

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

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

20 KM²

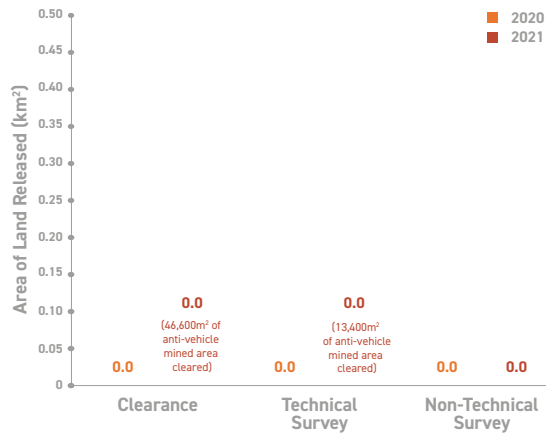
AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2021

0 M²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2021

0

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ethiopia did not undertake any survey or clearance in 2021 and, as of writing, had not yet submitted the updated work plan as requested by States Parties in accordance with the decision taken on Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request. Ethiopia's already ambitious land release targets now seem wholly unrealistic, with obstacles including technical and logistical challenges, a lack of basic infrastructure, and a critical lack of funding and capacity, as well as ongoing conflict within the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- As a priority, Ethiopia should conduct a desk assessment of remaining contamination in the database and conduct a complete re-survey of mined areas to establish an up-to-date and accurate baseline.
- Ethiopia should ensure the national mine action centre has sufficient resources to sustain an effective mine action programme and ensure the mobilisation of resources to complete clearance.
- Ethiopia should clarify its ability to meet the annual land release targets in its extension request and provide more information on the size of the demining capacity it requires to address the remaining challenge.
- Ethiopia should produce an updated work plan, with revised estimates of contamination, annual survey and clearance targets, and a detailed budget, in accordance with the terms of its latest extension.
- Ethiopia should cooperate with Eritrea, Sudan, and South Sudan on cross-border mine action activities by establishing regular regional coordination meetings to build trust between neighbouring countries and share information on mine action activities.
- Ethiopia should conduct a review of its existing information management capacity and finalise the transfer of its existing database to the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	4	Ethiopia has an inflated baseline of mine contamination, 99% of which are in suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in the Somali region. Ethiopia estimates that only 2% of the total mined area actually contains mines. Ethiopia has requested international assistance for a baseline survey to revise contamination data from the 2001–04 landmine impact survey. No progress was made on establishing a baseline survey in 2020 or 2021.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	In 2019, it was announced that the national programme would report directly to the Ministry of Defence (MoD), with a view to raising the profile of mine action and improve the efficiency of operations and availability of national resources. As at September 2022, it was not known if this had taken place. Ethiopia reported that no funding was made available for survey or clearance from April to December 2020 and in 2021, reiterated the need for more resources to make progress.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	Ethiopia claimed to have a gender policy in place for its mine action centre and reflected in its national mine action standards. It reported that, according to the policy, there is equal access for employment for qualified men and women in survey and clearance teams, including for managerial positions. As at September 2022, it was not known if any women were involved in survey or clearance in 2020 or 2021.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	Ethiopia's reporting in recent years have demonstrated improvements in accuracy although they lack detail. While Ethiopia submitted its Article 7 report covering 2021, no updated work plan, as requested by the decision taken by States Parties on Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, had been submitted.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	4	Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request contained annual targets for survey and clearance. According to the work plan, Ethiopia would have needed to more than double its clearance output from 2019 to 2020 to meet those targets. This seems unrealistic as no survey or anti-personnel mine clearance took place in 2021.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	An update to the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) is long overdue and, as at September 2022, Ethiopia had not reported on whether this has happened. Urgent progress is still needed on non-technical survey at scale, given the high degree of uncertainty over the extent and location of contamination.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	3	4	Ethiopia massively increased its land release output in April 2019–April 2020 but, as of writing, has reported that only 60,000m ² of further land release has taken place since. Given this, it seems unlikely that Ethiopia will meet its 2025 deadline, as challenges remain around capacity, funding, and access due to insecurity.
Average Score	4.0	4.3	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Head Office of the Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- Ethiopia Mine Action Office (EMAO)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Demining Companies (Ethiopian Armed Forces)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (technical agreement with the Ethiopian Ministry of Defence signed in June 2022)

