

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



CLEARING THE MINES 2022

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: LIGHT

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

0.4km²

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2021

0.04km²

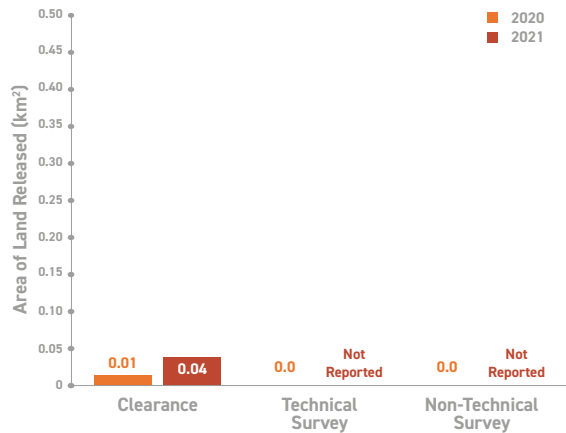
(PARTIAL REPORT BASED
ON OPERATOR DATA)

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2021

17

(BASED ON OPERATOR DATA)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) submitted a request for a three-and-a-half-year extension to its Article 5 deadline in July 2021, which was granted at the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties. Survey by the national non-governmental organisation (NGO) Afrique pour la Lutte Antimines (AFRILAM) in late 2021 located five previously unrecorded mined areas in Kasai province. An Article 7 transparency report submitted in May 2022 more than tripled the DR Congo's estimate of mined areas containing anti-personnel mines.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The DR Congo should update its latest Article 5 deadline extension request including a new work plan and new timelines that take account of the increased estimate of contamination.
- The Congolese Mine Action Centre (CCLAM) should specify what arrangements it is making for the long-delayed survey of Aru and Dungu territories.
- The DR Congo should submit annual, comprehensive Article 7 reports detailing results of survey and clearance for each previous calendar year, as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) requires.
- The DR Congo should report in detail on plans for and results of resource mobilisation activities.
- The DR Congo should detail its plans for sustainable capacity to tackle previously unidentified hazards.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	6	Two years after the DR Congo sharply reduced a previously inflated estimate of contamination, new survey has located previously unrecorded hazardous areas tripling the estimate of contamination. The DR Congo still needs to survey Aru and Dungu districts and the new finds add further uncertainty about the extent of the DR Congo's mine challenge.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	CCLAM coordinates mine action with financial support from the government but it relies on the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and other international organisations for technical support and on the UN and international donors to fund operations.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	The DR Congo's Article 5 extension request says it will encourage operators to employ up to 30% women in operations teams and at least half of the risk education teams. CCLAM recognised the significance of gender in mine action by including a section on it in the 2018–19 national mine action strategy. All activities, especially risk education and victim assistance, are required to take account of the needs of different age groups and genders, and women should participate in all essential stages of mine action planning.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	3	The DR Congo submitted an Article 7 report in May 2022 but it covered a 27-month period from 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2022 underscoring the lack of consistency in CCLAM's reporting. CCLAM continued to receive support from UNMAS and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) for information management but operators say the quality of data from the database is poor and they are still being deployed for survey and clearance to tasks that have no mine contamination.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	4	The July 2021 extension request included a calendar for operations with monthly targets for clearance and cost projections but these were overturned by release of new data tripling the estimate of contamination. Moreover, implementation is dependent on international donor funding. The request allowed a year for survey and clearance in Aru and Dungu but did not indicate when survey is expected to start.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	CCLAM has 24 chapters of National Technical Standards and Guidelines which it reportedly revised in 2018, making amendments to standards dealing with demining techniques and deminer safety. CCLAM still required support from UNMAS for quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC).
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	3	3	The DR Congo has not reported details of land released in 2020 or 2021. It reported that DCA tackled three tasks covering 28,400m ² but gave no details of what work was undertaken or when it was conducted. DCA reported clearing 43,000m ² in 2021.
Average Score	4.6	4.7	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Centre Congolais de Lutte Antimines (CCLAM)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Afrique pour la Lutte Antimines (AFRILAM)
- National NGOs conduct non-technical survey and mine risk education

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- G4S

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The DR Congo is believed to have very limited anti-personnel mine contamination of less than 0.5km² but the precise extent is obscured by fluctuating and inconsistent official accounts and incomplete survey.

