

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

KEY DATA

**ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM**

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

20KM²

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2022

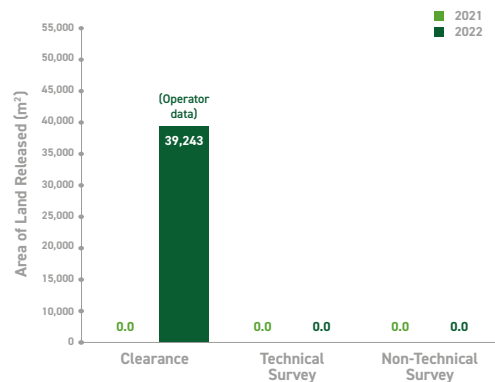
39,243M²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2022

1

(OPERATOR DATA)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **NONE**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ethiopia did not report any survey or clearance in 2022 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. The work of the Mine Action Area of Responsibility, co-ordinated by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), as well as the initiation of survey and clearance by The HALO Trust (HALO) in 2022 are positive steps. But given technical and logistical challenges and a critical lack of funding and capacity, Ethiopia's already ambitious land release targets are now wholly unrealistic.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- As a priority, Ethiopia should re-survey all mined areas to establish an accurate baseline of contamination.
- Ethiopia should ensure the national mine action centre has sufficient resources to sustain an effective mine action programme and mobilise resources to complete clearance.
- 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 extension.
- Ethiopia should review of its existing information management capacity and finalise the transfer of its existing data to the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2022)	Score (2021)	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. HALO began non-technical survey (NTS) in Somali state in 2022.
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). Ethiopia did not report if any funding was made available for survey or clearance in 2022.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	3	Ethiopia claims to have a gender policy in place for its mine action centre and which is reflected in its national mine action standards (NMAS). HALO trained and deployed 28 female deminers in 2022.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	Ethiopia's reports in recent years have demonstrated improvements in accuracy although they lack detail. While Ethiopia submitted an Article 7 report covering 2021 and the first quarter of 2022, it had not submitted one covering the remainder of the year as at September 2023. 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	3	Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request contained annual targets for survey and clearance. No survey of anti-personnel mine clearance took place in 2021 and only limited clearance took place in 2022.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	An update to the NMAS is long overdue and, as at July 2023, Ethiopia had not reported on whether this has happened. Urgent progress is still needed on NTS 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)	4	3	Since April 2020 only minimal land release has occurred. Challenges remain around capacity, funding, and access due to insecurity. In June 2023, Ethiopia acknowledged it would be "impossible" to meet its 2025 deadline. The arrival of HALO has improved the long-term prospects for Article 5 implementation in Ethiopia.
Average Score	4.3	4.0	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING 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 (HALO) (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 its most recent Article 7 Report, submitted 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 Ethiopia records mine contamination in six of its twelve² states. Almost all of the anti-personnel (AP) mined area is in SHAs, with just under 99%

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

2 On 19 June 2023, Ethiopia's Upper House of parliament voted to form a twelfth regional state called Southern Ethiopian Region. "Ethiopia: Upper House votes to form 12th regional state", *africanews*, accessed 30 August 2023 at: <https://bit.ly/3qP7RHf>.

of the total estimate located in the Somali region.³ UNMAS notes, however, that there is a further, unknown threat along the border with Eritrea, where contamination may be dense. Furthermore, additional contamination is expected to result from the conflict in Tigray,⁴ which has more recently spread into the regions of Amhara and Afar.⁵ Ethiopia has not yet provided an estimate of contamination disaggregated between areas known or suspected to contain AP or anti-vehicle (AV) mines.

Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request projected that a total of 27km² would require clearance, while the remaining 1,029km² would be cancelled or reduced.⁶ While high levels of cancellation are likely, HALO cautions that additional minefields could be found in the Somali region, which were not captured in the Ethiopian Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) in 2001–04.⁷

Table 1: AP mined area by region (at end March 2022)⁸

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

It is expected that survey of the buffer zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea will be undertaken once demarcation of the border is completed.⁹ Positively, the second extension request predicted negotiations through a joint border commission would allow mine action to be implemented in previously inaccessible areas. Specifically, new "military humanitarian demining" operations were expected to start in the Tigray border minefield.¹⁰ That said, no progress on demarcation of the border has been reported and conflict in northern Ethiopia has severely impeded progress in survey or clearance along the border.

