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Summary of the 22nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF): 12-14 October 2026

Technological advancements and demands related to the clean energy transition have put critical minerals and their supply chains at the forefront of many government agendas. Countries endowed with significant mineral reserves must balance market demands and their economic development needs with environmental and social protection. The 22nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF) convened under the theme "Trust in an interdependent world: Advancing inclusion and resilience in mineral value chains." Participants pondered the relationships between the private sector, governments, local authorities, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, as well as their roles and responsibilities in building trust and ensuring the long-term sustainability of mining operations.

Plenary sessions covered, among others: government participation mechanisms in the mining sector; frameworks for benefit-sharing; government-to-government cooperation; socioeconomic performance; building communities' trust; translating analysis and knowledge into policy action; and moving toward more responsible artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). Several panels focused on the various stages of a mine's lifecycle: exploration risks, mine closure policies, and managing mine waste and remining of tailings.

At the midpoint of the meeting, participants had a chance to participate in an interactive discussion on harmonizing sustainability standards and mining policy during the second policy dialogue convened by the IGF, the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It focused on: advancing practical solutions and shared priorities; the relevance of sustainability mining standards for governments; strengthening community voices; and supply chain engagement. The first dialogue was held during the OECD Critical Minerals Forum in Istanbul, Turkey, in April 2026.

The AGM also saw the official launch of the IGF Mining Academy. A new platform for learning, collaboration, and innovation in responsible mineral governance, the Academy will help strengthen mining governance and improve policy and regulatory decisions. The inaugural IGF Prize for Excellence in Mining Governance, which recognizes one IGF member's outstanding leadership in sustainable mining, was presented to Brazil for their consolidated mining-dam safety framework.

During the three-day AGM, several side sessions also convened on addressing hidden vulnerabilities in global mineral value chains due to industrial chemicals and processing

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auxiliaries, managing disputes, and implementing the UN Secretary-General's agenda on critical energy transition minerals. Two commodity sessions zeroed in on gold and silicon, both critical for the global economy.

The 22nd AGM of the IGF met in Geneva, Switzerland, from 12-14 October 2026, and was attended by 483 participants.

A Brief History of the IGF

The IGF serves as a global platform for dialogue among its member governments, as well as other stakeholders including mining companies, industry associations, civil society, and non-governmental and international organizations. The origins of the IGF can be traced back to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, and encouraged governments, civil society, and the private sector actors to enter voluntary partnerships focused on sustainable development objectives. The WSSD's Johannesburg Plan of Implementation specifically called for efforts to address the environmental, economic, health, and social impacts, and benefits, of mining minerals and metals throughout their life cycle. It also highlighted the importance of workers' health and safety, and the role of transparency and accountability for sustainable mining.

Following the WSSD, the governments of Canada and South Africa were instrumental in establishing the IGF. In February 2005, they announced the IGF as a voluntary initiative for national governments interested in promoting good governance in the management of mineral resources. The IGF currently has 85 members.

The IGF's work is largely framed by its flagship policy guidance and assessment tool, the Mining Policy Framework (MPF), which was initially ratified in 2010 by IGF members and was updated and ratified again in 2023. The MPF identifies best practices through six pillars of mining policy and law: the legal and policy environment; financial benefit optimization; socio-economic benefit optimization; environmental management; mine closure and post-mining transitions; and ASM.

In 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) convened to assess global sustainable development policy. Its outcome document, The Future We Want, further boosted the IGF's work. Besides calling on the international community to negotiate a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Rio+20 outcome urged governments and businesses to promote accountability and transparency in the mining sector, as well as improve existing mechanisms to prevent illicit financial flows from mining activities.

In October 2015, the IGF Secretariat moved from its home at the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development to the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) in Ottawa, Canada.

The IGF AGM first convened in 2005 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (now known as UN Trade and Development) (UNCTAD) acting as host. AGMs have been hosted by UNCTAD at the Palais ever since.

AGMs provide a forum for members to engage with industry, civil society, and one another, and exchange best practices, knowledge, and ideas. Previous AGMs have discussed topics relevant to the MPF, including: fiscal and legislative frameworks for investment in the mining sector; revenue sharing; community engagement and benefits; the role of women in mining; and post-mining transitions, including mine closure and the rehabilitation of mine sites. AGMs also present draft guidance on various aspects of sustainable mining before the guidance is publicly released.

Since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, AGMs have addressed the mining sector's contributions to achieving sustainable development; for example, the 2017 AGM produced the IGF Guidance for Governments on Managing ASM. Subsequent AGMs have highlighted the role of environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs), community engagement, and companies' efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to changes in the environment.

AGMs convened virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and continued to discuss critical issues for the mining sector, including critical minerals, ESIAs, and implementation of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management, which was published in August 2020.

In 2022, the 18th AGM discussed: government readiness to handle the rising demand for critical minerals and the resulting transitions; how to change resource taxation to best suit and take advantage of that demand; how legacy mines and waste might be re-mined for critical minerals; and how to ensure that local communities fully benefit from the rush to supply minerals for the energy transition.

In 2023, the 19th AGM focused on how to maximize the potential benefits from burgeoning demand for energy transition minerals (ETMs), while ensuring a just transition. Additionally, the AGM discussed: how to bridge the ETM supply gap; the role of ASM in the energy transition; how to ensure host communities fully benefit from mining projects; reform of tax and benefit-sharing regimes; and how best to ensure a fair, equitable, and inclusive energy transition.

