

Methodology for allegation collection & analysis on the Transition Minerals Tracker

The Transition Minerals Tracker (Tracker) captures publicly reported allegations of environmental and human rights abuses against companies mining one or more of the following six minerals: cobalt, copper, lithium, manganese, nickel and zinc.

The Tracker includes allegations arising from 2010 to present and is updated on a bi-annual basis.

Sources

Allegations are primarily collected through a filtered search by company on the [Business & Human Rights Resource Centre website](#). This includes allegations appearing in articles from international and local media outlets in all 10 languages of the Resource Centre website, as well as NGO reports and lawsuits filed against the companies. The Tracker is predominantly based on materials available in English, Spanish and French, mainly due to the regional focus in our company selection process and organizational resource capacity.

What do we include?

Only publicly-reported allegations of specific incidents or civil society action against companies are captured and not information on general trends of abuse that cannot be tied specifically to one of the tracked companies' operations. For example, reports on general trends within the mining sector that do not provide specific instances of abuse against a named company are not included.

The main categories of data we capture are:

- the location of the incident;
- the company against which the allegation is raised (including parent company, subsidiary and project-specific information);
- the types of abuses being alleged;
- the identity of affected stakeholders;
- the forms of activism used to bring the alleged abuse to light;
- the timeframe of allegations.

Our categories explained

Location

For each allegation, we identify the country in which the alleged abuse occurred.

Company information

For each allegation, we identify the parent company involved in the alleged abuse and, when the information is available, the responsible subsidiary and/or mining operation. One allegation may include multiple human rights impacts.

Types of abuses

We analyze each allegation against a set of 47 indicators of environmental & human rights abuses, which are sorted into 6 broad categories:

- Environmental impacts
 - Access to water
 - Water pollution
 - Soil pollution
 - Localized air pollution
 - GHG emissions
 - Impacts on wildlife and species habitat
 - Operations in or impacting protected areas
 - Absence of or insufficient environmental impact assessment and monitoring
 - Violation of environmental safety standards (incl. tailings dams)
- Impacts on local community & attacks against civil society organisations
 - Land rights
 - Insufficient/inadequate consultation
 - Free, prior and informed consent
 - Indigenous rights
 - Impact to ancestral, cultural, spiritual, and religious resources/sites
 - Displacement

- Forced relocation
- Impacts on livelihoods (incl. harm to food sources)
- Gendered impacts on human rights & livelihoods
- Sexual violence or exploitation
- Beatings & violence
- Injuries
- Health impacts
- Deaths
- Killings
- Intimidation & threats
- Arrests and arbitrary detention
- Right to peaceful protest
- Denial of freedom of expression (incl. Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation or SLAPP)
- Impacts on workers
 - Child labour
 - Unpaid or underpaid wages
 - Labour hiring/ firing practices
 - Occupational health & safety (incl. violations of international/national standards & injuries)
 - Work-related deaths
 - Freedom of association and bargaining (incl. unions)
 - Protests/Strikes/Blockades
 - Discrimination against groups (gender, LGBTQI +, ethnic, racial, caste, religious)
- Governance and transparency
 - Tax avoidance
 - Access to information (incl. misreporting & difficulty in accessing basic company information)
 - Disclosure/use of payments to governments
 - Corruption & use of influence on public actors
- Security issues & conflict zones
 - Cooperation/complicity with armed or out of the law groups
 - Cooperation/complicity with repressive state forces (police, militias, military)
 - Abuses by private security
- COVID-19: the allegation is linked to the company's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Worker health (incl. provision of PPE & access to medical care)
 - Public health (incl. impacts on community health)
 - Violation of containment measures
 - Corruption & use of influence on government response

Identity of affected stakeholders

In order to protect personal information of affected parties, and avoid revictimization in the process of reporting, tracking and analyzing allegations of human rights abuse, we identify for each allegation the affected parties according to general, impersonal qualifiers, namely:

- Local community¹
- Workers
- Human rights defenders
- Public entity (state prosecutorial services, regulatory authority acting on behalf of the public interest)
- Ecosystem (for purely environmental abuses)

Forms of activism to bring allegations to light

We analyze each allegation according to the method used by affected parties to bring the alleged abuse to light. This includes:

- Testimonies in media articles/press reporting
- NGO reports
- Press releases
- Open letters to companies
- Lawsuits
- Regulatory action from public entities

Timeframe of allegations

Many allegations in nature are a compilation of incremental impacts and can therefore be difficult to restrict to a specific timeframe. For each allegation we indicate the date when it was added (registered) to the Resource Centre website, as well as the date when the alleged abuse was originally reported.

¹ This identifies whether the affected parties are members of local communities. This does not necessarily mean that the local community is affected as whole. In certain instances, allegations of human rights abuses may only relate to impacts suffered by certain members of the community.

Seeking company responses

In line with the Resource Centre's broader strategy and libel policy, we make every effort to reach out to companies accused of abuse and ask them to respond to allegations made using our [Company Response Mechanism](#), unless the company has already publicly commented on the case or if the abuse is the basis of a lawsuit or regulatory action.

Scope and limitations

The Tracker captures publicly reported information on alleged abuses committed by mining companies. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre does not independently verify the accuracy of the allegations. When relevant and possible, the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre uses the Company Response Mechanism (see above) to seek responses from companies implicated in the commission of the alleged abuses. Similarly, the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre does not verify the accuracy of corporate statements on actions taken to respond.

The Tracker does not purport to provide comprehensive information on all allegations of abuses against mining companies. It only captures information specific to certain companies and to specific minerals (cobalt, copper, lithium, manganese, nickel and zinc). Furthermore, it only includes publicly available information which the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre has captured through the years. Restrictions on civil society activism in certain parts of the world coupled with limited means of action for affected parties and fears of reprisals can translate into under-reporting of abuses.

Each link is counted as one source of allegations unless it references different companies, or one company operating in multiple countries where the allegation is specific to different operations.

Only allegations against mining operations are included. Allegations relating to refining or smelting activities are not currently included, although Business & Human Rights Resource Centre acknowledges that there are numerous serious allegations of environmental and human rights abuses linked to those operations.