In March 2022, the Federal Government of Ethiopia declared an "indefinite humanitarian truce" to allow aid into Tigray, although unrest and armed clashes continued elsewhere in the country and the situation deteriorated in Amhara and

Oromia.¹¹ On 2 November 2022, a permanent cessation of hostilities was agreed between the Federal Government and armed groups in the Tigray. Ethiopia reported that the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) had agreed to fully disarm but that fighting had left behind significant contamination from explosive remnants of war (ERW). Ethiopia claimed in November 2022 that, since the onset of the conflict, its Combat Engineering Units had cleared a total of 1,000km² contaminated with mines and ERW in the north and east of Amhara region, Afar region, and west Tigray region.¹² This figure is not credible. UNMAS has not received reports of such clearance.¹³

Despite the ceasefire agreement, instability and insecurity has continued. Violence erupted in Amhara region in April 2023 over a federal decision to dissolve regional paramilitary

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

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

5 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

6 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 48.

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

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

9 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 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 States' defensive lines due to security concerns, and clearance would have to wait for demarcation to be completed.

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

12 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, APMBC Twentieth Meeting of States Parties (20MSP), Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

13 Email from Abel Tesfai, Chief of Mine Action Programme Ethiopia, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

groups. Talks between the federal government and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) ended without agreement in May 2023. Authorities denied the TPLF's request to restore its legal registration as a political party, marking a setback in otherwise improving relations with the Federal government.¹⁴ Although the security situation in some parts of northern Ethiopia appeared uncertain, Ethiopia's Ministry of Defence did agree in April 2023 that UNMAS could resume operations in the Amhara, Afar, and Tigray regions, a positive step for mine action.¹⁵ Ethiopia claimed in June 2023 that conflict in northern parts of the country had "recently ended".¹⁶

In 2022, HALO began non-technical survey (NTS) operations in Somali region. This work is likely to have a significant impact on the overall national understanding of contamination, as the previous LIS data identified the region as having the largest proportion of legacy contamination in Ethiopia.¹⁷

The 2001–04 LIS had identified mine and ERW contamination in 10 of Ethiopia's 11 regions, with 1,916 SHAs across more than 2,000km² impacting more than 1,492 communities.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹

EMAO, with support from donors and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), subsequently sought to confirm the results of the LIS and conduct mine clearance throughout the country.²⁰ In 2019, however, Ethiopia requested international assistance to conduct a new baseline survey.²¹

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). It is unclear whether Ethiopia also has contamination from AP mines of an improvised nature. Ethiopia stated in November 2022 that it had previously deployed its Combat Engineering Units to clear landmines in Somali region, "due to the cause of international extremist Al Shabaab activity by using IEDs" [improved explosive devices].²² HALO is not aware of any evidence of IEDs within its current area of operations in the Somali region.²³ However, UNMAS states that reports from the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) show evidence of IED threats in the Somali region, with seven such incidents recorded between August and September 2022 alone.²⁴

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In 2001, following the end of the conflict with Eritrea, Ethiopia's Council of Ministers established the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO), as an autonomous civilian body responsible for mine clearance and mine risk education reporting to the Office of the Prime Minister.²⁵ In 2011, EMAO's governing board decided that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) was better suited to clear the remaining mines.²⁶ The transition of EMAO to the MoD appeared to be in limbo until 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.²⁷ In 2017, Ethiopia confirmed that this "autonomous legal entity" had been re-named EMAO, and was responsible for survey, clearance, and risk education.²⁸ In 2019, however, Ethiopia reported that the responsibility for the national mine action programme had been transferred back to the headquarters of the MoD.²⁹

According to Ethiopia's second extension request (2019), more than US\$40 million was required to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 2025.³⁰ The government pledged to cover 20% of the total,³¹ but in its most recent Article 7 Report (covering January 2021 to March 2022), Ethiopia did not provide details

14 International Crisis Group, "Crisis Watch Digest Ethiopia", 13 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3Q9unVF>.

15 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023; and letter to Dr. Catherine Sozi, UN Resident and Humanitarian Co-ordinator, from Colonel Nizam Mudese, General Acting Director, Ministry of Defence Foreign Relations and Military Cooperation Directorate, Government of Ethiopia, 27 April 2023.

16 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5 Implementation, APMBBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19 June 2023.

17 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

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

19 In 2012, Ethiopia reported that subsequent technical survey (TS) and NTS of the 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 TS, resulting in a total of 196 confirmed mined areas. Ethiopia also reported that 358 SHAs across an area of 1,200km² from the LIS data needed to be re-surveyed.