A new assessment of its contamination provided in an Article 7 transparency report in May 2022 said the DR Congo had 37 hazardous areas affecting 399,969m² (see Table 1),¹ more than triple the estimate of contamination it had submitted eight months earlier in its 2021 request for an extension of its APMBC Article 5 deadline.² The new estimate included five mined areas identified by the national NGO AFRILAM working under contract to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).³ In June 2022, the DR Congo presented another estimate to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings, reporting that it had 36 hazardous areas covering 397,569m².⁴

The DR Congo informed the June 2022 Intersessional Meetings that several accidents had occurred between October and December 2021 in Kasai province in areas that were not previously suspected as hazardous. It said subsequent surveys had identified 328,726m² of additional contamination in Kasai and further surveys in Tanganyika province conducted during April 2022 had found 27,000m² of previously unreported mined area. It said the new discoveries raised the DR Congo's total contamination to 40 areas affecting 421,557m² though clearance of four areas in Tshopo province had removed 26,747m².⁵ The figures cited were not consistent with the data presented in either the Article 5 extension request⁶ or the Article 7 Report, which raised the estimate of contamination in Kasai from 700m² to 302,426m² and in Tanganyika province where it rose from 6,943m² to 36,343m².

The latest assessments also do not include any contamination in Aru district of Ituri province and Dungu in Haut-Uele province which it still plans to survey following up a preliminary assessment in 2013. The areas were not previously surveyed due to insecurity but since 2019 DR Congo has indicated that lack of financing was the factor holding back survey.⁷

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area (at end-March 2022)⁸

Province	Mines areas	Area (m ²)
Ituri	4	6,100
Kasai	7	302,426
Maniema	2	4,752
North Kivu	9	12,760
South Kivu	2	851
North Ubangi	4	35,417
Tanganyika	8	36,343
Tshuapa	1	1,320
Totals	37	399,969

DR Congo has anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine contamination left by decades of conflict with neighbouring states, rebel groups and militias since independence in 1960. At the end of 2016, UNMAS reported DR Congo still had 54 confirmed hazardous areas and suspected hazardous areas covering a total of 851,228m²,⁹ but subsequent re-survey found that a number of areas were contaminated by the DR Congo's more prevalent problem of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and contributed to a sharp fall in the estimate of contamination.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The mine action sector is overseen by the National Mine Action Committee (la Commission Nationale de Lutte Antimines, CNLAM), a multi-sectoral body which is supposed to meet twice a year and is composed of deputies from both parliamentary chambers, officials from four ministries, and representatives of five civil society organisations linked to mine action.¹⁰

Management of the sector is under the Centre Congolais de Lutte Antimines (CCLAM), which was established in 2012 with support from the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC) and UNMAS.¹¹ It is responsible for setting strategy, accrediting operators, information management, budgeting, and resource mobilisation. Law 11/007 of 9 July 2011 underpins

1 Article 7 Report (covering January 2019 to 31 March 2022), Form C.

2 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 9 July 2021, p. 22. The request estimated AP mine contamination at 117,031m².

3 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, Chief of Mine Action Programme, UNMAS, 31 May 2022.

4 Statement of DR Congo, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20 June 2022.

5 Ibid.

6 The extension request recorded six hazardous areas in Tshopo province totalling 48,188m². The DR Congo's Intersessional statement refers to clearance of four HAs clearing 26,747m² but gives no indication of what action, if any, accounts for the contamination previously reported in Tshopo province.

7 Statement of DR Congo, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, 25–29 November 2019.

8 Article 7 Report (covering 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2022), Form C.

9 Email from Steven Harrop, Chief of Operations, UNMAS, 20 September 2017.

10 "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines en République Démocratique du Congo 2018–2019", CCLAM, November 2017, p. 11. The government ministries represented in CNLAM include defence, health, interior, and humanitarian affairs.