In 2024, the 20th AGM addressed many issues relating to the global demand for accelerating the production of critical minerals, including: the possible role of circularity in bridging the supply gap; incentivizing local value addition; respecting human rights in mining; and navigating the bewildering collection of global mining standards.

In 2025, the 21st AGM focused on how to retain value from mining-related activities. Participants discussed many issues, including: the role of government in mineral exploration; national strategies for managing critical minerals; mining-related sustainability standards; rehabilitation of abandoned mine lands; strengthening water governance through collaborative approaches; and inclusive strategies that support women workers and entrepreneurs in mining-related activities.

Report of the 22nd AGM of the IGF

Opening

On Monday, 12 October, Isabelle Ramdoo, Director, IGF Secretariat, highlighted that record number of participants, including 110 government delegates, registered for the 22nd AGM of the IGF as a true testament to the growing importance of the mining sector. Referring to this year's theme, "Trust in an interdependent world: Advancing inclusion and resilience in mineral value chains," she reminded participants that no country can achieve mineral security alone.

Nathalie Bernasconi-Osterwalder, Vice-President, Global Strategies and Managing Director for Europe, IISD, reflected on the different dimensions and scales of "trust": between governments, citizens, and communities; in cross-border partnerships; and in the international system.

In a video message, Pedro Manuel Moreno, Acting Secretary General, UNCTAD, underscored the role of governance and benefit-sharing as demand for clean energy and critical minerals increases.

Preparing What's Next: New Capacities for Mineral Governance in an Interdependent Economy

Daniel Hill, Deputy Director, Natural Resources Canada, and Chair, IGF Executive Committee, moderated this high-level panel discussion on Monday morning.

Christopher Chilesche, Manager, Training and Development, Mopani Copper Mines PLC, Zambia, reflected on the national experience in addressing the gap between worker skills and industry needs. He highlighted: the creation of the Mining Sector Skills Body; the move from content-based to competence-based education; and the National Apprenticeship Program for increased youth employment.

Vera Perdigao, Director, Department of Labour Governance and Sectoral Policies, International Labour Organization (ILO), reflected on the three key organizational priorities of intelligence, institutions, and inclusion. She underlined the importance of, *inter alia*: anticipating change; bringing the right actors to the table, mentioning Argentina's tripartite process; and creating pathways for young people to access quality jobs, including for women and other underrepresented groups.



Vera Perdigao, Director, Department of Labour Governance and Sectoral Policies, ILO



Isabelle Ramdoo, Director, IGF Secretariat

Nneoma Nwogu, Senior Counsel, World Bank Group, introduced the Global Mining Legislation Atlas, an initiative of the World Bank Group, the African Legal Support Facility, and the African Union that covers the mining laws of over 150 jurisdictions. She argued that, with under-resourced communities and capacity-constrained governments, any solution geared toward improvements in the mining sector requires simplicity. She stressed that the Atlas allows countries to compare their mining laws against their neighbors', facilitating the identification of regulatory gaps.

Responding to a question from the moderator on what success looks like in practice, all panelists highlighted that continuous collaboration, peer learning, and capacity building are crucial. They also noted the importance of evidence for better-informed decision-making.

Sara Elder, Manager, IGF Mining Academy, introduced the Mining Academy, a new platform for learning, collaboration, and innovation in responsible mineral governance. She explained that the Academy currently provides three courses on an introduction to mining, local content policies, and gender equality in mining governance, and that other courses will be added in the next five months. She also pointed to the Mining Fiscal Regime Simulator, allowing users to test different mining tax measures.

The session ended with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the IGF and partner organizations, namely: the University of Cape Town, the Bradshaw Research Institute for Minerals and Mining at the University of British Columbia, and Catalyste+.

Governments as Enablers of Equitable Benefit-sharing: Building Trust Between Mining Companies and Communities

This session on Monday morning was moderated by Grace Zhang, Senior Program Associate, Minerals for the Energy Transition Initiative, ClimateWorks Foundation.

Ege Tekinbas, Lead, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, IGF Secretariat, highlighted mechanisms for benefit-sharing: revenue transfer, development funds, and community development agreements. She introduced an initiative to map legally-mandated mechanisms, noting countries often combine



Ege Tekinbas, Lead, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, IGF Secretariat

several options, and stressed the need to engage women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and other underrepresented groups when developing benefit-sharing mechanisms.

Brendan Schwartz, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Strategies Group, highlighted the exponential proliferation of mining legislation requiring benefit-sharing with communities. She noted that revenue sharing, like mining royalties and direct taxation, is common in Europe and South America, while national development funds that centralize mining royalties from the private sector are common in Africa. On community agency and negotiation capacity, Schwartz highlighted the need for technical and legal counsel to limit asymmetries between the negotiating parties.

Giovanni Emilio Bloise Garcia, Vice Minister of Mines, Ministry of Energy and Mines, Dominican Republic, noted that benefit-sharing models depend on jurisdiction and highlighted a national approach where a 5% royalty that benefits local communities is balanced with a long-term, durable capital investment. He lauded the inclusion of women to help focus on long-term benefits and community development.