20 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

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

22 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

23 Email from Rob Syfret, Head of Region, Horn of Africa, HALO, 10 April 2023.

24 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

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

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

27 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.

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

29 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

30 Ibid., p. 51.

31 Ibid., p. 11.

of any government funding, 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."³²

Ethiopia has made numerous requests for international assistance, for vehicles, detectors, and personal protective equipment (PPE); assistance to conduct a baseline survey; and for IMSMA training for staff.³³ Ethiopia has not reported if any national funding was made available for survey or clearance in 2022 and EMAO did not clarify if Ethiopia has a resource mobilisation strategy in place for Article 5 implementation.

As at July 2022, UNMAS had received contributions from the Government of Japan and the UN 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. At that time, UNMAS Ethiopia was 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.³⁴ From March to August 2022, UNMAS undertook 35 field assessment missions in the northern part of the country including Tigray. UNMAS cautions that re-assessment is required in locations that may have been further contaminated by the armed conflict between August and November 2022. UNMAS' mission report emphasised the urgency of establishing a mine action response in northern Ethiopia.³⁵

Despite a UN-led initiative involving non-governmental organisations (NGOs), HALO has observed that there is currently no formal mechanism for involving clearance operators in the decision-making process by the national authorities.³⁶ HALO is currently the only international

humanitarian demining operator working in Ethiopia, having signed a Technical Agreement with the Mine Action Office at the Ethiopian MoD in June 2022 and beginning training of its first demining sections in August 2022.³⁷ HALO is not currently conducting capacity development support to the national authority in Ethiopia but is exploring options to do so in the future.³⁸ The Government of Ethiopia has requested capacity building support from UNMAS, with a plan to attach an international capacity building specialist to EMAO and an aspiration to add a second. UNMAS also reports that EMAO is developing a request to seek support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) for information management and strategic planning.³⁹

HALO has encountered various challenges in the mine action environment in Ethiopia. HALO was able to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Somali regional state authorities in early 2023, allowing HALO to initiate operations in the region, but has been unable to sign a federal level MoU with the MoD and is therefore still unable to import demining equipment into Ethiopia free of tax. EMAO does not yet have a mechanism for accrediting national and international mine action operators.⁴⁰ However, the Government of Ethiopia, supported by UNMAS, has developed the first standard on accreditation,⁴¹ which is a notable first step.

Ethiopia has reported that it considers its national implementation measures and existing legislation to be sufficient for the national mine action programme.⁴² Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request also notes the availability of trained and highly experienced demining teams.⁴³ However, there has been a lack of clarity during Ethiopia's extension period regarding the national operational capacity available or any strategy to increase this in order to fulfil Ethiopia's Article 5 obligations.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Ethiopia does not have a national mine action standard (NMAS) on environmental management and/or a policy on environmental management.⁴⁴ 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.

HALO has a global standard operating procedure (SOP) for the environmental management of operations, which serves as a basis for programme-specific environmental management.⁴⁵ 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 NGOs in the Somali region, with the aim of facilitating post-clearance land regeneration projects to support resilience building against climate shocks.⁴⁶ HALO aimed to commence such activities in late 2023 or early 2024.

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

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

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

35 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

36 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

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

38 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

39 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

40 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

41 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

42 Article 7 Report (situation as of 30 April 2017), Form A.

43 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.

44 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

45 Ibid.

46 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO, 25 August 2022; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

HALO has long-established clearance procedures that help mitigate the impact of operations on the environment. These include only cutting trees during clearance operations when absolutely necessary and limiting any cutting to as few branches as possible and/or to young trees that are growing too densely to work around. Teams from HALO Ethiopia and HALO Somaliland⁴⁷ share field camps and all HALO field camps on the Ethiopia-Somaliland border are solar-powered to reduce the need for diesel generators or wood burning. HALO's Ethiopia programme plans to extend solar power to future field camps in elsewhere in the country.⁴⁸

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 AP 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. At the time of writing, UNMAS was engaging with EMAO to undertake a gender mainstreaming assessment.⁴⁹

HALO has a global policy on equality, diversity and inclusion, which serves as the basis for programme-specific approaches.⁵⁰ HALO actively pursues a policy of equal employment for women and men in Ethiopia for both operations and support staff, including the prioritisation of recruitment of women as deminers for HALO's first operational deployment in the Somali region.⁵¹ In 2022, HALO recruited, trained and deployed women for survey and clearance teams in Ethiopia. To date, two deminer training courses have taken place, with women making up a significant proportion of trainees on both courses. As at March 2023, women made up 30% of HALO Ethiopia staff, with women occupying 20% of managerial/supervisory positions and 31% of operational positions (see Table 2). HALO Ethiopia plans to continue to work to increase the proportion of women in operational roles, through liaison with local community leaders in the rural mine-impacted communities, where recruitment takes place.⁵²

