ERITREA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2027

Not on track and in serious violation of the Convention
(Renewed demining needed to return to compliance)

AP MINE CONTAMINATION: 10KM^2

Medium
(Mine Action Review estimate)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (m^2)	Release in 2024 (m^2)
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	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	Not reported	Not reported

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025:

- None

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

No survey or clearance of anti-personnel (AP) mined area was reported by Eritrea for 2025. The total absence of any demining since 2013 is a serious violation of Eritrea's obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. As at August 2026, Eritrea had still to submit an Article 7 report covering 2025. It has not submitted one since 2014. Eritrea participated in the Twenty-Second Meeting of the States Parties (22MSP) in December 2025,[1] but did not provide any statements or updates to States Parties.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Eritrea should report to States Parties on the latest developments in its planned restructuring of the Eritrea Demining Agency (EDA) and on results of preliminary assessments to determine a work plan.**
- **The government of Eritrea should ensure that identification and release of mined areas confirmed or suspected to contain AP mines is undertaken as a matter of urgency.**
- **Eritrea should urgently submit an up-to-date list of all confirmed or suspected mined areas and a detailed annual and multi-year work plan for survey and clearance.**
- **Eritrea must urgently submit its outstanding annual Article 7 transparency reports, the latest of which was due by 30 April 2026.**
- **Eritrea should reconsider its policy of excluding international technical assistance in mine action, which would support efficient land release and re-open international funding paths.**

1 "Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Final Report", 18 May 2026, p. 2.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2025)	Score (2024)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	3	3	The last estimate of mined area dates back to the end of 2013, when Eritrea reported that 434 mined areas remained covering a total of 33.4km^2. All mined area is reportedly in the form of suspected hazardous area (SHA). Mine Action Review is unaware of any progress in land release or updated information on the extent of contamination since then.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	3	3	Eritrea's mine action programme, to the extent it exists, is entirely nationally managed. The EDA is responsible for mine clearance. Eritrea reported in November 2024, as it had a year earlier, that the EDA was undergoing "restructuring" of its operational mandate. Eritrea has shared no further update on this since.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	It is not known if Eritrea has policies in place relating to gender and diversity in mine action.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION (10% of overall score)	0	0	It is not known how, if at all, the environment is taken into consideration during planning and tasking of demining.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	0	0	Details of Eritrea's current information management system are not known. Its failure to submit annual Article 7 reports over the past twelve years is a violation of the Convention. Eritrea has also failed to provide other updates on the implementation of its mine action obligations under Article 5 in recent years.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	1	1	Recent details on Eritrea's planning and tasking system are not available.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (10% of overall score)	3	3	Eritrea is reported to have national mine action standards dating back to 2012. The EDA was responsible for the implementation of quality management activities.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	0	0	Eritrea seemingly made no progress in land release to meet its obligations under its second, third, or fourth Article 5 deadline extension periods. Eritrea submitted a fifth extension request on 17 November 2024, seeking a three-year extension to 31 December 2027. The request was granted at the Fifth Review Conference. Eritrea remains in serious violation of the Convention for its failure to undertake demining as soon as possible.
Average Score	**1.6**	**1.6**	**Overall Programme Performance: VERY POOR**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Eritrea Demining Agency (EDA)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Engineering units of the Eritrean Armed Forces (based on information from earlier years)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Eritrea is affected by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) dating back to the Second World War, but largely as the result of the struggle for independence in 1962–91 and its armed conflict with Ethiopia in 1998–2000.

The last estimate of the extent of mined area in Eritrea dates back to the end of 2013, when Eritrea reported 434 mined areas covering an estimated 33.4km^2.[2] This was a two-thirds reduction on the earlier estimate of 99km^2 of June 2011,[3] and significantly lower than the 129km^2 identified by the 2004 landmine impact survey.[4] The UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), which was terminated in 2008 due to restrictions imposed by Eritrea and the cutting-off of fuel supplies, affirmed that there are 995 "dangerous areas", 914 "mined areas", and 702 minefields in Eritrea. UNMEE estimated that some 250,000 landmines were scattered across the country, with the most common being anti-vehicle (AV) mines and blast and fragmentation AP mines.[5]

All contaminated areas in Eritrea are thought to be still classified as suspected hazardous areas (SHAs). Eritrea has not reported on any plans to establish a more accurate baseline of contamination.