OTHER ACTORS

- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

In September 2022, Ethiopia reported a total of 152 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) with a size of 726km² remaining (see Table 1).¹

This estimate was unchanged between its Article 7 report covering 2020 and its Article 7 Report covering 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022. Ethiopia records mine contamination in six of its eleven states. Almost all of the anti-personnel mine contamination is in SHAs, with just under 99% of the total estimate located in the Somali region.² However, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) points out that there are important caveats to this statement in that the 2019 Article 7 Report mentions that the unknown threat along the border with Eritrea, where it is believed there may be dense contamination, is not included in that report. Furthermore,

additional contamination is expected to result from the ongoing conflict.³

Ethiopia stated in its 2019 extension request that only 2% of the SHA are expected to contain mines.⁴ As such, as at the end of 2018, the request projected a total of 27.3km² (6.3km² of existing CHA and 21km² of the SHA reported) would require clearance, while 1,029km² would be cancelled or reduced.⁵ While high levels of cancellation are likely, The HALO Trust cautions that additional minefields could be found in the Somali region, which were not captured in the original Ethiopian Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) between 2001 and 2004.⁶

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end March 2022)⁷

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHAs/CHAs	Total area (m ²)
Somali	18	1,027,500	82	718,769,532	100	719,797,032
Gambela	0	0	20	838,000	20	838,000
Afar	6	1,755,049	8	1,915,300	14	3,670,349
Tigray	3	691,989	0	0	3	691,989
Oromia	0	0	13	1,026,105	13	1,026,105
Benishangule Gumuze	2	45,000	0	0	2	45,000
Totals	29	3,519,538	123	722,548,937	152	726,068,475

As mentioned above, the estimate of mine contamination does not include the contaminated area along the border with Eritrea as this area has not been surveyed due to lack of access and delineation between the two countries.⁸ It is expected that survey of the buffer zone will be undertaken once demarcation of the border area is completed.⁹ Positively, the second extension request predicted negotiations through a joint border commission would allow mine action in previously inaccessible areas to begin. Specifically, new "military humanitarian demining" operations were expected to start in the Tigray border minefield.¹⁰

In November 2020, armed clashes began between the Ethiopian Defense Force (ENDF) and Tigray Regional Security Forces. Initial clashes took place along the regional border with Sudan and between Amhara Region and Western and North-Western Tigray, and quickly moved towards other parts of Tigray.¹¹ Humanitarian access to Tigray has been severely hampered by insecurity and the closure of road and air access to Tigray, Afar and Amhara Regions.¹² In March 2022, the Federal Government of Ethiopia declared an "indefinite humanitarian truce" to allow aid into Tigray, although unrest and armed clashes continue elsewhere in the country and the situation was deteriorating in Amhara and Oromia as of writing.¹³

The 2019 extension request also states that access to mined areas in Afar and Somali regions continued to present a challenge for operations due to insecurity and their remoteness, while technical and logistical challenges and a lack of infrastructure

1 Article 7 Report (covering 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022), Form C.

2 Statement of Ethiopia, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20-22 June 2022.

3 Email from Abel Tesfai, Chief of Mine Action Programme Ethiopia, UNMAS, 26 August 2022.

4 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 35; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.

5 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 48.

6 Emails from Ralph Legg, Ethiopia Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 13 July and 25 August 2022.

7 Article 7 Report (covering January 2021-March 2022), Form C.

8 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

9 Ibid., p. 11.

10 Ibid., pp. 9 and 35. Ethiopia said it was difficult to determine which areas were under the responsibility of Ethiopia or Eritrea. The area was previously under the control of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). Ethiopia reported in 2015 it had conducted clearance behind its own defensive lines, but said it was not possible to enter the area between the two countries' defensive lines due to security concerns, and clearance would have to wait for demarcation to be completed.

