

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unknown

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km²)	Release in 2023 (km²)
Clearance	Not reported	Not reported
Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Non-Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed*	Not known	Not known

*China reported destroying 563 mines in 2024 and 275 in 2023, but it is not known how many were AP mines.

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2024:

- Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

China does not disclose comprehensive data on its anti-personnel (AP) mine contamination, nor on its survey and clearance, but it is known to maintain AP mines around military infrastructure and some of its borders. In August 2024, China warned residents along its border with North Korea of the danger that landmines may have been displaced across the Yalu River into China. China reported destroying 563 landmines in 2024, an increase from the 275 it reported clearing in 2023. It is not known whether the landmines cleared were AP or anti-vehicle (AV) mines or a mixture, nor has it been reported where the clearance took place. Clearance on the border with Myanmar has, however, been reported since 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- China should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- China should clear all remaining AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- No functioning mine action programme

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of mined area in China is not known. While very significant demining has occurred since the 1990s, China has stated that it maintains some minefields for defence purposes,¹ and research by Landmine Monitor indicates that AP mines remain along most of China's borders.² In the 1990s, the United States reported that China had emplaced mines along its borders with India, the Russian Federation, Vietnam, North Korea, and Myanmar.³ China's military estimated that around two million mines of a wide variety of types were emplaced on the Vietnam border alone.⁴ China has reported on mine contamination and clearance along its border with Vietnam, and to some extent with Myanmar, but less information appears to be available about contamination and mine release on its borders with Russia, India, and North Korea.

In new developments in 2023 and 2024, according to the South Korean authorities and media sources, North Korea used AP mines on its side of the border with China.⁵ In August 2024, a media report stated that the Chinese authorities had warned that landmines potentially buried on the North Korean side of the Yalu River along the border may have been displaced into China. This occurred, in particular, into Changbai county, Jilin province, following heavy rains at the end of July 2024.⁶ Near the border with India, in August 2023, a Chinese media article claimed that India had emplaced mines in an area China claims as its own, to the north-west of Panglong Lake on the Tibetan plateau. Landmines reportedly killed two Indian labourers.⁷

China conducted four demining campaigns along its border with Vietnam between 1992 and 2018 – in Yunnan province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The first was in 1992–94; the second in 1997–99; the third in 2001–08; and the fourth in 2015–18. The Chinese military claim that the second clearance operation was the largest in world military history.⁸ However, the two campaigns in 1992–94 and 1997–99 did not deal with minefields located in disputed areas of the border, where 500,000 mines covered an estimated 40km². After technical survey of mined areas, China embarked on a third clearance campaign in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Yunnan province in 2005. China stated that in 2009 it completed clearance of 5.15km² at the border.⁹

In 2009, China said that its completion of demining along the Yunnan section of its border with Vietnam represented “the completion of mine clearance of mine-affected areas within China's territory.”¹⁰ This was clarified by a statement in 2011, though, when a Foreign Ministry official reported that China maintains a small number of minefields “for national defence.”¹¹ Two months later, at the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC, China said that large-scale demining had “on the whole eliminated the scourge of landmines in our territories.”¹² At the Third Review Conference of the APMBC in 2014, China said it had “basically eradicated landmines on its own territory.”¹³

In early November 2015, however, China initiated further demining along the border with Vietnam.¹⁴ In its Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 transparency report submitted in March 2017, China reported that between November 2015 and February 2017, the Chinese army cleared 18.4km² of minefields on the Yunnan border.¹⁵ Media accounts indicated that mine clearance again resumed in November 2017 in the Yunnan border area and in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.¹⁶ A total of 23km² was reported cleared between November 2015 and May 2018.¹⁷ According to a media source, Yunnan province contained 113 minefields and accounted for more than 95% of the total mined areas on the Chinese-Vietnamese borders and mines were often laid in very hard-to-access mountainous areas.¹⁸ In Guangxi, a total of 2,300 explosive items were reported found and destroyed across 1.5km².¹⁹

At the Fourth Review Conference in 2019, China said that, since the 1990s, it had carried out large-scale demining operations on the border many times. In the three years to 2019, China said it had cleared approximately 58km² of mined area on its borders with Vietnam and Myanmar and “enclosed” 25km² of minefields (permanently perimeter-marking, fencing, and closing down mined areas).²⁰ China was reported to have begun demining its border with Myanmar at the end of 2018 with a team of more than 300 deminers.²¹ Almost three years later, in 2021, an online media source reported that the Chinese authorities had begun mine clearance along the Chinese side of the border between Yunnan province and Myanmar, near Yunnan's Nansan township and near the Menadue township. No further details were available.²²

1 Landmine Monitor, “China”, Last updated 16 December 2024, at: <https://tinyurl.com/43tvn6vm>.

2 Ibid.

3 Landmine Monitor, “China – Impact” Last updated 1 April 2025, at: <https://tinyurl.com/5n6u7uwu>.

4 Ibid.

5 Landmine Monitor Report 2024, pp. 8 and 21.

6 “Chinese authorities warn of possible North Korean landmine displacement due to floods, notify residents ‘Do not go to the riverbank’”, *Rimjin-Gang*, 13 August 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3ST8ZnU>.

