

UNECE-UNEP cooperation on road map for action to strengthen mine tailings safety within and beyond the UNECE region

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the
Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Opportunities for collaboration

1. United Nations Environment Assembly Process
2. Implementation of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management
3. Secretary General's Working Group on Transforming Extractives Industries for Sustainable Development

UNEA-4 resolution 19 “Mineral Resource Governance”

The United Nations Environment Assembly at its 4th session adopted a resolution entitled “Mineral Resource Governance” (UNEP/EA.4/Res.19) which represented an unprecedented commitment by Member States on the need for broad, globally coordinated efforts to how mining is undertaken, and under which conditions. The resolution explicitly referred to UNEP’s work on mine tailings safety.

Following the adoption of this resolution, in cooperation with UNECE, UNEP organized consultations on mineral resource governance for Western and South-Eastern Europe and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in August 2020.

Outcomes of UNEA-4 consultations

- Highlighted the importance of the **establishment of an independent entity to oversee the implementation of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management;**
- Encouraged Member States **to prioritize the decommissioning, removal and rehabilitation of unsafe facilities**, in particular those with no responsible owner;
- Encouraged continued cooperation among United Nations agencies and relevant stakeholders to **strengthen tailing governance** and requested UNEP to collate and commission **further research on innovations in tailings management, reduction, recycling and re-use**, as well as to further develop the **Global Tailings Portal to expand access its information.**

UNEA-5 resolution 12 “Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals Management”

The United Nations Environment Assembly at its 5th session adopted a resolution entitled “Environmental Aspects of Minerals and Metals Management” which requests UNEP to:

- convene an **intergovernmental process with the aim of developing proposals to enhance the environmental sustainability of metals and minerals** along their full life cycle; take stock of existing activities and actions to enhance the environmental sustainability of minerals and metals, including tools and guidelines as well as **identify opportunities for enhanced international cooperation**;
- strengthen scientific, technical and policy knowledge with regard to **sand**;
- compile a report on knowledge gaps regarding environmental aspects of **tailings management**

Cooperation with UNECE

- Encouraging participation of all Member States in the intergovernmental process on minerals and metals which will take place between February and September 2023
- Contributing to the development of the report on knowledge gaps regarding environmental aspects of tailings management as well as convene subregional expert group discussions on tailings and by organizing joint awareness-raising events

Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management

- Following the January 2019 Brumadinho tailings dam disaster PRI, UNEP and ICMM co-convoked an international, multi-stakeholder process to develop a Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management (GISTM). **Together with the co-convokers, UNECE supported the organisation of a subregional consultation for Central Asia on the draft Global Industry Standard in November 2019.**
- The Standard was agreed by the Co-Convokers and published in August 2020.
- ICMM Members agreed to adopt it and work towards implementation. Investors in the mining sector subsequently required companies to adopt the Standard and work towards implementation and over 75% by market capitalisation have agreed to do so. A number of investors have begun to vote against Chairs of companies where they have not indicated they will support the Standard.
- Alongside the Standard a key recommendation of the Chair of the process was the need to create an Independent Institute that could manage an assurance framework for facilities to be audited against the Standard.
- Based upon this recommendation PRI and UNEP agreed to establish a process to create an Independent Institute. A multi-stakeholder International Advisory Panel was convened by PRI and UNEP.

- The International Panel is close to concluding its work and a consultation process with various stakeholders is currently underway to finalize the recommendations for the Institute.
- UNEP and PRI would very much appreciate UNECE’s contribution to raise awareness of the Standard in the ECE region, share knowledge on tailings management, including information on tailings facilities.**



Working Group on Transforming Extractives Industries for Sustainable Development



WORKING GROUP
ON TRANSFORMING THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Following the release of the UN Secretary-General's policy brief on transforming extractives industries for sustainable development, the Working Group was launched in 2022. It is co-led by UN regional economic commissions, UNEP and UNDP

Objectives

1. Coordinate extractives-related work across the UN and beyond through joint work, planning and collaboration;
2. Serve as an information and knowledge hub to scale up and replicate good practices;
3. Provide policy advice and technical assistance to stakeholders in the sector;
4. Assist in integrating the extractive industries' work into other UN-wide initiatives

Opportunity for further strengthen cooperation and create synergies in the implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention and UNEA intergovernmental process on minerals and metals and other work related to tailings management

Resources

UNEA resolution 4/19 on mineral resource governance:

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/28501/English.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>

UNEA resolution 5/12 on environmental aspects of minerals and metals management:

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39927/ENVIRONMENTAL%20ASPECTS%20OF%20MINERALS%20AND%20METALS%20MANAGEMENT.%20English.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

UNEP's work on extractives: <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/extractives>

Executive summary “Mineral resource governance and the Global Goals: an agenda for international collaboration”:

<https://www.greengrowthknowledge.org/research/mineral-resource-governance-and-global-goals-agenda-international-collaboration>

Compendium of papers prepared for the Global Tailings Review: <https://globaltailingsreview.org/compendium/>

Working Group on Transforming Extractives Industries for Sustainable Development:

<https://www.unep.org/events/working-group/transforming-extractive-industries-sustainable-development>

Thank you



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