

### KEY DATA

#### APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2026

Not on track to meet deadline

#### AP MINE CONTAMINATION: 17.83KM<sup>2</sup>

Medium  
(National authority estimate)

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (m <sup>2</sup> )	Release in 2023 (m <sup>2</sup> )
Clearance	15,574	185,914
Technical Survey	42,104	351,797
Non-Technical Survey	0	0
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed	17	170

#### MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2024:

- HAMAP-Humanitaire (HAMAP)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Seconded staff from the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD)

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2024, Mauritania released 57,678m<sup>2</sup> through technical survey (TS) and clearance conducted by the international NGO HAMAP-Humanitaire (HAMAP), with staff seconded from the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD), at the Lewej-2 minefield in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region. During these operations, 17 anti-personnel (AP) mines were destroyed. Due to a lack of secured co-funding, operations were suspended in August, leaving 272,151m<sup>2</sup> to be released. In the same region, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) conducted a baseline assessment of contamination in 46 localities. Of this total, 21 were assessed as "highly" suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), including five identified by the PNDHD in 2023 and already recorded in the national database as confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). Their polygons have now been confirmed, and the neighbouring population received risk education. Mauritania remains significantly behind schedule on both its 2021 extension request work plan and its revised 2023–26 plan and will need to submit a new Article 5 deadline extension request in 2026.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Mauritania should work to accelerate the pace of survey and clearance.
- Mauritania should put in place a national coalition forum to support its resource mobilisation strategy and serve as a strategic avenue to engage potential donors.
- Mauritania should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan for its mine action programme as per the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).
- Mauritania should revise its national standard on environmental protection, ensuring alignment with the new IMAS 07:13.

## ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2024)	Score (2023)	Performance Commentary
<b>UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION</b> (20% of overall score)	6	6	Mauritania has a reasonable understanding of its mine contamination. In 2024, MAG conducted a contamination baseline assessment in Dakhlet Nouadhibou, identifying 21 <i>highly</i> suspected hazardous areas. This included confirming polygons for five areas identified in 2023. MAG also “declassified” 20 SHAs, although these had not been listed as such in earlier Article 7 reports.
<b>NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT</b> (10% of overall score)	6	5	National funding to the PNDHD increased by \$50,000 to \$180,000 in 2024, but it needs more operational, financial, and technical support in order for Mauritania to fulfil its Article 5 obligations. In 2024, it received support from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs via HAMAP, though the donor did not commit to a second phase, resulting in the project interruption mid-year. Norway and the United Kingdom also supported MAG for capacity building support and contamination baseline assessment.
<b>GENDER AND DIVERSITY</b> (10% of overall score)	4	4	Mauritania’s 2023–26 mine action plan recognised that it has still to develop a specific gender and diversity policy. No women are members of the demining teams.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION</b> (10% of overall score)	5	5	Mauritania has a short environmental protection national standard, drafted at the end of 2024 and which was under review in 2025. Environmental considerations were not, however, referenced in the latest Article 5 deadline extension request (submitted in 2021) or Article 7 report.
<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING</b> (10% of overall score)	5	4	No major developments on information management were reported in 2024. In 2025, however, the PNDHD and the Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) began migrating data to IMSMA Core. Mauritania’s reporting under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is generally consistent and timely.
<b>PLANNING AND TASKING</b> (10% of overall score)	5	5	Mauritania did not meet the targets set in its updated 2023–26 mine action plan. Despite HAMAP being tasked to clear a minefield in 2024, and MAG conducting a contamination baseline assessment in 46 localities in Dakhlet Nouadhibou, Mauritania remains significantly behind schedule.
<b>LAND RELEASE SYSTEM</b> (10% of overall score)	6	6	National standards were reviewed in 2024 by the interministerial steering committee that oversees the PNDHD. In 2025, several standards, including TS and both mine and battle area clearance, were under review with the support of MAG.
<b>LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE</b> (20% of overall score)	5	6	The PNDHD has released some AP mined areas in recent years, using national resources and financial support from France, but progress has been slow. Based on current land release outputs, Mauritania will not meet its Article 5 deadline of 31 December 2026.
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE</b>

## AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

## MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (Programme National de Déminage Humanitaire pour le Développement, PNDHD)

## NATIONAL OPERATORS

- PNDHD Battle Area Clearance teams
- Army Engineer Corps

## INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- HAMAP-Humanitaire
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

## OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

## UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Mauritania is assessed as having a medium level of mine contamination. As at the end of 2024, it had recorded 20 CHAs covering 17.83km<sup>2</sup> with AP mines, including 18 areas with mixed AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines.<sup>1</sup> Nearly 17.5km<sup>2</sup> of this total is located in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region. In its successive Article 7 reports, Mauritania also includes two areas contaminated solely with AV mines, totalling 4.84km<sup>2</sup>, as part of its national baseline. However, since these are not covered under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), Mine Action Review excludes them from its estimate of contamination (see Table 1).<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the actual mined area requiring full clearance (as opposed to release through survey) is expected to be much smaller than the areas currently recorded in the PNDHD database. Further survey is needed to determine more accurately the size and extent of the final CHA requiring clearance.<sup>3</sup>

In June 2020, two years after declaring it had fulfilled its Article 5 clearance obligations,<sup>4</sup> Mauritania reported discovering previously unknown mined areas in the regions of Dakhlet Nouadhibou (in the north-west of the country), Tiris Zemmour (in the north), and Adrar (in the centre).<sup>5</sup> In 2021, the PNDHD and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) conducted a joint assessment that identified just over 15.47km<sup>2</sup> of mined area. Of this, 15.36km<sup>2</sup> was located in the Nouadhibou region, 11.53km<sup>2</sup> of which was previously known but which had been considered "politically" inaccessible. The remaining 114,565m<sup>2</sup> was found north of Bir Moghreïn, in the Tiris Zemmour region.<sup>6</sup> An NPA consultant visited all the locations identified, confirming access and the accuracy of the turning points of the polygons recorded in the PNDHD database. The only exception was Task ID "Bouchon55", where the northern boundary could not be verified due to a lack of visible marking. Direct evidence of contamination was found at every site visited.<sup>7</sup>

The western side of the Nouadhibou Peninsula, contaminated with both AP and AV mines, was excluded from Mauritania's 2018 declaration of completion on the basis that it lay outside national jurisdiction. However, with a new government in place and changing political circumstances, the area was now considered under Mauritanian control – as evidenced by the presence of police, military posts, and a State-administered wildlife reserve. As of 2021, clearance was deemed feasible using civilian capacity.<sup>8</sup> In its 2021 assessment report, NPA indicated that hazardous areas in and around Mauritania could be classified in four categories, as follows:<sup>9</sup>

- Category 1: Areas within Mauritanian jurisdiction and control (Bir Moghreïn and the north-western portion of Nouadhibou);
- Category 2: Areas outside Mauritanian jurisdiction but within its control (Nouadhibou peninsula);
- Category 3: Areas within Mauritania jurisdiction but outside its control (the area where the Morocco defence line crosses into Mauritania);
- Category 4: Areas outside Mauritanian jurisdiction and control (close to the Morocco defence line outside Mauritania's border and within Western Sahara).

Based on the findings of the joint-assessment, Mauritania was granted a fourth Article 5 deadline extension in 2021, extending its clearance deadline to the end of 2026. In its request, Mauritania acknowledged that certain areas on the Nouadhibou Peninsula had previously been politically inaccessible but were now considered under its jurisdiction or control.<sup>10</sup> Mauritania included maps showing minefields extending outside Mauritania's borders,<sup>11</sup> and it stated that it would coordinate with relevant authorities, to the extent possible, "on areas that lie outside its formal jurisdiction but remain under its de facto control".<sup>12</sup> The request listed 20 contaminated areas—double the total identified in NPA's report—including one area (Zirezargue) that was subdivided into eight separate tasks. Of these, one was listed by NPA as a cluster munition strike and two were not visited by NPA (in Mayaateg and Wettat Lechyakh).<sup>13</sup>

In 2022, the PNDHD cleared two minefields (Guemgoum and PK 173-Part 1) while one hazardous area, Guneive, was reclassified as containing cluster munition remnants (CMR).<sup>14</sup> In 2023, three further minefields (Bouchon 24-Part 1, Boukhzame, and Rbeit Lachar-1) were cleared by the PNDHD and HAMAP. Since then, Mauritania's Article 7 reports have not listed any mined areas remaining in Tiris Zemmour.<sup>15</sup> In 2023, the PNDHD reported the discovery of previously unknown mined areas: five in Dakhlet Nouadhibou and one in Adrar, covering a total of 6.9km<sup>2</sup>, following reports from local authorities.<sup>16</sup>

In 2024, MAG assessed the five areas in Dakhlet Nouadhibou (marked with two asterisks in Table 1 below), as part of its contamination baseline assessment, along with 41 other localities, and confirmed the accuracy of the polygons.<sup>17</sup> Contamination in Adrar is not widespread. Of the two mined

1 Mauritania refers to anti-tank (AT) mines in its reporting.

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 3.