7 Landmine Monitor, “India”, (last updated 22 September 2024), at: <https://tinyurl.com/mryezh2e>.

8 Landmine Monitor, “China – Impact”, Last updated 1 April 2025.

9 Ibid.

10 Statement of China, Second APMBC Review Conference, Cartagena, 4 December 2009.

11 Email from Lai Haiyang, Attaché, Department of Arms Control & Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 September 2011.

12 Statement of China, APMBC Eleventh Meeting of States Parties, Phnom Penh, 29 November 2011.

13 Statement of China, Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, 26 June 2014.

14 P. Scally, “Huge land mine clearance underway in Wenshan, Honghe”, Blog post, Gokunming, 5 November 2015, at: <https://bit.ly/20WbdVe>.

15 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2016), Form B. Unofficial translation.

16 “Land mine removal resumes on border”, *China Daily*, 29 November 2017, at: <https://bit.ly/2ZXUwtr>; and “China's Guangxi completes de-mining mission along Sino-Vietnam border”, *China Daily*, 26 November 2018, at: <https://bit.ly/33xCdNT>.

17 Landmine Monitor, “China – Impact”, Last updated 1 April 2025.

18 “Soldier loses both hands and eyes from a blast while clearing mines along Vietnam border”, *The Global Times*, 6 December 2018.

19 “China's Guangxi completes de-mining mission along Sino-Vietnam border”, *China Daily*, 26 November 2018.

20 Statement of China, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

21 J. Li, “Minesweeping operations along China-Myanmar border kick off”, *China Military Online*, 28 December 2019, at: <https://bit.ly/3f7P3qy>.

22 “China Begins Landmine Removal Operation Along Border With Myanmar”, *Radio Free Asia*, 13 September 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3D3lhQB>.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no formal mine action programme in China. Any mine clearance is conducted by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) as a military activity.

At a regional level, China has been active in collaborating with other countries on mine action. In 2024 this included various technical cooperation and assistance activities supporting demining in other countries (Ethiopia, Somalia, Cambodia, and Laos), sending technical experts to the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), as well as visits to Armenia and Serbia, where enhanced exchange and cooperation possibilities were explored.²³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

It is not known whether China takes into consideration gender and diversity during planning and tasking of survey and clearance of mines.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

It is not known how, if at all, the environment is taken into consideration during planning and tasking of survey and clearance of mines in China in order to minimise potential harm from clearance.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In 2024, China reported that it had translated the 2024 edition of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) into Chinese.²⁴ China has also reported carrying out technical research related to mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance and destruction, and research on unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) survey technology for mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) and on a multi-parameter real-time

monitoring and effect evaluation system for mine detection training.²⁵ In 2019, China reported conducting research on the application of virtual reality (VR) technology in humanitarian mine clearance training.²⁶ It claims breakthroughs in research and development, including in unmanned mine detection and laser demining (the use of directed energy weapons to destroy landmines).²⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

In its Amended Protocol II Article 13 reports covering 2024 and 2023, China did not report any AP mine clearance. China did, however, report in its CCW Protocol V Article 10 report (covering 2024) that Chinese public security organisations had worked closely with the military and disposed of 563 landmines (the type of landmine is not specified) in 2024. This compares with 2023, when China reported destroying 275 landmines (the type again was not specified).²⁸

China stated, at meetings of States Parties to the APMBC in 2017 and 2020, that it agrees with "the vision and goals" of the Convention, especially its humanitarian underpinnings, and that it appreciates "the convention's humanitarian spirit, and recognizes its purpose and objective, and acknowledges and attaches importance to its role."²⁹ At the United Nations Security Council in 2021 it stated that, "China subscribes to the purposes of the Ottawa Convention and supports the ultimate goal of comprehensive landmine ban".³⁰ China has said that it cannot consider acceding to the treaty due to its ongoing national defence needs.³¹

23 Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2024), Form E. Unofficial translation.
24 Ibid., Form C.
25 Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2021), Forms B and C.
26 Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.
27 Statement of China, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
28 The clearance of the 275 landmines was not reported in *Clearing the Mines 2024*.
29 Landmine Monitor, "China", Last updated 16 December 2024.
30 Statement of China, Security Council Open Debate on Mine Action, 8 April 2021.
31 Landmine Monitor, "China", Last updated 16 December 2024.