Dinah Asare, Senior Director Social Performance, Kinross Gold Corporation, stressed the importance of a structured approach to stakeholder engagement that is flexible enough for the local context. She reported on engaging local partners, such as municipalities, as key to implementing both government and community priorities and stressed the need to incorporate the gender dimension despite occasional local frictions. As for lessons learned from past mistakes, Asare pointed out the challenges around post-handover sustainability of development projects and helping local suppliers to proactively prepare for and adapt to mine closure.

Gerelzaya Altangerel, Head of the Policy Coordination Division of the SME Agency, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry, Mongolia, reflected on the Canadian-funded Catalyste+ initiative, highlighting, among others, the facilitated cooperation to identify companies' procurement needs and map the supply capacity of local producers. On sustaining trust after signing an agreement, she noted that building resilient value chains takes time and requires dialogue, information sharing, and local civil servants as catalysts.

Jenny Wik Karlsson, CEO and Senior Legal Council, Sámiid Riikkasearvi (Swedish Sámi National Association), stressed that free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is an ongoing process and that governments and companies need to recognize that benefit-sharing between local communities and Indigenous Peoples is not always aligned.

In response to questions from the floor, Bloise Garcia mentioned limited industry knowledge and related expectations among stakeholders as challenging aspects of structuring negotiations; Asare underscored the need to listen to and understand community needs, mentioning Brazil's social progress index as an example; and Schwartz reminded governments to keep legal architecture on benefit-sharing up to date.

Global Cooperation and Strategic Agreements in the Critical Minerals Era

This Monday afternoon session was moderated by Ros Lund, CEO, Eurasia Critical Minerals.

Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, illustrated the urgency of moving forward on critical minerals to support the clean energy transition and climate action. She reminded participants that according to the World Meteorological Organization, there is a 75% chance that the five-year average global temperature for 2026–2030 will exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. She also referred to the Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2026, noting that demand for critical minerals has risen 10% annually in recent years, while investment fell 9% in 2025. She warned that due to record-high processing concentration, "mineral wealth does not automatically become national wealth."

Rodrigo Urquiza, Head of International Affairs, Chilean Copper Commission, reported that Chile has been producing "responsible" minerals for years and has recently concluded a free trade agreement with the European Union, which includes a chapter dedicated to critical minerals. He stressed that responsible critical minerals supply chains cannot only provide employment and revenues, but must also addressjustice and equity.



Rodrigo Urquiza, Head of International Affairs, Chilean Copper Commission

Claudine Sigam, Technical Assistance Lead, African Minerals Development Centre, argued that Africa does not need more partnerships on critical minerals, but must ensure that these partnerships reinforce one another and collectively advance Africa's industrial agenda. She also noted that continental partnerships, such as the African Green Minerals Strategy, can: provide a common strategic direction for bilateral negotiations; ensure coherence and complementarity across bilateral partnerships; and help move from agreements to effective implementation.

Alex Malden, Policy Manager and Anti-Corruption Lead, Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative, explained that while government-to-government deals can help attract responsible investment, address infrastructure gaps, and make markets more predictable in times of high volatility, they also entail risks, including: limited scrutiny and transparency; concerns over financing and ownership; and constraints on mineral-rich countries' ability to set their own economic priorities.

Responding to questions from the floor, Malden highlighted greater transparency and accountability through unified standards; Urquiza stressed trust and collaboration as fundamental for the regional development of minerals and mining; and Sigam emphasized the importance of non-exclusive partnerships and agreements, noting that preferential access should not lead to exclusive control over markets and policies. She also pointed to the African Green Minerals Strategy as an effort to create a regional value chain.

Critical Choices: From Analysis to Actionable Critical Minerals Strategies

The last session on Monday addressed critical mineral strategies and was moderated by Grégoire Bellois, Lead, Critical Minerals and Geology, IGF Secretariat.

In his keynote presentation, Alessio Scanziani, Energy Security Analyst, International Energy Agency, presented key findings of the Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2026. He noted, among others: the increasing prices of critical minerals since 2025 due to strong demand growth; geopolitical developments turning supply concentration into an economic security challenge; increasing public finance commitments as private investments fall; and opportunities to diversify rare earth supply chains at a moderate cost.

Rokhaya Samba Diene, Director General, National Geological Survey, Senegal, noted the Africa Mining Vision as a continental roadmap to move from exporting raw materials to increased local value addition. She further presented Senegal's case study of developing a national critical minerals strategy for resilience and sustainable growth, highlighting the need to develop a national definition of critical minerals based on respective priorities.

Gustavo S. Masili, General Coordinator for Strategic Minerals and Energy Transition, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Brazil, presented the key instruments of Brazil's new policy for critical and strategic minerals. Among others, he noted: the increased focus on research, development, and investments; promoting green minerals through low-carbon mineral certification; offering



Anne Karla Navarro, Acting Chief, Mineral Economics, Information, and Publication Division, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, the Philippines

credit guarantees to support junior companies; and working closely with Mercosur countries to advance local processing.

Anne Karla Navarro, Acting Chief, Mineral Economics, Information, and Publication Division, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, the Philippines, presented the Philippines' approach to developing a national critical minerals list. The approach takes a producer perspective and includes three pillars: economic importance and opportunities; producer risk; and strategic importance.

Mohammad Sadiq, Director, National Critical Mineral Mission, Ministry of Mines, India, introduced India's comprehensive approach to critical minerals, including: its list of 24 critical and strategic minerals and target of 1,200 projects; the locations identified to build capacity beyond mines; and the establishment of a joint venture company. He quoted the Maha Upanishad, invoking the idea that "the world is one family" and stressing that no country can secure critical minerals alone.