11 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Humanitarian Needs Overview Ethiopia 2021", p. 16.

12 Ibid., p. 17.

13 Crisis Watch Digest Ethiopia, International Crisis Group, April 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/39gxCY8>.

continued to hamper access to Gambela and Benishangule regions.¹⁴ There have reportedly been six explosive ordnance (EO) accidents in Somali region since May 2021 (including three anti-vehicle mine explosions).¹⁵

In 2001–04, a landmine impact survey identified mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in 10 of Ethiopia's 11 regions, with 1,916 SHAs across more than 2,000km² impacting more than 1,492 communities.¹⁶ The Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO) stated that the LIS overestimated the number of both SHAs and impacted communities, citing lack of military expertise among the survey teams as the major reason for the overestimate.¹⁷ EMAO, with support from donors and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), subsequently carried out efforts to confirm the results of the LIS and conduct mine clearance throughout the country.¹⁸ In November 2019, Ethiopia requested international assistance to conduct a new baseline survey.¹⁹

Ethiopia's mine problem is a result of internal and international armed conflicts dating back to 1935, including the Italian occupation and subsequent East Africa campaigns (1935–41), a border war with Sudan (1980), the Ogaden war with Somalia (1977–78), internal conflict (1974–2000), and the Ethiopian-Eritrean war (1998–2000).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In 2001, following the end of the conflict with Eritrea, Ethiopia's Council of Ministers established EMAO as an autonomous civilian body responsible for mine clearance and mine risk education reporting to the Office of the Prime Minister.²⁰ EMAO developed its operational capacities with technical assistance from NPA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).²¹ In 2011, however, EMAO's governing board decided that the Ministry of Defence was better suited to clear the remaining mines. It was claimed that a civilian entity such as EMAO would struggle to access the unstable Somali region.²²

In response to the decision to close EMAO and transfer demining responsibility to the army's Combat Engineers Division, NPA ended its direct funding support and had completed the transfer of its remaining 49 mine detection dogs (MDDs) to EMAO and the federal police by the end of April 2012. The Combat Engineers Division took over management of the MDD Training Centre at Entoto in early 2012. The transition of EMAO to the MoD appeared to be in limbo until September 2015, when Ethiopia reported that oversight of national mine action activities had been re-established as "one Independent Mine Action Office" under the Combat Engineers Main Department.²³ In 2017, Ethiopia confirmed that this "autonomous legal entity" had been re-named EMAO, and was responsible for survey, clearance, and risk education.²⁴

In 2019, however, Ethiopia reported that the responsibility for the national mine action programme had been transferred back to the headquarters of the MoD. This was, it said, to enable the Ministry to directly manage resources and activities; to improve access to remaining CHAs; and to raise the profile of mine action at a time when resources are increasingly limited.²⁵

According to Ethiopia's second extension request (2019), just under US\$41 million is required to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 2025, a decrease from the US\$46 million reported in its 2017–20 work plan, which it said was due to progress made in land release in 2016–18. The request includes a breakdown of the budget required: US\$28.7 million for demining, US\$6.1 million for coordination and administration, US\$4.1 million for training and equipment to manage "residual issues"; and US\$2 million for quality assurance and information management.²⁶ Of the total US\$41 million sought, the government pledged to cover 20% (US\$8.2 million).²⁷ In its Article 7 Report covering January 2021 to March 2022, Ethiopia did not provide details of government funding that was forthcoming or of the international donor funding required to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 2025, simply stating that: "Ethiopia made realistic initiatives to improve the overall performance of the country's mine action sector in the period ending March 2022. This must be supplemented with adequate resources to allow the country to become landmine-free."²⁸

14 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 35.

15 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 25 August 2022.

16 Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), "Landmine Impact Survey Report, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia", May 2004.

17 In 2012, Ethiopia reported that subsequent technical survey and non-technical (re-)survey of SHAs identified during the LIS had confirmed mine contamination in only 136 areas. However, 60 previously unrecorded hazardous areas were also identified, which were confirmed as mined through technical survey, resulting in a total of 196 areas confirmed as mined. Also in 2012, Ethiopia reported that 358 SHAs across an area of 1,200km² from the LIS data needed to be re-surveyed.