11 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 11; and Response to Cluster Munition Monitor questionnaire by Michelle Healy, UNMACC, 29 April 2013.

the national mine action programme.¹² CCLAM took over from UNMAS as the national focal point for demining in early 2016 overseeing accreditation, issuing task orders, conducting quality assurance (QA)/quality control (QC) and managing the national database but lack of capacity remained a concern for operators.¹³ The government has provided funding for CCLAM's operating expenses but has not funded operations. In 2018, that support amounted to US\$530,000¹⁴ but the Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2021 indicated this would fall to US\$272,271 and CCLAM indicated it would argue for government support for operations.¹⁵

UNMAS started working in DR Congo in 2002, when it established UNMACC as part of the UN Stabilisation Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO), coordinating mine action through offices in the capital, Kinshasa, and five other cities. In 2014, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2147 (2014), humanitarian mine action was removed from MONUSCO's mandate although it has continued financial support and in 2020 and 2021 UNMAS was funded exclusively by MONUSCO.¹⁶

UNMAS supported mine action in DR Congo in 2021 operating with 25 staff (11 national and 14 international) working from offices in Beni, Bukavu, and Goma. It was also in the process of recruiting another eight national staff for a project funded by the South Korean government.¹⁷ UNMAS contracted an international operator, G4S, for disposal of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and funded national operator AFRILAM to conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in five provinces. UNMAS provided technical advice to support national authorities preparing the APMB Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in September 2021 and participating in a meeting convened by the APMB Implementation Support Unit in November 2020 on what was needed for DR Congo to fulfil its Article 5 obligations.¹⁸

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The DR Congo does not appear to have national standards or policies covering the protection of the environment during mine action operations.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The national mine action strategy for 2018–19 stipulated that all mine action activities, particularly those related to risk education and victim assistance, must reflect the different needs of individuals according to age and gender, in a non-discriminatory manner. It also stated that the principles of non-discrimination against women as set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) are to be respected, ensuring that women are involved in all essential stages of mine action (planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation), and that activities take into account the special needs of women and girls.¹⁹

CCLAM reported in 2019 that approximately 30% of operational staff in survey and clearance teams were female and only around 7% of managerial or supervisory positions were held by women, but that local customs about the employment roles appropriate for women were an obstacle to hiring female staff.²⁰ DR Congo's 2021 Article 5 deadline

extension request said CCLAM would work closely with operators to integrate women deminers into mine action so that women make up 30% of the staff in operations teams and at least half the members of risk education teams. It said risk education task orders would focus on increasing the participation of women in outreach sessions.²¹

CCLAM had previously reported that mine action survey teams were already gender balanced and that efforts were undertaken to ensure that all community groups, including women and children, are consulted. It also noted, however, the need to continue raising awareness on gender equality in certain communities as local customs can discriminate against women undertaking certain categories of work.²²

As of December 2021, UNMAS employed seven women among its staff of twenty-four, five of them international staff, including the programme manager, and two national staff working in office positions.²³

12 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, Director, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.

13 Emails from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 5 March 2018; Bill Marsden, MAG, 11 May 2018; and Guillaume Zerr, Humanity and Inclusion, 24 May 2018.

14 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.

15 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 6 July 2021, p. 11.

16 UN Security Council Resolution 2147, 28 March 2014; and email from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS, 28 April 2021.

17 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, UNMAS, 31 May 2022.

18 Email from Aurelie Fabry, Programme Officer, UNMAS, 28 April 2021.

19 "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, pp. 15–16.

20 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.

21 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31.

22 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.

23 Email from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS, 28 April 2021.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

CCLAM took over responsibility for information management from UNMAS in 2016 but has lacked the capacity and resources to manage data and operate effectively the national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. As a result, data are not considered up to date or reliable. Operator access is also complicated by the fact that CCLAM decides which information it is prepared to share.

