

# ECUADOR

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2022  
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE IN QUESTION

## KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)  
MINE CONTAMINATION: LIGHT

GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE

**40,056<sub>M<sup>2</sup></sub>**

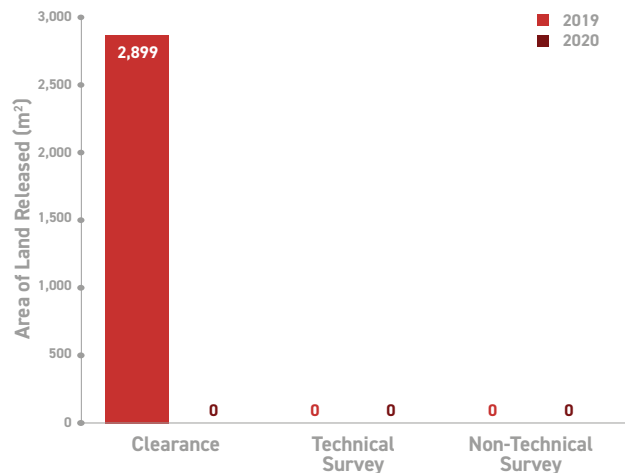
AP MINE  
CLEARANCE IN 2020

**0<sub>M<sup>2</sup></sub>**

AP MINES  
DESTROYED IN 2020

**0**

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ecuador's clearance output fell in 2020 for the fourth consecutive year, this time to nil, putting its compliance with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in doubt. Ecuador has stated that it requires more than \$7 million dollars to complete clearance in the next two years. At the same time, it is unclear whether its estimate of remaining contamination is accurate and whether Ecuador is using the most efficient and effective land release methods.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ecuador should clarify the extent of remaining contamination.
- Ecuador should ensure it deploys its limited resources in the most efficient manner and that it conducts both non-technical and technical survey, as appropriate, before full clearance.
- Ecuador should submit its annual Article 7 reports on time.
- Ecuador should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and mine action data should be systematically disaggregated by sex and age.
- Ecuador should develop a strategy for managing residual contamination post completion.

## ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2020)	Score (2019)	Performance Commentary
<b>UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION</b> (20% of overall score)	5	5	Ecuador's estimate of contamination is unchanged from 2019 to 2020. There have been some discrepancies in the amount of remaining contamination data in previous years that are still unexplained.
<b>NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT</b> (10% of overall score)	5	5	There is clarity of roles and responsibilities at a national level and Ecuador has necessary demining infrastructure in place. No national funding was provided to the mine action programme in 2020 and Ecuador has estimated that it requires more than \$7 million in funding to complete clearance in the next two years.
<b>GENDER AND DIVERSITY</b> (10% of overall score)	3	3	Ecuador does not have a gender and diversity policy or plan and does not employ any women in its mine action programme. Women, children, and ethnic minorities are said to be consulted only when they are also informed about planned demining operations.
<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING</b> (10% of overall score)	5	5	Ecuador submitted its Article 7 report covering 2020 in August 2021.
<b>PLANNING AND TASKING</b> (10% of overall score)	6	6	Ecuador did not meet its land release target for 2020 and provided an updated plan for clearance based on the revised estimate of remaining mine contamination. These targets should be achievable but depend on the mobilisation of sufficient resources.
<b>LAND RELEASE SYSTEM</b> (20% of overall score)	6	6	Ecuador claims to conduct survey and clearance according to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). All clearance is conducted manually but Ecuador did not deploy its demining capacity in 2020.
<b>LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE</b> (20% of overall score)	1	2	Ecuador's land release output fell again in 2020 to zero and the country is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline even with the very small amount of remaining contamination it is now reporting.
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>Overall Programme Performance: POOR</b>

## DEMINING CAPACITY

### MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI)
- Army Corps of Engineers (CEE)

### NATIONAL OPERATORS

- CEE Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"
- General Command for Demining and EOD (CGDEOD)
- Joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit (Not operational in 2019)

### INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

### OTHER ACTORS

- None

## UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Ecuador reported that, as at December 2020, 40,056m<sup>2</sup> of anti-personnel mine contamination remained in the Zamora Chinchipe province containing an estimated 2,941 mines.<sup>1</sup> The estimated 40,056m<sup>2</sup> is found in 27 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and 26 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) across four districts in Zamora Chinchipe province (see Table 1). The contamination is unchanged from the estimate provided as at December 2019.