Table 1: Mined area by region (at end 2013)[6]

Zoba (region)	SHAs	Estimated area (m^2)
Semienawi Keih Bahri	166	9,462,537
Anseba	144	10,230,940
Gash Barka	63	6,252,951
Debub	29	3,894,036
Maakel	24	2,423,325
Debubawi Keih Bahri	8	1,169,029
Totals	**434**	**33,432,818**

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

UNMEE estimated that three million items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) are scattered across Eritrea, ranging from small arms ammunition to bombs dropped from aeroplanes.[7] Eritrea might be contaminated with cluster munition remnants as a result of the 1998–2000 war with Ethiopia.[8]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

To the extent one exists, Eritrea's mine action programme is entirely nationally managed. The Eritrea Demining Agency (EDA), established in July 2002, is believed to be still responsible for policy development, regulation of mine action, and the conduct of mine clearance operations. The EDA is believed to report directly to the Office of the President.

In its fifth Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in November 2024, the situation reported by Eritrea remained virtually unchanged from that outlined in its fourth extension request, submitted a year earlier. Eritrea stated again that the restructuring of the EDA was in progress. It also stated that the Government had been "conducting preliminary assessments involving key policy and operational stakeholders", with the aim of presenting a detailed work plan, but that it had been unable to submit its extension request in due time for consideration by the Fifth Review Conference, due to time constraints and "technical challenges".[9] No further details were provided of what this restructuring of the EDA may entail, nor of the "technical challenges" Eritrea refers to.

Eritrea has not responded to Mine Action Review's inquiries about its national mine action programme since 2022.

2 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7. This was despite finding 49 previously unrecorded SHAs in five regions across an estimated area of 9km^2 during non-technical survey (NTS) in 2013. "Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted by the President of the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extensions", 20 June 2014, p. 2.

3 "Eritrea's reply to questions from the Article 5 Analysing Group about its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", 7 June 2011, p. 2.

4 Survey Action Center (SAC), "Landmine Impact Survey, Eritrea, Final Report", May 2005, p. 7.

5 United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), "UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea is withdrawn", accessed 5 June 2023, https://bit.ly/43K5Sl5.

6 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

7 UNMEE, "UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea is withdrawn".

8 Cluster Munition Monitor, "Cluster Munition Ban Policy – Eritrea", accessed 24 June 2026, https://bit.ly/3yrdNtX. The Cluster Munition Monitor cites the "Report on the Kampala Conference on the Convention on Cluster Munitions" of September 2008. See also "Negotiating the Convention on Cluster Munitions The role of African states", Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 2009, https://tinyurl.com/2kfs2t2k, p. 4, which also reports that Ethiopia and Eritrea each air-dropped cluster munitions in 1998.

9 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

Eritrea projected that costs during its Article 5 deadline extension period to 1 February 2020 would amount to more than US$7 million, all to be raised nationally.[10] In 2011–13, Eritrea had managed to raise only $257,000 annually. Eritrea acknowledged at the time that its progress in clearing mines would be slow due to lack of resources, but it has never been clear how it intended to secure the funding for its survey and clearance, particularly in light of its policy of not accepting international technical assistance.[11] It is not known if Eritrea contributed any national resources to support the cost of the EDA or any survey or clearance of mined areas that might have been conducted in 2025, nor if Eritrea has made any progress towards developing a resource mobilisation strategy for Article 5 implementation. For more information on funding, please see the country profile on Eritrea on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[12]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

It is not known if Eritrea has policies in place relating to gender and diversity in mine action.

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 Eritrea in order to minimise potential harm from clearance.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Details on Eritrea's current information management system are not known. As at mid-October 2026, Eritrea had yet to submit its latest Article 7 report covering calendar year 2025. Eritrea has not submitted an Article 7 transparency report since 2014, which is itself a violation of the Convention. It has also failed to provide an updated Article 5 work plan, pledging instead to provide one by 31 December 2027.[13]

In granting Eritrea's 2024 request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline, the Fifth Review Conference noted that Eritrea had not acted in accordance with the agreed "process for the preparation, submission and consideration of requests for extensions to Article 5 deadlines", preventing the Committee on Article 5 Implementation from carrying out its mandate to "prepare and submit to the States Parties in advance of Meetings of the States Parties or Review Conferences an analysis of each request for an Article 5 extended deadline". In granting the 2024 request, the Conference welcomed Eritrea's commitment to adhere to the established process and submit a request by 31 March 2027 for consideration by the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of States Parties (24MSP).[14]

PLANNING AND TASKING

There is no recent information available on whether Eritrea has a national mine action strategy or how Eritrea plans any demining operations it may conduct. Re-survey during the second extension period was planned to involve both technical survey (TS) and non-technical survey (NTS) of all remaining mined areas across six regions, and to run concurrently with clearance in priority areas in the Anseba, Maakel, and Semienawi Keih Bahri regions.[15] Eritrea's 2024 extension request did not contain any information on the extent of mined area remaining or on plans to address it. Eritrea plans to submit a detailed work plan by 31 March 2027.[16]

10 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.