HALO's NTS teams contain both men and women to facilitate engagement by all groups during survey. HALO will continue to maintain gender balance in its survey teams as its operational capacity expands. HALO also recruits both men and women for survey teams from the mine-impacted communities in which it works. This helps to encourage participation from, and ongoing liaison with, different social groups, to ensure the impact of mines on all segments of the community is considered during survey.⁵³

All beneficiary data collected during survey are disaggregated by gender and age. HALO also collects information on the current and expected future use of contaminated land, as well as for nearby land where access is restricted due to contamination. HALO uses this beneficiary and land-use data to assist in the prioritisation and planning of clearance and additional survey. This process includes consideration of the specific impact of contamination or suspected contamination on different groups, including women and children. During pre-clearance and post-clearance surveys, HALO uses diverse approaches, including household interviews and community meetings, to encourage wide participation from all parts of the community.⁵⁴

47 Somaliland is a self-proclaimed, though generally unrecognised, State in the north-west of Somalia.

48 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

49 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

50 Ibid.

51 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO, 25 August 2022.

52 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

Table 2: Gender composition of mine action operators in Ethiopia in 2022⁵⁵

Organisation*	Total staff	Total women employed	Total staff in managerial or supervisory positions	Total women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total staff in operational positions	Total women in operational positions
EMAO	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K
National Demining Companies	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K
HALO*	103	31	20	4	89	28

* Figures are as at March 2023. Some supervisory positions are also operational.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Although a version of IMSMA 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 system’s installation. EMAO claims it requested additional training and assistance from the GICHD to finalise the transfer of the data into IMSMA.⁵⁶ 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.⁵⁷ In August 2023, UNMAS stated that, having assisted in drafting a request for such assistance from the GICHD, it was awaiting approval from senior officials before proceeding.⁵⁸

UNMAS has established and employed its own global information management system (GIMS), and field enumerators, and assessment is conducted using Survey 123. A strategic decision has yet to be made as to whether use of the GIMS system will continue in Ethiopia in the long term.⁵⁹

EMAO did not clarify what steps, if any, were taken in 2022 to improve the quality of information in Ethiopia’s database.

There is currently no national guidance for the collection of NTS data in Ethiopia. The data collection forms HALO uses are in line with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and global best practice and, as such, collect data in a form compatible with IMSMA. HALO reports all its land release data to the MoD each month. At this stage it is not clear to what extent the information that HALO reports is

being used by the national authority. HALO will continue to report to the government and other stakeholders and will encourage its data to be used to improve the quality of information in the national database.⁶⁰

Ethiopia’s Article 7 reports covering 2020 and 1 January 2021 to 1 March 2022 were mostly unchanged from the report it submitted for 2019, aside from 60,000m² of land release through survey and clearance of AV mined area. As at September 2023, Ethiopia had still to submit an Article 7 report covering the remainder of 2022.

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 July 2023, Ethiopia had not done so.

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.⁶¹ However, no timeframe for these activities was given. In June 2023, Ethiopia again stated its commitment to “employ advanced technical survey in different regions of the country” adding that “the recent peace agreement provides good opportunity for mine action”. Ethiopia stated it was “in preparation to develop a new work plan that encompasses the current situation”.⁶²

55 Ibid.

56 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31.

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

58 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

59 Ibid.

60 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

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

62 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5 Implementation, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19 June 2023.

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.⁶³

Table 3: Planned land release in 2019–25⁶⁴

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

The work plan included in the 2019 extension request is neither realistic nor achievable and has already been surpassed by events. In its Article 7 Report covering 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022, Ethiopia reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had again “affected the Ethiopian mine action sector” but gave no further details. Ethiopia has not provided any updated land release targets since then.

At the Twentieth Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC in 2022, Ethiopia shared an amended list of strategic priorities, which reflected the outbreak of conflict in the north of the country, namely:

- Clearance of mines and ERW by Ethiopia's Combat Engineering Units focused in the regions of Amhara, Afar, Benishangule, Gambela, Gumuze, and Tigray. Ethiopia described the risks to people going about their daily activities as “high”, and appealed for international aid to support clearance
- Cross-border liaison and co-operation to support implementation of the Oslo Action Plan.
- A risk education programme.
- Training of military personnel to conduct humanitarian demining.