18 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

19 Statement on Article 5 deadline extension request, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

20 Council of Ministers, Regulation No. 70/2001, 5 February 2001.

21 A. Borchgrevink et al., "End Review of the Norwegian People's Aid Mine Action Programme in Ethiopia 2005–2007: Final Evaluation", Norad Collected Reviews 36/2008, June 2008, p. 5.

22 Statements of Ethiopia, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 25 June 2015, April 2014, and 24 May 2012.

23 Statements of Ethiopia, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 9 April 2014 and 25 June 2015; "Response to Committee on Article 5 Implementation request for additional information on its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", submitted 26 September 2015; and Analysis of Ethiopia's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 19 November 2015, p. 3.

24 Revised National Mine Action Plan for 2017–20, October 2017, pp. 2 and 32.

25 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

28 Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form J.

Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request notes the availability of trained and highly experienced demining teams.²⁹ In 2018, the Ethiopian government was the sole funder of mine action operations.³⁰ EMAO had informed Mine Action Review that it expected to receive increased funding in 2019.³¹ In November 2020, Ethiopia reported that no funding was made available for humanitarian demining activities during the year from either the government or donors and that insecurity in border and remote areas was making access for demining personnel difficult.³² Ethiopia has also made numerous requests for international assistance, for vehicles, detectors, and personal protective equipment (PPE); assistance to conduct a baseline survey; and for Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) training for staff.³³

In May 2021, the United Nations (UN) in collaboration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and EMAO convened a meeting with national stakeholders, including ministries, and international stakeholders to discuss how to address Ethiopia's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) commitments. This opened up the humanitarian mine action space, increasing scope to appeal for financial and technical assistance for mine action, including mine clearance equipment.³⁴ As a result, Terms of Reference (ToR) for the formation of a mine action standing group were established and an ad hoc accreditation process was determined, providing international operators with access to register and resume operations in Ethiopia. In March and June 2021, UNMAS undertook assessment missions in the northern part of the country including Tigray. The mission report emphasised the urgency of establishing a Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) in Ethiopia to ensure a predictable, accountable, and coordinated response, organised in line with international humanitarian law principles.

Following these assessment missions, the UN Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team (UNHCT) endorsed the establishment of an MA AoR in Ethiopia, which falls under the UN Protection Cluster.³⁵ The MA AoR, coordinated by UNMAS, was formally activated in Ethiopia in August 2021.³⁶ In November 2021, in the context of extensive armed fighting throughout Tigray and some parts of the Afar and Amhara regions, with high numbers of EO casualties and ERWs spread across residential areas, internally displaced persons (IDP) sites, in communal areas and among ruined buildings, UNMAS shifted focus from providing a strategic advisory role to Ethiopia's UNHCT to an operational role. This included emergency Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), technical assessment and threat reduction in support

of humanitarian aid delivery. While the current context of conflict has necessitated this shift, UNMAS aspires to support the development of EMAO's long-term capacity in future if donor funding can be obtained.³⁷

UNMAS describes how the present MA AoR advocacy strategy has been produced in line with Ethiopia's UNHCT's Protection Strategy and responds to its Priority Objective, which is to enable the operationalisation of mine action, set for the first quarter of 2022. This MA AoR strategy was developed by MA AoR members in Ethiopia in order to facilitate advocacy for the rapid deployment of appropriate mine action capacities, when required, as part of emergency humanitarian operations as well as to support the safe transition and sustainable solutions for internally displaced people. The strategy aims at enabling the humanitarian mine action response in Ethiopia in 2022 through appropriate action, including EORE, victim assistance, survey, marking, and clearance. Since the MA AoR's establishment participation has grown with active members including UNMAS as the lead organisation, The HALO Trust, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Ethio-Professional Security Solution (EPSS), Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RADO), Survivors Recovery and Rehabilitation Organization (SRaRO), and the National Association for Disability.³⁸