Answering the moderator on the main challenges identified, panelists highlighted: raw material security; access to relevant technologies; battery production; and financing. During the ensuing Q&A session, discussions focused on: whether a single global list of critical minerals should be developed, with several panelists arguing that national lists are necessary to reflect



Gustavo S. Masili, General Coordinator for Strategic Minerals and Energy Transition, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Brazil

countries' specific priorities; sovereignty, particularly the ability of mineral-producing countries to decide which stages of the value chain they wish to participate in; and the reliability of mineral reserves data, with one attendee cautioning against relying on private-sector data.

Asked to identify the single most important priority for ensuring the success of national critical minerals strategies, panelists stressed: covering the entire mineral lifecycle, "from discovery to recovery"; strong government commitment; international cooperation; and greater attention to the demand side.

Where Nature Thrives, Communities Trust: Rethinking Socioenvironmental Performance in Mining

Tuesday 13 October kicked off with a session on environmental and social impact assessments of mining projects, which was moderated by Carlos Ortega, Senior Environmental Advisor, IGF Secretariat, and Elena Cornaro, Policy Advisor, IGF Secretariat.

Joyce Kortlandt, Senior Advisor Environmental and Social Assessment, Netherlands Commission on Environmental Assessment, discussed the key sources of violent conflict in the mining sector in Burkina Faso: cohabitation between industrial mining and small-scale miners; questions of local employment and procurement of local goods and services; and negotiations on land-for-land compensation and its duration .

Daryl Bosu, Deputy National Director, A Rocha Ghana, shared the national perspective of civil society and a community. He noted that communities do not oppose mining as such, only when they are not consulted, calling for the protection of community voices. As recommendations, he underscored: applying strong due diligence and sustainability standards from the start; designating boundaries and no-go zones for mining activities; and funding restoration and compensation upfront.

Uyanga Bold, Member of Parliament, Mongolia, presented the process of amending the national law on environmental impact assessment (EIA). Among key changes, she noted: the EIA law now requiring engagement and consultation with up to 70% of affected stakeholders to reduce misinformation; the reduction of average EIA approval timelines by 65%; and the introduction of the natural resources transparency bill.



Uyanga Bold, Member of Parliament, Mongolia

Antonella Velazco, Mining Development Secretary, Ministry of Mining, Catamarca Province, Argentina, discussed community involvement in lithium mining in Catamarca. She noted the practices of: holding public hearings and citizen participation in EIA processes to dispel community doubts; developing and sharing sustainable mining plans with communities; and involving and training communities in environmental monitoring.

In the subsequent Q&A session, panelists highlighted the role of local governments in translating community concerns to national regulators and bridging the information gap between companies and communities. They also stressed the need to: engage local communities from the early stages to avoid later pushback and adopt whole-of-community approaches; ensure transparency and open sharing of data on both the opportunities and risks the mine would bring; and build communities' capacity to meaningfully engage in the EIA.

Strengthening Social Performance: Harmonizing Sustainability Standards and Mining Policy

This Tuesday morning session represented the second policy dialogue, organized by the IGF, ICMM, and OECD, with the first one having convened in April 2026 in Istanbul. The session was facilitated by Bertram Lang, Senior Policy Advisor, IGF Secretariat, and Sophia Esmail, Environmental Advisor, IGF Secretariat. Participants engaged in an interactive session combining short expert presentations, group discussion, and live polling. They explored: the relevance of sustainability mining standards for governments, strengthening community voices, and supply chain engagement.

On sustainability standards, John C.H. Lindberg, Head of Policy & Government Affairs, ICMM, stressed that standards "create a common understanding of what responsible mining looks like" for companies operating in various contexts and jurisdictions. Most attendees indicated that they already engage with standards, including through: mandatory or voluntary references to standards in national legislation; support for standards' implementation; and having standards guide engagement with buyers and investors.

On community voices, Jenny Wik Karlsson, CEO and Senior Legal Council, Sámiid Riikkasearvi (Swedish Sámi National



Participants engage in group discussions



Kristi Disney Bruckner, Law & Policy Director, Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance

Association), argued that expecting Indigenous Peoples to operate in a market-based economy means their basic needs are not fully respected. She urged governments to: respect Indigenous rights through the FPIC process; pay more attention to the meaning of words such as inclusion, adaptation, and just transition; conduct Indigenous impact assessments; and let Indigenous Peoples have influence over mining policies and international standards.

Kristi Disney Bruckner, Law & Policy Director, Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance, highlighted that the strong desire to get minerals into production creates stress for governments, right holders, and companies. She emphasized the need for stakeholders to listen carefully to each other.

Attendees were then asked to discuss: how social performance requirements in responsible mining standards can help support local communities and economies; why governments should care; and where they see opportunities and challenges in using international standards to strengthen community rights and local participation.

On supply chain engagement, Louis Maréchal, Senior Advisor, OECD, stressed the need for dialogue between buyers and local authorities, highlighting the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative's national multi-stakeholder groups and local monitoring committees in Africa. Attendees were then asked to discuss how the social performance aspects of standards can support meaningful engagement between international buyers and producing countries. Answers to the live survey will be compiled and analyzed by the IGF.