The 2018–19 national strategy acknowledged a need to build staff capacity, improve data collection, update the database on a regular basis, and provide data disaggregated by age and gender.²⁴ Persistent issues have included gaps in data; lack of maintenance; reporting on land release that did not comply with international terminology; misreporting items of UXO as mines; and a lack of verification of incoming reports.²⁵

Until 2020, CCLAM information management received support from UNMAS, which assisted monthly updates of data to improve operational coordination, collaborated on developing an information management work plan, and provided a range of computer and digital hardware.²⁶ Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) also previously provided refresher training for CCLAM staff in use of IMSMA and the associated Geographic Information System (GIS).²⁷ In 2020, CCLAM did not request IM support from UNMAS and a request for support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) was not met due to the Centre's lack of capacity and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁸

UNMAS maintains an internal mine action database, which is said to be updated regularly.²⁹

PLANNING AND TASKING

An Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in July 2021 included a work plan with monthly clearance targets which would provide for tackling a total of 4,370m² in 2022, 59,644m² in 2023, 37,868m² in 2024, and 19,482m² in 2025. This made for a total of more than 120,000m², which exceeded the 117,030m² that the request has identified as remaining contamination. The request allowed a year for the survey of Aru and Dangu districts and said it plans to conduct non-technical and technical survey at the same time so as to facilitate manual clearance of areas identified as hazardous and had allowed a year for these operations but did not state when it expected to implement them.

In January 2022, DR Congo completed a "National Strategic Plan for the Fight Against Anti-Personnel Mines and Explosive Remnants of War", including cluster munitions, for 2023 to 2032. The plan sets out general objectives for the coming decade, including completing mine clearance by 2025 and cluster munition remnants by 2032. The strategy aims to ensure all mined areas are cleared, that survey of cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) is completed rapidly, and that a decentralised EOD capacity is established to tackle residual contamination.³⁰ The 76-page strategy sets out a detailed budget for the 10 years of the plan³¹ but provides no details or timeline for survey or clearance of hazardous areas.

The new strategy follows on from the National Mine Action Strategy 2018–19, prepared with support from UNMAS and the GICHD, which focused on seeking to fulfil the DR Congo's APMBC's Article 5 obligations by 2020, one year ahead of its extended 2021 deadline.³² The strategy also set out the objective of completing procedures for ratifying the Convention on Cluster Munitions by the end of 2018.³³ CCLAM has not reported any action to seek to implement this plan. The strategy identified three strategic pillars: effective and efficient management of the explosive threat; ensuring the national programme had the capacity to manage residual contamination in a sustainable manner; and that the legal framework of the mine action programme was strengthened through the adoption of national laws and other implementing measures and adherence to relevant treaties.³⁴ None of these goals was met.

Tasking continues to be challenged by the remote location of many hazardous areas and database weaknesses, including misidentification of ERW as mines and the addition of hazards to the database without robust evidence of the presence of explosive ordnance.

24 "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 14.

25 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, Programme Manager, NPA, 24 April 2019; and email, 24 May 2019.

26 Email from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS, 13 April 2020.

27 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 May 2019.

28 Emails from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS, 28 April and 7 June 2021.

29 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, UNMAS, 31 May 2022.

30 "Plan Stratégique National de Lutte Contre les Mines Antipersonnel et les Restes Explosifs de Guerre en République Démocratique du Congo 2023–2032", January 2022, p. 11.

31 Ibid., p. 63.

32 "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 4.

33 "Plan Stratégique National de Lutte Contre les Mines Antipersonnel et les Restes Explosifs de Guerre en République Démocratique du Congo 2023–2032", January 2022, p. 23.

34 "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 5.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The DR Congo has 24 national standards developed with support from the GICHD³⁵ and the national strategy for 2018–19 called for revision of the standards and awareness raising of their content through training.³⁶ CCLAM reported in June 2019 it had revised the National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) during 2018, amending mainly the standards relating to demining techniques and safety of deminers.³⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

International engagement with DR Congo's mine action programme has decreased following the closure of programmes by NPA in 2019 and TDI in February 2020. That left DanChurchAid (DCA) as the only international humanitarian organisation active in 2021, operating with a total staff of 65, including five internationals. Operational capacity included one manual clearance team of 16 deminers, an EOD team with nine people, and five mechanical assets. DCA worked in North and South Kivu tackling mine contamination in a project funded by the United States Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA).³⁸