- Reduction of ERW and other hazards.
- A concerted NTS effort.
- Pro-active planning for victim assistance.⁶⁵

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 AP 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.⁶⁶ As at July 2023, Ethiopia had not submitted even the first of the requested updated work plans.

There were no nationally agreed criteria for the prioritisation of land release tasks in Ethiopia at the time of writing. HALO uses its own survey information to assess the impact of contamination and prioritise clearance tasks. HALO also produces its own survey and task dossiers for all operations,⁶⁷ which is normally the responsibility of the national authorities and the national mine action centre.

⁶³ 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10–11.

⁶⁴ 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, p. 48; and Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

⁶⁵ Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

⁶⁶ Decision on 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 November 2019.

⁶⁷ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Ethiopia previously reported in 2017 that its NMAS would be “developed and updated” and that SOPs for mine clearance and other land release would be revised according to the IMAS. As at July 2023, however it was unclear whether any revisions had been completed. HALO has not had access to any previously developed NMAS and has developed its own SOPs, which are in line with IMAS.⁶⁸

Ethiopia's second Article 5 deadline extension request detailed the land release methodology it intended to employ in demining operations.⁶⁹ 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.⁷⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

HALO is the only international humanitarian mine action operator currently working in Ethiopia. In June 2022, HALO signed a Technical Agreement with the Mine Action Office at the Ethiopian MoD. In August, it began training its first demining sections to clear high-priority minefields on the border with Somaliland.⁷¹ HALO also plans to undertake 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. Based on existing survey information, the requirement for both clearance and survey is expected to be much greater than the operational deployment that HALO's secured funding will currently permit.⁷²

As planned, by April 2023, HALO had recruited, trained, and deployed eight manual mine clearance teams and two NTS teams (see Tables 4 and 5). HALO planned to maintain this capacity for 2023. HALO cautions that expansion of NTS and clearance operations may be impeded by an inability to import essential demining equipment into Ethiopia, due to a lack of a federal-level MoU with the MoD, as well as on its need for increased donor funding.⁷³

HALO Ethiopia notes that is using HALO's experience, technological innovations and operating procedures, built during its time conducting clearance and survey operations in Somaliland since 1999, where terrain and field conditions are similar to those in Somali region of Ethiopia. HALO will share lessons learned and operating procedures with the national authorities should opportunities to undertake capacity development arise. Additionally, HALO will share

lessons learned should other international or national clearance operators become registered and accredited in Ethiopia.⁷⁴

Prior to HALO commencing operations, all survey and clearance in Ethiopia was conducted by the national demining companies of the Ethiopian Armed Forces. Ethiopia's second extension request forecasted a “rearrangement” of its four demining companies and four RRTs, which would be deployed each year through to the end of its Article 5 extension in 2025.⁷⁵ The request indicates that one additional “demining company” would be added during the extension period, but did not specify when this would occur. EMAO informed Mine Action Review in 2019 that there would be an additional 90 deminers.⁷⁶

UNMAS explains that it had planned to launch a request for proposals from organisations wishing to undertake survey and clearance in Ethiopia through third party agreement. However, due to the lack of accredited implementing partners, in the absence of a finalised accreditation mechanism, UNMAS has had to change its operating mode to direct implementation; deploying its operational personnel in the field to undertake surveys and removal of explosive ordnance in close collaboration with government entities. UNMAS describes this as a measure of last resort.⁷⁷

Ethiopia has reported that it has six ground-preparation machines but that these were not in use as all remaining hazardous areas are located in remote areas, which it claims are only suitable for manual clearance.⁷⁸

68 Ibid.

69 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 24–25 and 27–29.

70 Ibid, p. 51.

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

72 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO, 13 July 2022; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

73 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April and 4 August 2023.

74 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

75 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 46–48.

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

77 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

78 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 50.

Table 4: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2022⁷⁹

Operator	Survey teams	Total personnel	Mechanical assets	Comments
HALO	1	4	0	Deployed for NTS. See Table 5 for technical survey capacity. Initiated operations in 2022. Second NTS team deployed January 2023.
Ethiopia Armed Forces*	2	N/K	0	Deployed for technical survey.
Totals	3	N/K	0	

* Based on most recent data from 2019 for capacity deployed in 2018. It is not known if this information remains correct.