This figure is less than half the amount of anti-personnel mine contamination reported at the end of 2018, despite Ecuador releasing only 2,899m<sup>2</sup> of contaminated land in 2019.<sup>2</sup> This also differs significantly from the contamination figures reported in Ecuador's Article 5 statement at the Fourth APMBC Review Conference at the end of November 2019 when Ecuador said it had 79,030m<sup>2</sup> of contamination and 3,233 anti-personnel mines to destroy in four mined areas.<sup>3</sup> Despite these very significant discrepancies, Ecuador considered its current estimate of contamination to be accurate as it is based on evidence from field reports and technical records of mine laying in the border area between Ecuador and Peru. Affected communities, including women, were reportedly consulted during survey.<sup>4</sup>

Ecuador's contamination results from its 1995 border conflict with Peru. The most heavily mined section of the border is the Condor mountain range (Cordillera del Condor) which was at the centre of the dispute.

**Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2020)<sup>5</sup>**

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	SHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Total CHA/SHA	Total area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Zamora Chinchipe	Chinchipe	1	7,009	0	0	1	7,009
	Yanzatza	3	6,565	0	0	3	6,565
	Nangaritza	14	4,577	0	0	14	4,577
	El Panguí	9	14,384	26	7,521	35	21,905
<b>Totals</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>32,535</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7,521</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40,056</b>

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI). The Ecuadorian government created CENDESMI by an Executive Decree in 1999.<sup>6</sup> It is an interministerial body chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility comprising the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Public Health, and the Army Corps of Engineers (CEE) through the Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI" and the General Command for Demining and EOD (CGDEOD).<sup>7</sup> CENDESMI is responsible for overseeing compliance with the APMBC, while the CEE is responsible for coordinating the planning of demining and COTOPAXI is tasked with conducting land release operations.<sup>8</sup>

Ecuador currently funds all its demining operations. It previously reported allocating almost US\$21 million for demining personnel, materials, and equipment for 2014–22.<sup>9</sup> This amounts to around \$2 million per year from 2019 to 2022.<sup>10</sup> However, only \$821,953 was provided to the demining programme in 2019 and no national funding was allocated

to the demining programme in 2020. In February 2021, Ecuador estimated that it requires \$7,344,125 for land release operations in 2021 and 2022, split evenly over the two years, of which it would be able to provide about \$500,000 of national funding. In 2021, Ecuador also estimated that it requires an additional \$281,977 for mechanical demining and \$2,321,568 for quality control (QC).<sup>11</sup>

Ecuador participated in the APMBC Individualised Approach, in 2019, in the course of which it claimed that it requires just over US\$8 million dollars to complete clearance. This will be used to replace personal protective equipment and other demining tools which are no longer usable, as well as for vehicles, training, food, and shelter for the deminers.<sup>12</sup> In February 2021, the OAS, Ecuador and Peru, supported by the European Union (EU), organised a two-day virtual event with Ecuador and Peru both presenting the ongoing challenges that they face in order to complete clearance by their deadlines.<sup>13</sup>

## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, which chairs CENDESMI, has a gender and diversity policy but no similar policy exists that is specific to CENDESMI.<sup>14</sup>

Ecuador has stated that it considers all populations affected by mines, without discrimination, in the planning and execution of demining operations.<sup>15</sup> Women, children, and ethnic minorities are targeted during risk education campaigns, which are conducted in Spanish as well as in native languages. Risk education teams are said to include indigenous people. During risk education activities, affected communities are also "informed" of planned demining operations, the prioritisation of operations,

and the different land release activities being conducted.<sup>16</sup> Fourteen communities and five ethnic groups live in the eastern border sector near the contaminated areas.<sup>17</sup>

Mine action data are not disaggregated by sex or age.<sup>18</sup>

Ecuador has trained women in demining and in the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.<sup>19</sup> Since 2014, Ecuador has employed three female deminers, 3% of the total trained, however none is currently engaged in survey, clearance, managerial or administrative positions.<sup>20</sup> Ecuador has said it will continue to include and train female personnel "according to their availability" ("de acuerdo a la disponibilidad de dicho personal").<sup>21</sup>

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Ecuador uses the IMSMA database, which is said to be updated regularly.<sup>22</sup>

Ecuador submitted its Article 7 report covering 2020 in August 2021 in which it provided an update on the work that was carried out during 2020 which was limited to training sessions for demining personnel.

## PLANNING AND TASKING

Ecuador presented a revised plan for mine clearance for 2020 to 2022 in its Article 7 report covering 2019, based on the updated estimate of contamination as at end 2019.<sup>23</sup>

In 2020, clearance was planned of 11,285m<sup>2</sup> (with expected discovery of 1,362 mines) in El Oro and Loja in Zamora Chinchipe with seven demining teams working between June and August.<sup>24</sup> However, no clearance took place in 2020 and Ecuador presented an updated work plan for 2021–22 in February 2021.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the plan for remaining clearance Ecuador also presented its programme for the handover of cleared land with 551,742m<sup>2</sup> to be certified and handed over during 2021 and 2022.<sup>26</sup>

Ecuador prioritises contaminated areas for clearance according to the proximity of the local population and the impact on socio-economic development.<sup>27</sup>

