

Meeting of the Environmental Issues in Mine Action Working Group (EIMA)

26 April 2023, 12:00 – 13:00 CEST time

Hosted on Zoom

Participants:

1. **Linsey Cottrell (Chair), CEOBS**
2. Mikael Bold, APOPO
3. Miguel Pacheco, La Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas
4. Anders Kolind, DCA
5. Didier Bastien, Deminotec
6. Christelle Mestre, GICHD
7. Eunice Janssen, ICBL-CMC
8. Martin Jebens, ICRC
9. Lucy Pinches, Mine Action Review (MAR)
10. Bach Bui Doan. NPA
11. Kristin Holme Obrestad, NPA
12. Previous Mafira, NPA Zimbabwe
13. Elizabeth Rolen, PM/WRA

MINUTES

Updates on environmental activities within organisations from attendees

Brief updates were given by:

- **DCA** – Joining the group and interested in conducting greening investigations especially in South Sudan and Syria, including the assessment of the use of mechanical assets, review current environmental performance and how to improve.
- **NPA** – Strengthened their environment team with recruitment of a new Environmental Advisor in Head Office to support NPA's environmental management system and climate mitigation. NPA to use ICRC's [new carbon accounting](#) tool to provide an overview of their organisational carbon emissions across all country programmes. Emissions have already been estimated for Head Office. ICRC have set up different learning portals across Teams channels, providing support on use of the tool. Environmental Advisor will also be working on setting reduction targets and Climate Action plans – climate and environmental footprint. Work is across NPA, including work in development and search-and-rescue.

Roll-out of both NPA's green office tool and field tool is on-going, with focus on field tool to assess impacts or benefits. The tool is currently in excel format and integration into Survey 123 is being progressed and trialed by NPA Vietnam, with development of supporting training material and workshops. From August 2024 the field tool will be used in all programmes to improve environmental performance and quality. Adjustments are anticipated from feedback during the 2023 roll-out but NPA will be happy to share the outputs and tool.

NPA also integrating environment and climate questions into surveys and Impact Assessments to better understand how communities may be affected and opportunities for support.

NPA Vietnam trialing Survey 123 for the Clearance teams in May 2023 and Survey Teams in June 2023, both of which already very familiar using tablets and the Survey 123 platform. NPA Vietnam also visited by the GICHD Climate Change and Resiliency study team, which is assessing how mine

action can contribute to the climate resilience of communities. Vietnam was the first country visited for the study. NPA supported the study team's visit to national government and VNMAC, and the team conducted interviews with senior staff. The study team also visited local government representatives, as well as beneficiaries and victims of explosive ordnance to enable questions on how climate change may have already impacted them and how mine action may support them. The team also visited MAG and PeaceTrees Vietnam. A key question was how donors - PM/WRA – can support climate resilience in communities. The team will visit further countries and complete desk reviews on other selected countries. NPA also attended the wrap-up meeting with the US Embassy, and the study team reported that the country visit had been positive and constructive. Initial project set-up is also underway for the pilot to assess the use of co-bang grass as an alternative to plastic sandbags, with procurement of machine for the local village.

- **CEOBS** – paper has been submitted for the ICRC's 2023 publication on protecting the environment in armed conflict, together with Sarah Njeri from SOAS and Kristin Holme Obrestad. It covers the synergies and how mine action organisation's can work with others on environmental initiatives. Comments received but article not yet approved. NPA and CEOBS have also been approached by a representative from the Austrian National Defence Academy to write a similar article addressing mine action and climate change for an OSCE publication (Sept/Oct). Since the focus is on the OSCE region, a request to all for any examples of climate-related incidents involving explosive ordnance or examples of initiatives or recommendations for action in certain countries or programmes to help inform donors.

CEOBS, NPA and HALO have also submitted a joint proposal for inclusion in GICHD's Innovation Conference in November.

A written submission for the Convention on Biological Diversity has also been drafted as a joint statement. See later in minutes.

CEOBS, together with NPA and HALO also attended UNEP/OCHA's Environment and Emergencies Forum (EEF) 2023 in March. Excellent networking opportunities and very useful to learn of the implementation of some of the other environmental screening tools being used within the humanitarian sector, such as NEAT+ which was used as a base for creating the NPA green tool [Post meeting note: EEF outcomes report can be found [here](#)].

- **GICHD** – following on from the update by NPA Vietnam on the climate study, Christelle is now the project lead. As well as Vietnam, further country visits to now take place to Kosovo, Tajikistan, Colombia and Somaliland. These to be supported by other desk-top assessments. Collaboration expected with others in forthcoming weeks.

For the GICHD Innovation conference, the environment will feature and CEOBS/NPA/HALO has been accepted and should expect further details from GICHD colleague within the next few weeks.

Actions from last meeting (Feb 2023)

- **Intersessional Meeting (IM), 19-21 June** – at the last meeting agreed to try and get the environment into the plenary session of the Mine Ban Treaty, since not previously addressed and not in the current 5-year Oslo Action Plan. Lucy has reached out to Germany – current APMBT chair – and head of the ISU and some other members of the Coordinating Committee to lobby for inclusion of the environment in the IM agenda. Outcome is that it will be on the agenda, although still being finalized. Tues 20th will have thematic segments covering each committee, although none have put forward the environment. The environment will therefore have a lunchtime plenary slot. Some discussion that there may also be one a gender, but have advised against. Both of importance and should not be merged, and gender has had plenary sessions in the past. Next step is to develop the panel, with a recommendation to keep this broad and present the topic to the sector, including its importance for operators, affected states, and donors. Will be suggesting representatives from the EIMA working group - with examples from across different clearance operators and

programmes – with also representation from an affected state (one which is party to the APMBT) and donor. Nominating a ‘green donor’ is more difficult since no single champion, but Germany an option given their priority on the environment, current Chair of the APBMT and a signatory to the [Humanitarian Aid Donor’s declaration](#) on climate and the environment, which presents some useful talking points.