Strategies for Developing Post-Mining Transition Governance Frameworks

Moderated by Rob Stevens, Senior Associate, IGF Secretariat, this Tuesday afternoon session explored the development of governance frameworks for post-mining transitions through three case studies.

In her opening remarks, Lucia de Carlo, Head of Division, Global Supply Chains, Raw Materials and Circular Economy, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany, noted that while mines can operate for decades, they are a temporary business. She recalled that the responsibility and financing for mine closure must be established from the outset. She also highlighted that public acceptance of mining is influenced by people's previous experiences with mining operations.

Jackson Kafwanka, Assistant Director, Ministry of Mines and Mineral Development, Zambia, shared his country's experience of developing mine closure plan guidelines. He noted that Zambia, as a major producer of copper and emeralds, is developing a plan to reduce long-term environmental, safety, social, and governmental risks. After presenting key phases in the process, including inception and desk review, benchmarking, drafting and consolidation, and stakeholder review and validation, he underlined the remaining need for building the capacity of regulators, communities, and governmental institutions so everyone understands their role in the mine closure process.

Luísa Rafael Mahocha, National Director of Geology and Mines, Mozambique, noted that the need for a mine closure law is driven by the growing mining sector and related environmental, economic, and social impacts in the country. She reflected on different regulatory options for the new law, while highlighting the importance of involving communities in: developing the plan; influencing decisions on their rights and livelihoods; and monitoring rehabilitation and post-closure activities.

Rathnak Tieng, Vice Chief of Office, General Department of Mineral Resources, Cambodia, shared lessons learned from Cambodia's national process of developing a mine closure regulatory framework. He flagged the importance of: reviewing the existing national framework to identify needs for greater detail and integration; bringing together the right expertise, including regulatory direction, practical technical expertise, and international experience; adapting international good practices to national circumstances; and ensuring continued collaboration, national ownership, and iterative drafting of regulations.

In the subsequent discussions, panelists highlighted the need for nuanced regulations that differentiate small-scale mines and larger operations. They stressed the all-encompassing nature of mine closure regulations, including provisions on water management and monitoring, and noted that stakeholder



Rathnak Tieng, Vice Chief of Office, General Department of Mineral Resources, Cambodia

engagement needs to be documented throughout the life of the mine. On building capacity to ensure regulations are followed, Tieng reported that in Cambodia, they select focal points from each provincial department and conduct trainings of trainers. Kafwanka noted that everyone needs to understand what new regulations mean for their respective roles, while Mahocha stressed that every new regulation or action should start with an initial assessment of legislative gaps.

Beyond Risk: Managing Mine Waste and Unlocking Opportunities in Remining Tailings

Elisa Tonda, Chief, Industry Innovation Branch, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), moderated this session on Tuesday.

Gudrun Franken, Head of Mining and Sustainability Unit, Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, Germany, presented a project to develop a mining waste inventory in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The project involved three steps: reviewing existing documentation with national authorities to assess available information on mining waste; conducting remote sensing across the Copperbelt region; and carrying out field verification. This process identified 453 mining waste facilities, 45% of which were associated with ASM. She stressed that the methodology could be replicated in other countries and regions and encouraged mining authorities to: use the inventory as a basis for risk-based monitoring; prioritize follow-up at facilities with high hazard potential; and engage in regional and international peer exchanges.

Marina Marques Dalla Costa, Superintendent of Regulatory Policy, National Mining Agency, Brazil, reported that her country integrated the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management, launched in August 2020 by UNEP, ICMM, and the Principles for Responsible Investment, into its national legislation. She emphasized three principles from the Standard: planning, building, and operating tailings facilities to manage risks throughout their lifecycle (Principle 6); emergency preparedness and response to tailings facility failure (Principle 13); and public disclosure and access to information to support accountability (Principle 15). She also highlighted several lessons learned from integrating the standards into national legislation, including the need for: a transparent regulatory process; strengthening state technical oversight capacity; and designing proportionate result-oriented regulations.

Zephania Owuor Ouma, Deputy Director Compliance, National Environmental Management Authority, Kenya, presented the closure and rehabilitation of the tailings storage facility at Kenya's largest mine, which operated from 2013 to 2024. He explained that rehabilitation efforts include planting 250,000 trees. Among lessons learned, he highlighted the importance of a 15-year post-closure period to ensure the facility's stability, restore degraded land, and address residual liabilities; granting access rights to enable rehabilitation beyond the expiry of the special mining license; and participatory environmental monitoring.

In the Q&A session, Franken explained how the online dashboard of the mining waste inventory in the DRC brings added value to other stakeholders through open-source, downloadable data. She said while risk assessment was the main focus of the inventory, remining is taking place in the DRC, aided by rising copper prices.

Marques Dalla Costa elaborated on the Brazilian context, noting Brazil's diversity as a regulatory challenge. She pointed to less flexibility in tailoring the tailings management standard requirements according to compliance capacity between small and large companies due to the potential hazards to human lives, urging, instead, the establishment of clear goals and constant review and improvement of regulations. Where national frameworks for dam safety are lacking, she lauded the international good practice principles providing basic standards for operators, with Ouma underlining the importance of their enforcement. Regarding the large variety of mine waste structures, Marques Dalla Costa noted that Brazil's mining sector is increasingly adopting dry stacking of tailings amid tightening regulatory requirements, necessitating revisions to existing regulations.