At the time of writing, UNMAS had received contributions from the Government of Japan and the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), through the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund, supporting the programme's activities in its mobilisation phase through to the middle of 2022. UNMAS Ethiopia is currently seeking US\$2.5 million to scale up its mine action intervention in northern Ethiopia, and provide necessary technical assistance and capacity development for EMAO.³⁹

In June 2022, The HALO Trust signed a Technical Agreement with the Mine Action Office at the Ethiopian MoD and in August 2022, began training its first demining sections.⁴⁰ HALO has acquired funding from international donors to recruit, train, and deploy eight Ethiopian manual mine clearance teams by April 2023 to clear high-priority minefields on the border with Somaliland. HALO will also begin a resurvey of 100 known CHAs and SHAs in the Somali region with the objective of producing a baseline assessment of mine contamination in the east of Ethiopia. The requirement for both clearance and survey is expected to be much greater than the operational deployment that secured funding will currently permit.⁴¹

29 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.

30 Ibid., p. 21.

31 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, Head, EMAO, 5 August 2019.

32 Statement of Ethiopia, 18th Meeting of States Parties, 5 Nov 2020.

33 Statement on Article 5 deadline extension request, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

34 "Ethiopia appeals for International support to combat landmines", The Reporter, 22 May 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3jKdoci>; and email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 26 August 2022.

35 Emails from Abel Tesfai, then UNMAS Advisor to the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ethiopia, 18 and 26 August 2021.

36 Email from Abel Tesfai, Chief of Mine Action Programme Ethiopia, UNMAS, 19 July 2022.

37 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 26 August 2022.

38 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 19 July 2022.

39 Ibid.

40 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 13 July and 25 August 2022.

41 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 13 July 2022.

The success of Ethiopia's mine action programme is partly dependent on cross-border co-operation, given that there are areas believed to be contaminated at the borders with Eritrea, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, and Sudan. Recognising this, UNMAS organised a workshop in 2021 with the objective of bringing together all the affected states and key governmental institutions. In this workshop, participants were able to express their concerns and develop a collective response. Consequently, ToR for the establishment of the National Mine Action Authority was drafted. However, its momentum was halted due to the ongoing conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region. In addition to the workshop, EMAO, supported by UNMAS, began engaging with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to obtain some support, and, critically, strengthen regional cooperation. Although this engagement is at an early stage, UNMAS reports that it appears promising.⁴²

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 Ethiopia in order to minimise potential harm from clearance. The HALO Trust has institutional guidance on environmental management during demining operations. HALO is also in the process of developing pre-clearance environmental assessments for mine-impacted communities and is actively building partnerships with regional-based national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Somali Region, with the aim of facilitating post-clearance land regeneration projects to support resilience building against climate shocks.⁴³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In August 2019, EMAO claimed to have a gender and diversity plan in place and to have mainstreamed gender in the national standards. It stated that all groups affected by anti-personnel mines are consulted during survey and community liaison through face-to-face interviews and using elders to disseminate information to local communities. It also noted, though, that no female deminers were employed in the demining companies. It claimed that, according to EMAO's policy, there is equal access for employment for qualified men and women in survey and clearance teams, including for managerial positions, but acknowledged that in practice no women had been engaged in survey or clearance in 2018.⁴⁴

As at September 2022, the Ethiopian authorities had not provided information on whether women were involved in survey or clearance activities in 2020 or 2021. However, the HALO Trust is actively pursuing a policy of equal employment for women and men in Ethiopia for both operations and support staff. Most recently this has included the prioritisation of recruitment of women as deminers for HALO's first operational deployment in Somali Region.⁴⁵

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Although a version of the IMSMA database software was installed and customised by EMAO prior to 2015, in 2019, Ethiopia continued to report it was still using an "alternative data processing package" alongside the IMSMA database, due to a "gap" in the IMSMA system's installation. It reported that efforts to upgrade capacity and data processing had been ongoing under EMAO, and that it requested additional IMSMA training and assistance from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to finalise the transfer of the database.⁴⁶ The GICHD, however, has no record of a request for such assistance nor for any application by Ethiopia for its mine action personnel to attend any training courses.⁴⁷

In 2021, the British Embassy in Addis Ababa provided minor infrastructure support to facilitate the establishment of an information management database, including support for refurbishing existing computers and printers, and some infrastructure support, such as fixing cable lines.⁴⁸

Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 extension request contained a number of discrepancies in reporting, possibly due in part to previous inconsistencies in reporting on area remaining in its 2017 updated work plan and first Article 5 extension request.⁴⁹ The figures in Ethiopia's Article 7 report, covering April 2019 to April 2020, are accurate but the report lacks detail on survey and clearance capacity and land release methodology, and reporting would benefit from an updated work plan and detailed budget. However, both documents are evidence of significant improvements in reporting compared to previous years.