UNMAS deployed an IED disposal team consisting of two international staff based in North Kivu province. UNMAS also contracted five multi-task teams of national NGO AFRILAM in 2021. Three of these teams were engaged largely in a range of tasks supporting MONUSCO in North and South Kivu and Tanganyika provinces, while the other two were assigned to supporting DR Congo's mine action programme in Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, and Kasai Occidental.³⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

Survey conducted by AFRILAM, working under contract to UNMAS, located five previously unrecorded minefields in Kasai province in 2021⁴⁰ but DR Congo's latest Article 7 report did not record any release of anti-personnel mined area through survey or clearance. It reported 12 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in 2021 compared with 21 destroyed the previous year, but gave no indication of whether this occurred in the context of area clearance or EOD.⁴¹

The DR Congo reported in June 2022 that four hazardous areas covering 26,747m² had been cleared in Tshopo province but provided no details of when the clearance occurred, who conducted it, or whether it resulted in any mines being destroyed.⁴² DCA reported that it cleared a total of 43,149m² in four provinces (Maniema, North and South Kivu, and Tshopo) resulting in destruction of 13 anti-personnel mines and 131 items of UXO.⁴³ AFRILAM also destroyed four anti-personnel mines and 3,808 items of UXO in the course of EOD operations in Kasai and Tanganyika provinces in 2021.⁴⁴

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



35 Statement of DR Congo, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 2 July 2020.

36 "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 34.

37 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 April 2019; and email, 24 May 2019.

38 Email from Petri Siikanen, Country Director, DCA, 4 May 2022.

39 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, UNMAS, 31 May 2022.

40 Ibid.

41 Article 7 Report (covering 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2022), Form G.

42 Statement of DR Congo, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20 June 2022.

43 Email from Petri Siikanen, DCA, 4 May 2022.

44 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, UNMAS, 31 May 2022.

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the 42-month extension granted by States Parties in November 2021), the DR Congo is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025. It is unlikely to meet this deadline based on progress to date.

The DR Congo's position on meeting its Article 5 obligations has fluctuated sharply in recent years. In November 2019, the DR Congo said it had 49 hazardous areas totalling 469,338m² but it would not need to extend its January 2021 Article 5 deadline.⁴⁵ In August 2020, after reviewing data, it said there were 128,842m² to release and it asked for its third extension of 18 months to complete the job.⁴⁶ Less than a year later, having released a little over 13,000m², and reporting it still had 33 hazardous areas covering around 117,000m², the DR Congo submitted its fourth extension request asking for 42 more months to complete clearance.⁴⁷ That request was overtaken 10 months later by new data that more than tripled the DR Congo's estimate of contamination, reporting 37 hazardous areas affecting 399,969m², undermining the DR Congo's proposed land release work plan and financial projections.⁴⁸

The DR Congo, in response to questions from the Article 5 committee, repeated the explanations for earlier extensions and said the request for 42 more months took account of the following issues:⁴⁹

- its financial situation and the need to establish mechanisms for researching and mobilising funding to implement the work plan
- logistical issues, linked to the condition of roads, bridges, and infrastructure
- insecurity and constraints on demining posed by military operations against armed groups; and
- environmental challenges posed by the climate and dense vegetation.

The decision by the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties in 2021 that accepted the DR Congo's latest extension request asked the DR Congo to submit a detailed updated work plan by April 2023 with annual projections of which areas remained to be addressed and by which organisations.⁵⁰

Table 2: Five-year summary of anti-personnel mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2021	43,149
2020	10,562
2019 ⁵¹	146,761
2018	275,700
2017	226,025
Total	702,197

N/R = Not reported

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

DR Congo does not have plans in place to address residual contamination once its Article 5 obligations have been fulfilled.

45 Statement of DR Congo, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.

46 Statement of DR Congo, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 2 July 2020.

47 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, July 2021, p. 8.

48 Article 7 Report (covering 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2022), Form C.

49 Response of CCLAM to questions from the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, 24 September 2021.

50 19th Meeting of States Parties, Decision on the DR Congo request for an extension of its Article deadline, 6 November 2021.

51 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), p. 7. Although ostensibly a report for 2018, it included results for the first three months of 2019.