On the transfer and release of land, Ouma highlighted the role of the Kenyan post-mining land use committees, which enable companies and local communities to participate in the process. On the issue of management and ownership of abandoned mines, Marques Dalla Costa stated that in Brazil, this challenge is being



Marina Marques Dalla Costa, Superintendent of Regulatory Policy, National Mining Agency, Brazil



Zephania Owuor Ouma, Deputy Director Compliance, National Environmental Management Authority, Kenya

addressed through an ongoing inventory with the IGF. Franken mentioned the difficulty with identifying very old sites through remote sensing due to vegetation growth.

Sustainability Risks at the Exploration Stage

The first session on Wednesday morning, 14 October, was moderated by Natascha Nunes da Cunha, Senior Critical Minerals Expert, Inter-American Development Bank.

Luis Francisco Madriñan, Vice Minister of Mines, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Colombia, argued that the most important part in exploration is the understanding of the territory, highlighting that only 4% of Colombia's territory has been explored so far. He also explained that mistrust stems partly from the existence of 22 fragmented instruments that need to be aligned and consolidated into a single framework. He argued that successful exploration requires: a good communicative relationship; environmental and social management from an early stage; and transparency.

Mervat Mostafa Ahmed, General Manager, Marketing and Mining Promotion, Mineral Resources and Mining Industries Authority, Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Egypt, emphasized that companies must fulfil their commitments and manage environmental and social impacts, while governments must oversee their implementation. She also stressed that geological information serves the public interest and can support realistic exploration planning, and showcased Egypt's digital tools in this area.

Teresa Steele-Schober, Principal Consultant, ESG, SRK Consulting, explained that risks identified during exploration, such as challenges accessing water or restrictions related to the hunting and nesting seasons of protected birds, provide valuable insights into risks throughout a mine's life. Documenting these lessons is therefore crucial to inform mine design and planning, she added, as is adopting good practices early to lay the foundation for lasting relationships built on trust.

Martin Oelz, Senior Specialist, ILO, highlighted the mining sector's significant role in job creation and referred to ILO Convention No. 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention). He noted uncertainty regarding when to begin consultations, whom to consult, and what issues to address. However, providing comprehensive information early on can help Indigenous Peoples and local communities better understand and appreciate a project's potential benefits. He concluded by calling for greater experience sharing and mutual learning, stressing that there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

In the subsequent discussion, Madriñan highlighted: the importance of regional rules for the exploration stage; the role of governments in coordinating consultations between communities and companies to bridge the knowledge gap and build trust; and that technicians, not politicians, should first approach the community. Ahmed reiterated the importance of clear and open information as key to building trust and community engagement. Steele-Schober cautioned against creating unreasonable community expectations and called for exploration companies to clearly communicate both potential benefits and risks.

In closing remarks, panelists called for: long-term thinking at the exploration stage; having a permanent conflict-resolution entity; and doing more than legislation requires when it comes to prior consultations to build trust and understanding with local communities.



Luis Francisco Madriñan, Vice Minister of Mines, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Colombia

Beyond Formalization: Moving Toward More Responsible Artisanal and Small-scale Mining

This Wednesday session was moderated by Marlies den Boer, Policy Coordinator Raw Materials, Sustainable Economic Development Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands.

Reflecting on the existing gaps and barriers for ASM miners to formalize their business, Louis Maréchal, Senior Advisor, OECD, called for international buyers to increasingly engage with ASM miners, whether formalized or not, and use their leverage to help miners enter the legalization process. He also noted the role of critical minerals as potentially powerful drivers of future inclusion of ASM miners, while calling for the integration of international standards into ASM production without further marginalization of producers, and enhanced coexistence between large producers and ASM to avoid local conflicts.

Ahmed Tijani, Head, Corporate Affairs and Information Technology, Minerals Commission, Ghana, discussed the disconnect between policies and on-the-ground realities. He said Ghana is the largest gold producer in Africa, and, in 2025,



Marlies den Boer, Policy Coordinator Raw Materials, Sustainable Economic Development Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands

ASM exceeded large-scale national production, accounting for 53% of national gold output. Among issues beyond licensing, he mentioned land tenure, relationships with host communities and traditional administration systems, and enabling access to capital.

Chiedza Chipangura, International Council for Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining, reflected on her experience of entering the sector as a formalized ASM miner. She noted: the importance of consulting with the traditional Chiefs and getting a social license to be accepted in the host community; the additional licenses required after acquiring a mining permit; and lack of proper training facilities. She further called for: inclusive engagement of the ASM sector; policies to account for the varying classes and production levels among ASM miners; increasing governmental investments in exploration; and the need for stronger protection of ASM miners.

In the ensuing discussion, Tijani highlighted the significant contribution of ASM to job creation worldwide, stressing that the key challenge is to create an enabling environment for miners to formalize their activities. He noted that Ghana is investing in geological surveys and considering the establishment of a dedicated mining finance institution, as well as the introduction of a "medium-scale miner" category. Maréchal cautioned that many international buyers still have limited knowledge of the mining sector, with some tending to conflate ASM and informality with illegal activities. He called for stronger global efforts to disrupt criminal networks that profit from ASM and highlighted difficulties with transparency and trust faced by companies seeking to engage with ASM miners.

Victoria Walker, Senior Technical Advisor, Coginta, presented the SECORCI project, which aims to promote artisanal gold mining as a driver of development and social cohesion while strengthening security in northern Côte d'Ivoire.