42 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 19 July 2022.

43 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 25 August 2022.

44 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.

45 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 25 August 2022.

46 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31.

47 Email from Dominic Wolsey, Advisor, Gender and Diversity, GICHD, 17 July 2020.

48 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 19 July 2022.

49 Ethiopia's reporting on the number and size of areas suspected or confirmed to be mined has been plagued with inconsistencies, including the figures contained within its 2015 Article 5 extension request, its response to subsequent requests for clarification, statements at APMBC meetings, and its last Article 7 transparency report on the status of contamination as at 30 April 2017. Ethiopia has been asked by States Parties to the APMBC on numerous occasions to clarify its estimates of contamination and to present accurate information on the number and estimated size of CHAs and SHAs. "Response to Committee on Article 5 Implementation request for additional information on its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", submitted on 26 September 2015; and Analysis of Ethiopia's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 19 November 2015, p. 3.

Both Ethiopia's Article 7 reports covering 2020 and 2021 were mostly unchanged from the Article 7 report it submitted covering 2019, albeit with a further 60,000m² of land release through anti-vehicle mine survey and clearance reported in the latest report. In the decision on Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, the States Parties requested that Ethiopia submit by 30 April 2021 an updated work plan for the period covered by the extension request. As at September 2022, Ethiopia had not done so.

In its Article 5 update to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings in Geneva in June 2022, Ethiopia stated its plans to conduct a desk assessment of remaining contamination in the database and conduct re-survey of mined areas to establish an accurate baseline, as well as strengthen technical capacity for emergency response while building towards nationwide survey and clearance.⁵⁰ However, no timeframe for these activities was given.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ethiopia's second Article 5 extension request for the period 2020–25 aims to achieve the following:

- Address the remaining 1,065km² of mine contamination
- Complete survey of the buffer zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea once demarcation is completed
- Obtain the support of donors and international advisors
- Fully equip and train the demining companies, Rapid Response Teams (RRTs), and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams
- Implement risk education in affected communities and mark SHAs; and
- Finish the building of the demining training centre.⁵¹

In 2019, Ethiopia planned a "rearrangement" of the RRTs and demining companies in the Somali region, and to release 171.5km² through survey and 1.9km² through clearance.⁵² Ethiopia far exceeded its survey target, releasing nearly

329km² from April 2019 to April 2020, but did not quite meet its clearance target of 1.9km², clearing only 1.76km².⁵³

In 2020 and 2021, Ethiopia planned to continue demining in the Somali region and expected to release 171.5km² through survey and to clear 4.3km² each year (see Table 2).⁵⁴ Ethiopia reported that while land release activities had been planned in the Somali region for the remainder of 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic meant that field activities were suspended both due to lockdowns affecting deployment of personnel and demining personnel being redeployed to support COVID-19 mitigation activities within the community.⁵⁵ In its Article 7 Report covering the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022, Ethiopia reported again that the COVID-19 pandemic had "affected the Ethiopian mine action sector" but gave no further details. It is not clear exactly when the 60,000m² reported as taking place 'as at 2020' occurred or when the suspension of field activities was lifted.⁵⁶

Table 2: Planned land release in 2019–25

Year	Area to be reduced/cancelled (m ²)	Area to be cleared (m ²)	Totals (m ²)
2019	171,507,352	1,905,438	173,412,790
2020	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2021	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2022	171,507,353	4,300,000	175,807,353
2023	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2024	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2025	0	3,900,000	3,900,000
Totals	1,029,044,113	27,305,438	1,056,349,51

50 Statement of Ethiopia, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

51 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10–11.