Sub-meeting will be planned to develop ideas for the plenary panel and context, and keep EIMA members updated.

- **NDM, 22 -23 June** – UNMAS has also been approached to include the environment and it was included in their preparatory list of suggested topics. Waiting to hear status/decisions on final agenda.
- **Engagement with other networks** – this includes looking to ensure engagement across other environmental networks is covered by EIMA members and fed back to the group including [EHAN](#), the disaster risk reduction network - [PEDRR](#) - and the International Conservation group - [ICCF](#). Action outstanding but plan to progress mapping of the existing environmental networks which may be useful, co-ordinate engagement, minimise duplication of effort, and give feedback to EIMA members. HALO are involved with ICCF. CEOBS are linked with both EHAN and PEDRR. CEOBS to action mapping.
- **Mapping of EIMA members** – action outstanding to review list of members and extend invite to others, including national authorities. Membership is not restricted and open all interested organisations. NPA to action with HALO.
- **Website** – website constructed and now being populated. Decisions to be made on how organisations listed and any logos to be used. Will be live for the Intersessionals and NDM. Will be a useful resource as outreach tool to others not currently involved.
- **External experts** – presentations by guest speakers have proved useful and informative. Discussion at previous meeting on developing a ‘go-to’ pool of experts and further consideration needed on what this means in practice, e.g. resource list of those have engaged with the group or shown an interest. This should be in alignment with any data protection requirements. The website could also be used to highlight routes to contact experts.
- **Sector surveys** – a reminder that the EIMA WG can also be used to facilitate surveys, which can be used to better understand current practices, skills gaps etc... Further survey and research opportunities also being considered by Sarah Njeri at SOAS.

Progress on IMAS 07.13 update

Brief update from CEOBS on the revisions to the International 07.13 on Environmental Management.

A summary of the key points below:

1. New standard will incorporate climate change adaptation and mitigation considerations, with updated definitions given the new terminology.
2. Post clearance land use is also addressed and the consideration of enhancement opportunities
3. Aim to be as concise as possible, with practical steps and checklists to be moved into a separate Technical Note.
4. Technical Note will be easier to update, and can be revised with any changes or updates to environmental good practice.
5. Will also incorporate a clearer distinction between the requirements for a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – which are often a statutory/legal or contractual requirement – and environmental screening, which should form part of all field operation planning and implementation.

6. Some areas which were discussed during drafting include where an individual's responsibility should be added (i.e. in line with safety responsibilities), and training and awareness requirements. This hasn't been included since it is not addressed in other IMAS.
7. Cross references to other IMAS on quality and risk management
8. Currently on version 4, which will then be sent to a selection of national mine action authorities (NMAA) for feedback (as stated at minutes from last meeting). [Post meeting note: this includes Cambodia, Tajikistan, Colombia, BiH, and Lebanon, and waiting to hear back from others].
9. Hopefully that feedback from NMAA on the 07.13 updates may also be useful springboard to increase NMAA engagement with this EIMA WG.
10. Draft unlikely to be ready for consideration at the next IMAS Review Board meeting in June 2023, but expected to be ready for end of Q3 2023, on track with original programme.
11. Updated 07.13 and supporting Technical Note will be published together.

Events and points of interest

- A link to the Joint Statement drafted on the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) was circulated. The statement sets out how mine action links and can provide a benefit to biodiversity when done in the right way. Conflict-affected areas are currently not addressed in the CBD, and mine action could be effective route to supporting initiatives in conflict-affected states. Deadline is 28th April. Although not all organisations may be in a position to sign, shared for your information. Five organisations are signatories to date. Please inform linsey@ceobs.org if your organisation would like to be added. [Post meeting note: final joint statement can be found [here](#)].
- A [link](#) already shared through the LinkedIn group, but launch later today of the Unpacked Guide: Nature-based Solutions for Climate Resilience in Humanitarian Action. [Post meeting note: guidance available [here](#)].
- Ongoing this week is the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks (17-28 April). Presentations on risk platforms and management of climate change risks - MJ from ICRC has attended some. ICRC have been advocating for consideration of weapons contamination as part of climate risks, building on the previous work by Kiona Bolt for the Mekong Region

Any other business

- Of interest to the wider group - UN Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) newsletter subscription and alerts here: [subscribe Prevention updates](#)
- Useful that IMAS 07.13 plan to have finalized in Q3, since MAR have been discussing about getting the environment into the final report for the APMBT MSP and a mandate for the Review Conference to take it forward, and the next 5-year Action Plan.
- Sub-group meeting date will be circulated for those wanting to contribute to planning for the Intersessional Meeting.

Date of next meeting

- Wed 28 June, 12:00-13:00 CET, online. Guest speaker approached on metal contaminated sites, and managing risks from crop cultivation and grazing.

NOTE: LinkedIn group – search for **Environmental issues and mine action**