Erik Post, Senior Advisor, European Partnership for Responsible Minerals, explained that the Partnership is a multi-stakeholder initiative promoting responsible mineral supply chains through inclusive, knowledge-driven engagement with ASM in high-risk areas. He questioned the effectiveness of costly and labor-intensive supply chain mapping exercises, noting that many companies report finding no ASM in their supply chains, despite the difficulty of tracing mineral origins.

Responding to questions from the floor, Tijani highlighted the detrimental impacts of illegal ASM on water bodies and forest cover. He also referred to the establishment of the Ghana Gold Board in 2025, which provides a formal platform for ASM to sell their gold. He stressed that Ghana has also reached an agreement with large-scale mining companies to sell 30% of their gold production to the Board, supporting the accumulation of national gold reserves. Lastly, he explained that mining operators are required to rehabilitate their sites and provide reclamation bonds as financial guarantees, which the government can draw on if they fail to fulfil their rehabilitation obligations.

State Participation in Mining: Models, Opportunities, and Trade-offs

Moderated by Juliana Cubillos González, Policy Advisor, Tax and Extractives, IGF Secretariat, this Wednesday afternoon session focused on different models of state engagement and ensuring long-lasting return and value.

Yakouba Kourouma, Economic and Tax Advisor, Ministry of Mines and Geology, Guinea, noted that in Guinea, state participation varies and is structured around the type of substance and level of processing, aiming to ensure onsite processing to add value locally, maximize income from mining to finance national development, and strengthen strategic control over mining companies. He reported that since 2013, the number of mining companies rose from two to ten, and bauxite output grew from 17 to 173 million tonnes per year, making Guinea a top global producer. The state allowed companies to join a consortium and develop refineries to reduce capital expenditure, he added, and three refineries have been launched to ensure an annual output of at least 3.6 million tonnes of alumina, with companies losing licenses if they underperform. He stressed the need for governments to fulfill their oversight role and ensure that mining revenue is reinvested into the country's needs and sustainability, citing the Simandou Project's railway line, which not only has been transporting 120 million tonnes of iron ore annually since 2025, but also carries goods and passengers.



Erik Post, Senior Advisor, European Partnership for Responsible Minerals



Yakouba Kourouma, Economic and Tax Advisor, Ministry of Mines and Geology, Guinea

Khaliun Bayartsogt, Senior Specialist, Contracts, Legal Affairs and Foreign Cooperation, Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources, Mongolia, reported that the country is actively working on moving mines from state to public ownership, as called for by civil society. She noted that currently, some mines have 100% state ownership, and in some, including all new mines, the state must have a 34% equity stake if the deposit is strategic and can transform the economy. However, the state does not always have the capacity to invest in mines it co-owns. Therefore, she explained, new models are tested. With French Orano, for example, instead of a 34% equity stake, the state holds 10% in preferred shares and receives a 5% special royalty. Bayartsogt highlighted recent reforms that would allow state-owned mines to reinvest 10% of their income instead of contributing everything to the national budget, and efforts to engage youth with education-abroad scholarships to build up national engineering capacity.

Daniel Zamora, Trustee, CAMYEN, Catamarca, Argentina, presented on Catamarca's reversal from full provincial ownership of all mines, mandated by national legislation, to private ownership due to financial constraints. He explained that while CAMYEN, the mining and energy company of Catamarca, owned over 500 mines, no financing was available for exploration and building operations, and investors were hesitant to join the projects without collateral since they could not get mining rights transferred to them. Zamora concluded that any mechanism the state uses must be consistent with the challenges of attracting financing in the mining sector, and stressed that regulatory stability is key for the long-term success of projects.

In the ensuing Q&A, Kourouma discussed how the setting of a reference price for bauxite resulted in a significant increase in the fiscal income for the government. On the question of attracting investments, he flagged different factors, including the level of tax burden and the need for capital expenditure depending on the national status of infrastructure and available points of export. Concurring on the importance of infrastructure, Zamora mentioned that Catamarca is now starting to see development through the growth of the mining sector.

The Future of Mineral Value Chains: Embedding Trust Through Benefit-sharing

On Wednesday, Isabelle Ramdoo, Director, IGF Secretariat, moderated the AGM's final session on the role of regional and international cooperation in building more resilient and inclusive value chains.

Marit Kitaw, Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, provided an African perspective, noting that while many strategies and visions exist, what is needed next is to scale infrastructure, energy, skills, technology, and capital to move the needle. She underlined the importance of coordination and mentioned the Congolese Battery Council as a potential model.

Esteban Abelenda, Geologist, Mining and Geology National Directorate, Uruguay, Pro Tempore Presidency, Mercosur, elaborated on the example of the Mercosur working group on mining and geology. He explained the group involves all member countries to develop a road map on adding value to national minerals, including the development of strategies on which minerals to export and import.



Esteban Abelenda, Geologist, Mining and Geology National Directorate, Uruguay, Pro Tempore Presidency, Mercosur

Annika Seiler, Principal Energy Specialist, Asian Development Bank (ADB), explained how the ADB takes a regional approach and works through integrated platforms, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation Program, bringing countries together to complement each other in developing regional critical mineral corridors and joint special economic zones, among others. Mentioning the recent ASEAN Minerals Development Vision, she underlined that in addition to strategy development, the ADB drives project delivery by supporting project preparation and capacity building.