52 Ibid., p. 47.

53 Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.

54 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, p. 5; and Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

55 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form J.

56 Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

The work plan included in the 2019 extension request is neither realistic nor achievable and has already been surpassed by events. For example, Ethiopia did not detail how the significant jump in projections for clearance from 1.9km² in 2019 to 4.3km² in 2020 was to be realised. The request indicates that one additional "demining company" will be added during the extension period, but does not specify at what time this will occur or the number of deminers who will form the company. EMAO informed Mine Action Review that it was 90 deminers.⁵⁷ The request also foresees that one deminer will clear on average 40–50 square metres per day, 22 days a month, 10 months a year; projections which are improbably optimistic.⁵⁸

Ethiopia was due to submit to the States Parties, by 30 April 2021 and then a second time by 30 April 2023, updated work plans for the remaining period covered by the extension request. The decision at the Fourth Review Conference had further requested that these work plans contain an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas would be dealt with each year and by which organisations during the remaining period covered by the request, and a revised detailed budget.⁵⁹ As at September 2022, Ethiopia had not submitted the first of the requested updated work plans.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Ethiopia previously reported in 2017 that its National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) would be "developed and updated" and that standing operating procedures (SOPs) for mine clearance and other land release would be revised according to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). It had also reported that this would happen in 2015, according to its extension request targets.⁶⁰ As at September 2022, Ethiopia had not reported that the revisions had been completed.

Ethiopia's second Article 5 deadline extension request detailed the land release methodology it intended to employ in demining operations.⁶¹ The request claimed that manual demining is the most efficient and least costly method of clearance, and states that machines cannot be used due to the terrain of the remaining contaminated areas.⁶² Arguably, with such large projections for cancellation and reduction of SHA, Ethiopia should consider significantly increasing non-technical survey capacity before expending significant resources on technical survey.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

All survey and clearance in Ethiopia are conducted by the national demining companies of the Ethiopian Armed Forces. Ethiopia's second extension request forecasted that following a "rearrangement" of its four demining companies and four RRTs, which included two technical survey/RRTs and two specialist EOD teams in 2019, these four demining companies and four RRTs would be deployed each year through to the end of its Article 5 deadline extension period in 2025.⁶³ According to EMAO, two companies were deployed for clearance in 2018, along with two technical survey teams, and one EOD team.⁶⁴ Ethiopia has not reported on the operational capacity that was deployed for survey and clearance from April 2019 to April 2020. From April to December 2020 no operational capacity was deployed and, as at August 2022, Ethiopia had not formally reported what operational capacity was deployed in 2021. However, UNMAS noted that EMAO trained 45 new deminers in 2021.⁶⁵

The extension request claims that the manual clearance, technical survey, and EOD teams have carried out extensive trainings and "are enough capable to implement the activities mentioned in the detailed work plan".⁶⁶ Ethiopia has reported that while it has six ground preparation machines, these were not in use as all remaining hazardous areas are located in remote areas, which it claims are only suitable for manual clearance.⁶⁷ The British Embassy in Addis Ababa is reported to have supported basic improvised explosive device (IED) and EOD training for Ethiopia in 2021.⁶⁸

57 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.

58 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.

59 Decision on 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 November 2019.

60 Revised National Mine Action Plan for 2017–20, October 2017, p. 12; and 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.

61 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 24–25 and 27–29.

62 Ibid., p. 51.

63 Ibid., pp. 46–48.

64 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.

65 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 26 August 2022.

66 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 50.