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2022⁸⁰

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers	Mechanical assets	Comments
HALO	8	64	0	Deployed for clearance and technical survey. Commenced operations in 2022.
Ethiopia Armed Forces*	2	N/K	0	Also deployed one EOD team.
Totals	10	N/K	0	

* Based on most recent data from 2019 for capacity deployed in 2018. It is not known if this information remains correct.

DEMINER SAFETY

EMA0 did not clarify if any accidents involving deminers took place in 2022. There were no accidents involving HALO deminers during survey or clearance operations in 2022.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2022

Ethiopia did not report any release of land contaminated with AP mines during 2022. HALO reported that, during its first year of operation in Ethiopia in 2022, it cancelled no areas through NTS, reduced no areas through TS, and cleared 39,243m², destroying one AP mine. HALO recorded 2.16km² of previously unrecorded AP mined area through NTS.⁸¹

Prior to 2021, the last reported land release of AP mined area in Ethiopia took place between May 2019 and May 2020, when a total of 330km² of mined area was released across 128

hazardous areas. Of this, almost 1.8km² was cleared, 10km² was reduced through TS, and 318km² was cancelled through NTS. A total of 128 AP mines were found and destroyed.⁸²

In January 2021 to 31 March 2022, some 60,000m² of AV mined area was released with the destruction of 46 TM-57 AV mines.⁸³

79 Emails from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMA0, 5 August 2019; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April and 4 August 2023.

80 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

81 Ibid.

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

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

SURVEY IN 2022

Ethiopia did not report any land release through survey during 2022. HALO did not release any mined area survey but did record 2,162,961m² of AP mined area through NTS.⁸⁴

CLEARANCE IN 2022

Ethiopia did not report any clearance of AP mined area during 2022. HALO reported that, during 2022, it cleared 39,243m², destroying one AP mine (see Table 6).⁸⁵

Ethiopia stated in November 2022 that, since the onset of the regional conflict which began in late 2020, Ethiopia's Combat Engineering Units had cleared a 1,000km² area contaminated with "mines and ERW" in the north and east of Amhara region, Afar region, and west Tigray region.⁸⁶ No specific dates for this activity were provided. The figure is not credible.⁸⁷

As previously noted, it is unclear if and how much land was released by clearance in Ethiopia in 2021.

Table 6: Mine clearance by HALO in 2022⁸⁸

State/Zone/District (woreda)	CHAs cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Somali/Jarar Zone/ Gashamo	0	39,243	1	0
Totals	0		1	0

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Ethiopia 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 2025.⁸⁹ It will not meet this deadline.

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, it 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".⁹⁰ 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.⁹¹

⁸⁴ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

⁸⁷ UNMAS is not aware of any such clearance having taken place and Mine Action Review was unable to verify such reports with EMAO. UNMAS notes that similar claims have been made by Tigray regional forces, who claim to have surveyed and cleared around 1,700 schools, removing thousands of items of explosive ordnance, but without any operational detail provided. Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

⁸⁸ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

⁸⁹ 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.

⁹⁰ For example, in just one year, 2018, the work plan stated that more than 518.5km² would be addressed through NTS and NTS with clearance of just under 8km².

⁹¹ 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.

The pace of clearance in Ethiopia has been exceedingly slow in recent years. In May 2019 to May 2020, Ethiopia cleared 1.76km² and exceeded its land release through survey target by 91%.⁹² Ethiopia's most recent Article 7 report, however, covering January 2021 to end-March 2022, indicated that only a further 60,000m² had been released to date.⁹³ In 2022, HALO was able to release a further 39,243m² through clearance.⁹⁴

At the 20MSP in November 2022, Ethiopia stated that it is not in a position to complete clearance by 2025.⁹⁵ Apart from the lack of an accurate baseline of contamination, the ongoing conflict and insecurity in the north of the country since November 2020 has impeded any ongoing efforts towards completion. The ongoing work of the "Mine Action Area of Responsibility" launched in 2021 and coordinated by UNMAS, and the commencement of HALO's survey and clearance operations in Ethiopia in 2022, are significant positive steps. Ethiopia would benefit from finally providing an updated work plan with realistic and costed annual targets for land release, including a realistic plan for comprehensive NTS.

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2022	*0.04
2021**	0
2020***	0
2019****	1.76
2018	1.10
Total	2.90

* Represents clearance reported by HALO

** Reporting year was January 2021 to March 2022

*** Reporting year was April–December 2020

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

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.⁹⁶ As at July 2023, Ethiopia had not reported on whether it has a strategy for managing residual contamination after completion of large-scale clearance.

⁹² Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.

⁹³ Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

⁹⁴ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

⁹⁵ Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

⁹⁶ 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.