**Table 2: Planned mine clearance in Zamora Chinchipe in 2020–22 (Article 7)<sup>28</sup>**

Year	Mined areas	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
2020	12	11,285
2021	14	12,250
2022	27	16,521
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40,056</b>

**Table 3: Planned mine clearance in Zamora Chinchipe in 2021–22<sup>29</sup>**

Year	Mined areas	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
2021	23	21,010
2022	30	19,046
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40,056</b>

**Table 4: Planned handover of cleared land 2021–22<sup>30</sup>**

Year	Province	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Total (m <sup>2</sup> )
2021	El Oro	103,472	200,856
	Loja	66,314	
	Pastaza	31,070	
2022	Morona Santiago	272,601	350,885
	Zamora Chinchipe	78,285	
<b>Total</b>			<b>551,742</b>

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The process of humanitarian demining in Ecuador is carried out in accordance with the Binational Manual for Humanitarian Demining (Manual Binacional de Desminado Humanitario), developed under the Binational Cooperation Programme with Peru, and the Manual of Humanitarian Demining Procedures of Ecuador. These are said to be based on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), but adapted to the Ecuadorian context.<sup>31</sup> Ecuador has adopted the national mine action standards (NMAS) for land release, non-technical survey, technical survey, clearance requirements, and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).<sup>32</sup>

At the APMBC 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties, Ecuador and Peru delivered a joint statement detailing their cooperation on demining activities during 2020 in which they worked together to strengthen their demining procedures. Peru shared its health protocol with Ecuador to support demining during the COVID-19 pandemic while Ecuador approved an aerial evacuation protocol to allow Peruvian deminers through Ecuadorian airspace in case of emergencies. They also reported that they had organised a joint workshop on humanitarian demining which was planned for 2021 and that demining personnel from Ecuador and Peru had received EOD training from the Organization of American States (OAS) between January and March 2020.<sup>33</sup> In Ecuador's latest Article 7 request it was reported that humanitarian demining training was conducted by the Battalion No. 68 COTOPAXI in February 2020 and that a meeting was held with their demining counterparts in Peru to discuss ongoing cooperation.<sup>34</sup>

In granting Ecuador's 2017 Article 5 deadline extension request, the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties noted that Ecuador should use the most relevant land release standards, policies, and methodologies, in line with IMAS, and encouraged it to continue seeking improved land release and certification techniques, which could lead to Ecuador fulfilling its obligations more quickly.<sup>35</sup> Ecuador stated in its 2017 extension request that non-technical and technical survey would be carried out to determine the location, size, and other characteristic of the mined areas before operations begin using records of mined areas.<sup>36</sup> No non-technical survey or technical survey was reported to have occurred in 2020.

## OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Demining is conducted by Battalion No. 68 COTOPAXI and, in 2019, only manual clearance took place.<sup>37</sup> In the additional information provided alongside its 2017 extension request, Ecuador stated that the remaining clearance would be carried out only by manual deminers, due to the unsuitability of terrain for its machinery.<sup>38</sup> Mine detection dogs (MDDs) are used only for QC following clearance.<sup>39</sup> No personnel were deployed for survey or clearance during 2020.

The joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit is deployed to areas that were at the centre of the conflict between the two nations but did not carry out any demining operations in 2019. In November 2019 in the "Tumbes Declaration" the presidents of Ecuador and Peru agreed to continue their binational cooperation and committed to assign the necessary resources to continue demining operations in both territories, but no further details were provided.<sup>40</sup>

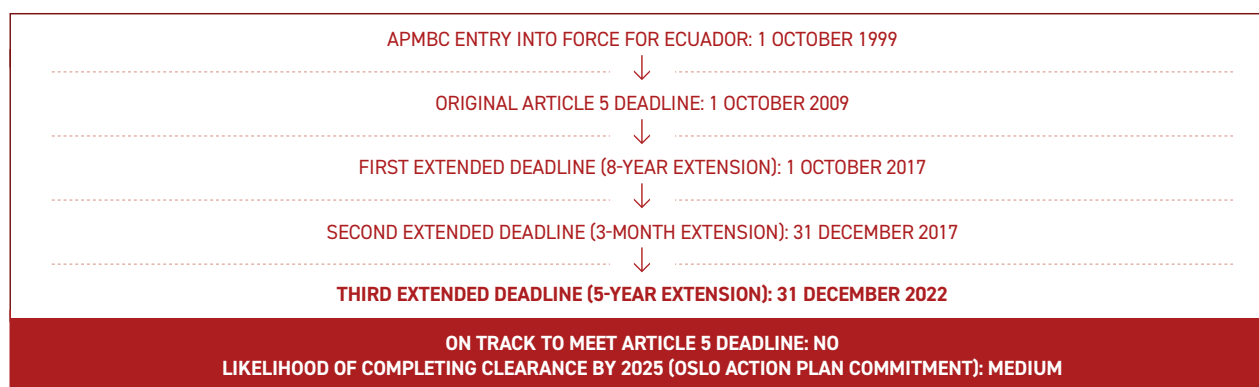
CENDESMI is responsible for observing and monitoring compliance of the demining, including QC and certification of clearance operations.<sup>41</sup>