67 Ibid.

68 Emails from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 19 July and 26 August 2022.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

Prior to 2021, the last reported land release of anti-personnel mined area in Ethiopia took place between end-April 2019 and end-April 2020, when a total of 330km² of mined area was released across 128 hazardous areas. Of this, 1.76km² was cleared, 10.3km² was reduced through technical survey, and 318.2km² was cancelled through non-technical survey. A total of 128 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.⁶⁹ Ethiopia reported that no further survey or clearance took place in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ethiopia then stated that, as at 31 March 2022, it had been able to release 330,341,076m².⁷⁰ The additional 60,000m² of land release concerns anti-vehicle mined area in the Fik district of Erer zone in the Somali region. There is inconsistency in the Article 7 Report as to the means by which this land was released. The report variously states that 13,400m² was "cancelled using technical survey" and 46,600m² was cleared or that 13,400m² was "reduced through technical survey" and 46,600m² was cleared, albeit with no anti-personnel mines or items of UXO destroyed.⁷¹ A total of 46 TM-57 anti-vehicle mines (and no anti-personnel mines) were destroyed during this clearance/technical survey.⁷²

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 3: Five-year summary of anti-personnel mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2021*	0
2020**	0
2019***	1.76
2018	1.10
2017	0.40
Total	3.26

* Reporting year was January 2021 to March 2022

** Reporting year was April–December 2020

*** Reporting year was 31 April 2019–31 April 2020

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Ethiopia 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 2025.⁷³ In its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, Ethiopia listed the following reasons for its inability to comply with its Article 5 obligations: insecurity in and around some mined areas; the lack of basic social services and infrastructure necessary for operations in rural areas; continuous redeployment of demining teams in scattered mined areas; lack of funding; the identification of additional hazardous areas; climate (such as a three-month rainy season); and a lack of precise information on the number and location of mined areas.⁷⁴ This again points to the need for extensive non-technical survey to clarify the extent of remaining mined areas and the total area of known contamination in the country.

69 Statement of Ethiopia, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

70 Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

71 Ibid. Table 2 on Form C in the same draft report specifies 13,400m² "reduced" and 46,600m² "cleared".

72 Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

73 Ethiopia's original Article 5 deadline expired on 1 June 2015. In March 2015, Ethiopia submitted a request for an extension of five years until 1 June 2020 to complete survey and clearance of all remaining mined areas. It failed, however, to submit an extension request with sufficient time to allow States Parties to consider extending the deadline prior to its expiry, thus placing Ethiopia in violation of the convention until the approval of the late request by the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties on 4 December 2015.

74 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 40–41; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 14–15.

Ethiopia has been at best, overly ambitious, or at worst, seriously remiss in its projections and estimations for completion of survey and clearance in recent years. Its 2017–20 work plan, submitted in October 2017, stated that it was “realistic” that all 314 areas then remaining could be addressed using “all available demining assets in Ethiopia” within the extension time period, and that donor funding will enable it “successfully to complete the clearance of contaminated areas from land mines and fulfil the legal obligations of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention by 2020”.⁷⁵ This did not occur.

The second extension request clearly sets out primary assumptions and risk factors in implementing its targets: that donor funding will increase steadily; that old demining equipment is replaced by “licensed” demining equipment; that one deminer will clear on average as much as 50 square metres per day, 22 days a month, and 10 months a year; and that one additional demining company will be added, for a total of five deployed. This average clearance rate per deminer appears unrealistically high.⁷⁶

For the period April 2019 to April 2020, Ethiopia cleared 1.76km² and exceeded its land release through survey target by 91%. Ethiopia has not reported on its deployed operational capacity during this period, so it is unclear how these high levels of productivity were achieved. Ethiopia reported that for the remainder of 2020, no land release activities took place due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. Ethiopia’s Article 7 Report covering the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022 indicated that only a further 60,000m² had been released to date. Ethiopia would benefit from providing an updated work plan with realistic and costed annual targets for land release.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The scope of residual contamination remains unknown in Ethiopia. Ethiopia acknowledges that landmines may have been left because of lack of information during clearance operations, because of ground movements, or exposure to rain. It is also possible that more mines have been laid in recent armed conflicts.⁷⁷ As at September 2022, Ethiopia had not reported on whether it has a strategy for managing residual contamination after completion of large-scale clearance.

⁷⁵ For example, in just one year, 2018, the work plan stated that more than 518.5km² would be addressed through non-technical and technical survey by concluding survey of Afar, Benishangul, Gambela, and Oromia regions, along with ongoing survey in Somali region, and the clearance of just under 8km².

⁷⁶ 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.