harm, common heritage of mankind, precautionary principle, polluter pays principle, environmental impact assessment, state responsibility, Paris Agreement, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Agreement on the Implementation of Part XI of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, Minamata Convention, Amazon Cooperation Treaty, Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, World Heritage Convention, Antarctic Treaty System, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment, Convention to Combat Desertification, Human rights and social rights treaties, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Labour Organisation, American Convention on Human Rights, International trade and investment law, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Government Procurement Agreement, CETA, COMESA, EU-Colombia/Peru, binding international law, non-binding international standards, mining, OECD Due Diligence Guidance, The World Bank Environmental and Social Framework, Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM), Fairmined, Fairtrade, Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI), base metals, conflict minerals, cobalt, National and European law, extraterritorial effects, EU Timber Regulation, French law on the duty of vigilance of parent companies and ordering companies, US Alien Tort Statute, EU Public Procurement Directive, EU Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Directive, EU Conflict Minerals Regulation, EU Renewable Energy Directive, Certified Trading Chain (CTC), ASM, Minamata Convention, Mining Association of Canada, international governance, direct regulation, investment agreements, indirect regulation, Espoo-Convention, UNECE area, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses, UNCLOS, ILO Conventions, environmental reporting, EITI, ISO Standard, innovative supply chain initiatives
Europe, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Peru, Canada
assessment of instruments, case studies, analysis, stocktake