11 Statement of Eritrea, APMBC Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 6 December 2013.

12 https://the-monitor.org.

13 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.

14 "Decisions on the request submitted by Eritrea for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", Fifth Review Conference, Siem Reap, 25–29 November 2024.

15 Statement of Eritrea, Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Geneva, 9 April 2014.

16 "Decisions on the request submitted by Eritrea for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", Fifth Review Conference, November 2024.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Eritrea reportedly has national mine action standards (NMAS) that date back at least to 2012. It is not known if any updates to the standards have been made in the 14 years since. It was previously reported that the EDA was responsible for quality assurance and quality control of demining.[17] It is not known whether Eritrea still has national capacity for mine survey or clearance.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In the past, demining has been primarily conducted by the engineering units of the Eritrean Defence Forces under the supervision of the EDA.[18] According to its 2014 Article 5 deadline extension request, Eritrea planned to deploy "at least" five demining teams during its second extension period.[19] No information is available as to whether any such capacity was deployed.

Since the expulsion of international NGOs in 2005, the authorities have not allowed international operators to conduct survey or clearance in Eritrea.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under its 2014 extension request, Eritrea projected that up to 15.4km^2 of mined area could be cleared within five years. It reported that 67.3km^2 of contaminated area had been cancelled through NTS and that 5.7km^2 was cleared over 38 mined areas in 2011–13.[20]

In recent years, Eritrea has not responded to Mine Action Review's requests for information on any mine action activities (including survey) undertaken since 2014. In 2013, Eritrea had reported release of 157 SHAs totalling 33.5km^2, leaving 385 mined areas covering close to 24.5km^2 to be surveyed.[21] Forty-nine mined areas with a total size of 9km^2 were discovered in five of the country's six regions during NTS in 2013: Anseba, Debub, Gash Barka, Maakel, and Semienawi Keih Bahri.[22]

Likewise, Eritrea has not made public any information on any mine clearance that it has undertaken in more than a decade. In 2013, Eritrea seemingly cleared approximately 2.26km^2 of mined area, almost twice the amount cleared in 2012 (1.2km^2).[23] The number of AP and AV mines destroyed was not reported.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2025

No land release outputs through survey or clearance were reported for 2025.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR ERITREA: 1 FEBRUARY 2002

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 FEBRUARY 2012

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FIRST EXTENDED DEADLINE (3 YEARS): 1 FEBRUARY 2015

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SECOND EXTENDED DEADLINE (5 YEARS): 1 FEBRUARY 2020

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THIRD EXTENDED DEADLINE (11 MONTHS, INTERIM EXTENSION): 31 DECEMBER 2020

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FOURTH EXTENDED DEADLINE (4 YEAR, INTERIM EXTENSION): 31 DECEMBER 2024

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FIFTH EXTENDED DEADLINE (3 YEARS): 31 DECEMBER 2027

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND IN SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE APMBC

17 Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 5.
18 Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 5.
19 Ibid., Form F, p. 10.
20 "Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request", 20 June 2014, p. 2.
21 Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 23 January 2014, p. 7.
22 "Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request", 20 June 2014, p. 2.
23 Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 10.

Under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) (in accordance with the three-year extension granted in 2024), Eritrea is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2027. It is highly unlikely to meet this deadline, especially given that Eritrea plans to submit a detailed work plan only by 31 March 2027, just eight months ahead of the deadline for completion.[24]

Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m²)
2025	N/R
2024	N/R
2023	N/R
2022	N/R
2021	N/R
Total	**N/R**

N/R = Not reported.

On 17 November 2024, only eight days ahead of the Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC, Eritrea submitted a fifth request to extend its clearance deadline. In this two-paragraph request, Eritrea stated that a restructuring of the EDA was underway, (as it had stated in its previous (fourth) extension request a year earlier)[25], and that the Government had been conducting "preliminary assessments involving key policy and operational stakeholders". Eritrea claimed that, due to time constraints and "technical challenges", it had not been able to submit its request earlier for consideration at the Fifth Review Conference. Eritrea pledged to submit a detailed work plan by 31 March 2027, and to continue engaging with the Presidency, the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU).[26] In presenting its extension request to the Fifth Review Conference, Eritrea said it would be possible to make progress quickly "when there are better circumstances, and all the necessary tools and actions are aligned for a very specific objective". Eritrea highlighted, however, that persistent "security threats" and prolonged conflict in the region had necessitated readjustment of priorities, including the restructuring of the EDA to "better build national capacity". Eritrea also noted that "strengthening ownership and leadership of the mine action program will be critical to ensure its sustainability".[27]