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2020

No survey or clearance took place in 2020.<sup>42</sup> This is a reduction from the meagre 2,899m<sup>2</sup> of anti-personnel mined area was released in 2019, all of which was cleared, with 62 anti-personnel mines destroyed.<sup>43</sup>

### ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Ecuador has submitted three extension requests in recent years. Ecuador explained that the failure to meet the 1 October 2017 deadline was due to a serious earthquake on 16 April 2016, which required the diversion of the armed forces away from demining, as well as to the physical characteristics of the land and climate conditions in the areas requiring clearance.<sup>44</sup> In its Article 7 report covering 2016, Ecuador suddenly and without explanation determined that it would need a further five years to fulfil its Article 5 obligations. It submitted another Article 5 deadline extension request in March 2017 and was granted a deadline extension to 31 December 2022.

Survey and clearance output fell from the already minimal 2,899m<sup>2</sup> in 2019 to nil in 2020, with the mine action programme grounding to a halt due to lack of funding. Ecuador has now set itself a land release target of approximately 20,000m<sup>2</sup> per year in order to complete clearance of remaining contamination by its Article 5 deadline. This should be possible if Ecuador can mobilise its existing operational capacity to significantly increase land release output. However, this is dependent on securing the requisite funds, establishing an accurate estimate of the remaining contamination and deploying its limited resources in the most efficient manner conducting both non-technical and technical survey, as appropriate, before full clearance.

**Table 5: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance**

Year	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )
2020	0
2019	2,899
2018	14,068
2017	15,476
2016	1,410
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,853</b>

## PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Ecuador does not have a strategy in place for managing residual risk post completion but has stated that it will use its current capacity to address areas of residual contamination.<sup>45</sup>

- 1 Presentation by Commander of Ecuador's 68 "Cotopaxi" Engineers Battalion Staff Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Torres Garzón for the Regional Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining, (virtual meeting), 11 February 2021.
- 2 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Commander, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 3 Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 4 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 5 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form C.
- 6 Executive Decree No. 1297, issued on 22 September 1999.
- 7 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension request, Annex I.
- 8 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension request, Annex I, pp. 39 and 40.
- 9 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 20.
- 10 Ibid.; Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 11 Presentation by Commander of Ecuador's 68 "Cotopaxi" Engineers Battalion Staff Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Torres Garzón for the Regional Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining, (virtual meeting), 11 February 2021.
- 12 APMBBC Individualised Approach Meeting at Intersessionals, "Mine Action Program of Ecuador Status and Challenges in Implementation", Geneva, 23 May 2019; and Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 21.
- 13 Regional Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining, (virtual meeting), 10-11 February 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/2SvmcYd>.
- 14 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 15 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 23.
- 16 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 17 Presentation by Commander of Ecuador's 68 "Cotopaxi" Engineers Battalion Staff Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Torres Garzón for the Regional Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining, (virtual meeting), 11 February 2021.
- 18 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 19 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 17.
- 20 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 39 and 41; and email from Lt. Col Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 21 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 20.
- 22 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25; and email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 23 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Presentation by Commander of Ecuador's 68 "Cotopaxi" Engineers Battalion Staff Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Torres Garzón for the Regional Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining, (virtual meeting), 11 February 2021.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 17.
- 28 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 31 Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 5.
- 32 Ibid., p. 17.
- 33 Joint statement of Peru and Ecuador, 18th Meeting of States Parties, APMBBC, 16–20 November 2020
- 34 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form J.
- 35 Decisions on the request by Ecuador for an extension of its Article 5 deadline, 16MSP, 21 December 2017.
- 36 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 15.
- 37 APMBBC Individualised Approach Meeting at Intersessionals, "Mine Action Program of Ecuador Status and Challenges in Implementation", Geneva, 23 May 2019.
- 38 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information provided on 8 September 2017, p. 1.
- 39 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 18.
- 40 Statement of Peru, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 41 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 39.
- 42 Presentation by Commander of Ecuador's 68 "Cotopaxi" Engineers Battalion Staff Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Torres Garzón for the Regional Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining, (virtual meeting), 11 February 2021.
- 43 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
- 44 Letter from Efraín Baus Palacios, Director of Neighbourhood Relations and Sovereignty for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and President of the National Humanitarian Demining Center of Ecuador, to Amb. Patricia O'Brian, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations in Geneva, and Chair of the Article 5 Committee, Note No. 14839-DRVS/CENDESMI, Quito, 26 November 2016.
- 45 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.