On Canada's role in strengthening mineral value chain resilience, Daniel Hill, Deputy Director, Natural Resources Canada, and Chair, IGF Executive Committee, reflected on the country's unique position as a developed mining country with large mining capital markets. He mentioned, among others, Canada's initiatives as the G7 Chair, namely the G7 Critical Minerals Action Plan and the Critical Minerals Resilience and Production Alliance.

Reflecting on concrete action to advance regional cooperation, panelists noted, *inter alia*: the need to turn partnership agreements into delivery commitments, with a clear understanding of who does what and who provides finance; the importance of South-South cooperation, such as Mercosur and ASEAN; making cooperation a win-win opportunity; moving beyond strategy to delivering projects that build trust; consolidating the crowded space of numerous initiatives; and being mindful of the "critical minerals blinders" to ensure other fundamental elements outside critical minerals, such as ASM and mine closure, are not forgotten.

Marina Ruete, Deputy Director, IGF Secretariat, then introduced the first IGF Prize for Excellence in Mining Governance, which recognizes one IGF member's outstanding leadership in sustainable mining. She briefly presented the 23 initiatives from 11 countries (Argentina, Armenia, Bhutan, Brazil, Cameroon, Egypt, Mexico, Niger, Philippines, Senegal, and Thailand). She announced Brazil's integrated mining dam safety

governance as the winner, with Marina Marques Dalla Costa accepting the award on her country's behalf. Brazil consolidated its mining-dam safety framework and established a system that registers and risk-classifies 909 dams, requires periodic stability and emergency-plan declarations, publishes georeferenced risk information, and supports risk-based inspection and enforcement.

Closing

Luz Maria de la Mora, Director, UNCTAD, reminded participants that "trust is not an abstract aspiration." She referred to the recommendation of the UN Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals to accelerate benefit-sharing, local value addition, and economic diversification in critical mineral value chains, which is crucial to ensure "the energy transition is also a development transition." She also emphasized the Panel's recommendation on traceability, transparency, and accountability. She then reiterated that "no country can secure resilience in isolation," and that resilience depends not only on mineral resources themselves but also on the technologies, infrastructure, skills, supply chains, and financing that support them. She urged participants to leave Geneva resolved to build trust, advance transparency, promote value addition, and ensure mineral development really does contribute to sustainable development for all.

Isabelle Ramdoo, Director, IGF Secretariat, stressed that while interdependence is a reality, how we govern it is a choice. She ended the meeting saying "the 22nd AGM is ending today, but the work that comes from it is starting now."

The meeting ended at 5.56 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

G20 Leaders' Summit 2026: Among the overarching priority topics of the United States G20 Presidency are unlocking affordable and secure energy supply chains. The Presidency has also set up a Working Group focused on unlocking energy abundance and strengthening global resilience. **dates:** 14-15 December 2026 **location:** Miami, US **www:** g20.org

17th Session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Commodities and Development: The Expert Meeting provides a platform for sharing national experiences of developments, challenges, and opportunities in commodity markets, focusing on sectors relevant to commodity-producing developing countries. Panel discussions will focus on commodity price volatility and related implications for trade and development. **dates:** 22-23 October 2026 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** unctad.org/meeting/multi-year-expert-meeting-commodities-and-development-18th-session

Future Minerals Forum 2027: This Forum will bring together government and industry representatives and experts, academia, and other stakeholders dedicated to creating resilient and responsible mineral value chains. Emerging conference themes revolve around navigating geopolitics, governments' role in driving mineral supply, and strong commodity prices, among others. The event will include ministerial and leadership roundtables, conferences, and an international exhibition. **dates:** 12-14 January 2027 **location:** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia **www:** www.futuremineralsforum.com/forum-2027/

Mining Indaba 2027: The Investing in African Mining Indaba (Mining Indaba) is dedicated to the successful capitalization and development of mining interests in Africa. The 2027 theme is "Stronger Together: Partnerships in Practice," building on 2026's focus on broad-based collaboration and partnerships by moving beyond dialogue and turning the shared intent into tangible daily action to ensure long-term value, social license, and sustainable growth. **dates:** 8-11 February 2027 **location:** Cape Town, South Africa **www:** miningindaba.com/home

Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada Convention 2027: The annual PDAC Convention on mineral exploration and mining comprises short courses, exhibits, a technical programme, and programmes on sustainability and Indigenous Peoples. **dates:** 7-10 March 2027 **location:** Toronto, Canada **www:** pdac.ca/convention-2027

UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF): HLPF 2027 will take place under the theme "Scaling up just transition to achieving sustainable development, poverty eradication and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs." It will include an in-depth review of SDGs 4 (quality education), 10 (reduced inequalities), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 15 (life on land), and 17 (partnerships for the Goals). **dates:** 6-15 July 2027 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** hlpf.un.org/2027

IGF AGM 23: The theme for the 23rd AGM has not yet been set. **dates:** TBC, 2027 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** www.igfmining.org/annual-general-meeting/

For additional upcoming events, see sdg.iisd.org

Glossary

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASM	Artisanal and small-scale mining
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
ICMM	International Council on Mining and Metals
IGF	Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development
MPF	Mining Policy Framework
ILO	International Labour Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNCTAD	UN Trade and Development
UNEP	UN Environment Programme