No information was provided on the results of preliminary assessments or on any restructuring of the EDA to date. Eritrea has not provided information on the nature of the "security threats" to which it has referred nor on their impact on the outlook for survey and clearance. Since early 2025 there have, however, been reports of mounting tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia over maritime access. As at March 2025, Eritrea had reportedly been increasing efforts in military recruitment, and Ethiopia had deployed troops to border areas.[28] In the first half of 2026, it was reported that both Eritrea and Ethiopia had amassed troops along their shared border.[29]

In granting Eritrea's fifth extension request, the Fifth Review Conference noted its concern that Eritrea had not provided updated information on progress in implementation of its Article 5 obligations since the Fourth Review Conference; and that Eritrea has not complied with the decision of the Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties (21MSP) on Eritrea's request for extension. It further noted that Eritrea had not acted in accordance with the agreed process for the preparation, submission and consideration of requests for extensions to Article 5 deadlines, thus preventing the Committee on Article 5 Implementation from carrying out its mandate to prepare and submit to the States Parties in advance of Meetings of the States Parties or Review Conferences, an analysis of each request for an Article 5 extended deadline.

The Fifth Review Conference welcomed Eritrea's efforts to conduct and finalise preliminary assessments on the restructuring of the EDA, which will enable Eritrea to prepare and submit a detailed work plan by 31 March 2027, and would welcome Eritrea providing updated information to the States Parties in this regard by 22MSP. The Conference also welcomed Eritrea's commitment to submit a request by 31 March 2027, for consideration by the 24MSP, which would "permit a cooperative dialogue with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation to take place, as envisaged by the extension request process". It noted that Eritrea would benefit from seeking assistance from the ISU in the preparation of its request, "including by inviting the ISU for an in-country visit, in order to ensure that Eritrea benefits from support in the development of its extension request". The Conference further noted the importance of Eritrea keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of implementation of its Article 5 obligations at intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties, as well as through its Article 7 reports.[30]

24 "Decisions on the request submitted by Eritrea for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", Fifth Review Conference, November 2024.

25 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted on 16 November 2023.

26 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted on 17 November 2024.

27 "Statement of Eritrea on its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", APMBC Fifth Review Conference, November 2024.

28 "Are Ethiopia and Eritrea hurtling towards war?", *Al Jazeera*, 25 March 2025, https://bit.ly/3GIT9te; and "A dangerous frenemy: Averting a showdown between Eritrea and Ethiopia", Clingendael Institute, 6 March 2025, https://bit.ly/4loCQAP.

29 "Conflict in Ethiopia", Global Conflict Tracker, Council on Foreign Relations, 18 February 2026, https://tinyurl.com/5fsucj2t; "Why tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea are rising again", *African Business*, 11 March 2026, https://tinyurl.com/2j2nk5ud; and "Ethiopia and Eritrea are on the brink of war again", Atlantic Council, 22 May 2026, https://tinyurl.com/43zmtwca.

30 "Decisions on the request submitted by Eritrea for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", Fifth Review Conference, November 2024.

Prior to the submission of this fifth extension request, Eritrea was already in serious violation of the APMBC for several years, as it failed to request an extension to its third extended Article 5 mine clearance deadline which expired on 31 December 2020. However, on 16 November 2023, Eritrea submitted a long-overdue fourth request to extend its clearance deadline. This two-paragraph request was very similar in content to that submitted a year later. In the 2023 request, Eritrea stated that a restructuring of the EDA was underway and pledged to work with the President, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, and the ISU to submit a detailed extension request by 31 March 2024 for consideration by the Fifth Review Conference in November 2024.[31] The interim request was granted by the 21MSP and a new deadline set for 31 December 2024.[32] In granting the 2023 interim extension request, the 21MSP noted that Eritrea would benefit from seeking assistance from the ISU in the preparation of its next request, "including by inviting the ISU for an in-country visit, in order to ensure that Eritrea benefits from support in the development of its extension request". It did not do so. Eritrea did not participate in the intersessional meetings that took place in Geneva in 2026.

Eritrea has reported no progress in survey or clearance of mined areas or in the development of a national mine action programme in recent years. It has wilfully failed to comply with its obligation under Article 5 of the APMBC to complete clearance as soon as possible. There is no indication of any demining since the end of 2013, which, without exceptional justification, would itself amount to a serious violation of the Convention. None has been forthcoming. Eritrea is therefore in serious violation of the Convention for its failure to work towards the completion of mine survey and clearance as soon as possible. In addition, Eritrea has not submitted an Article 7 report since 2014, despite the legal obligation for States Parties to report annually.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

At the time of writing, in August 2026, Eritrea had not provided any information on whether it has made any provision for a sustainable capacity to address previously unknown mined areas following completion.

31 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted on 16 November 2023.

32 Implementation Support Unit, "Eritrea", accessed 12 August 2024, https://bit.ly/3WEcvDT.