3 NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021, p. 3.

4 Mauritania Declaration of Compliance with APMBC Article 5, submitted on 29 November 2018.

5 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 2.

6 NPA, "Mauritania Assessment Report", 12 April 2021, p. 2.

7 Ibid., p. 3.

8 Ibid., pp. 5–6.

9 Ibid., p. 4.

10 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 3 and 4.

11 Ibid., maps 1 and 2, pp. 5–6.

12 Ibid., p. 13.

13 Ibid., p. 5.

14 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), p. 4.

15 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), pp. 3–4; and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 3.

16 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 4.

17 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, Regional Programme Manager, West Africa, MAG, 3 June 2025.

areas recorded in the national database for the region, one (Mayaateg) was reduced by 0.35km<sup>2</sup> by the PNDHD in 2023.

The other (Emdel) was discovered and added to the database in 2023.<sup>18</sup>

**Table 1: Mined area by region (at end 2024)<sup>19</sup>**

Region	Location ID	CHAs	CHA with AP mines only or mixed mines (m <sup>2</sup> )	CHA with AV mines only (m <sup>2</sup> )
Adrar	Emdel	1	176,633	0
Adrar	Mayaateg	1	186,752	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Berwaga **	1	207,136	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Bouchon 24	1	780,125	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Bouchon 55	1	9,147,780	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Eguedet El Ghamboul2 **	1	398,422	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Gherd El Angra **	1	5,693,715	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guergara 1	1	0	1,203,880
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guerguerat **	1	62,817	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Lewej-2	1	*272,151	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Oued Emghewess **	1	364,701	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	PK 126	1	132,585	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	PK 173-Part 2	1	0	3,280,805
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Wettat Lechyakh	1	126,578	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 1	1	28,794	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 2	1	16,257	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 3	1	23,638	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 4	1	14,696	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 5	1	75,375	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 6	1	25,565	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 7	1	26,654	0
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 8	1	66,987	0
<b>Totals</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>17,827,361</b>	<b>4,484,685</b>

\*Remaining surface after clearance of one part of Lewej-2 by HAMAP in 2024. \*\*Areas assessed by MAG in 2024 as part of a baseline assessment. These areas were discovered and added to the database by the PNDHD in 2023.

Mauritania's mine contamination is a legacy of the conflict over Western Sahara in 1976–78, which was characterised by large-scale, haphazard, use of mines without recording and mapping.<sup>20</sup>

18 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), pp. 3–4.

19 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 3.

20 2010 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 3 and 6; and 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4.

## OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Mauritania is also affected by the presence of explosive remnants of war, including CMR. After declaring compliance with Article 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) in 2014, Mauritania reported discovery of additional cluster munition-contaminated areas in 2019 in Tiris Zemmour, near Bir Moghreïn, along the border with Western Sahara.<sup>21</sup>

Subsequent surveys have identified more contaminated areas in the same region.<sup>22</sup> At the end of 2024, contamination was estimated to cover 15.17km<sup>2</sup> across 10 hazardous areas.<sup>23</sup> See Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2025* report on Mauritania for more information.

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (Programme National de Déminage Humanitaire pour le Développement, PNDHD) is responsible for coordinating mine action operations in Mauritania.<sup>24</sup> It also provides the framework for Mauritania's national mine action strategic plan, the latest of which covers the period 2023–26.<sup>25</sup>

Since 2007, the PNDHD has been the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralisation and Local Development, with oversight from an interministerial steering committee composed of representatives from key ministries (defence, foreign affairs, and finance); civil society organisations; and international observers (the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP).<sup>26</sup> It works in close collaboration with the Military Engineering Department.<sup>27</sup>

The PNDHD has its headquarters in the capital, Nouakchott, with a regional mine action centre in Nouadhibou. The PNDHD plans to open a field office in the Tiris Zemmour region, which is essential for clearing areas contaminated by CMR and for addressing any newly discovered minefields.<sup>28</sup> The PNDHD is composed of five departments: operations (including information management and quality control, QC); small arms and light weapons; risk education/victim assistance; the secretariat; and administration and finance.<sup>29</sup> In 2024, it employed 26 staff, of whom 10 were women, and oversaw eight battle area clearance (BAC) teams.<sup>30</sup>

In 2024, the PNDHD received capacity-building support from two international organisations. HAMAP, with renewed funding from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2024, provided explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) Level 1 training to 21 deminers, along with demining equipment (six detectors and eight sets of PPE) and an ambulance. This added to the five vehicles donated in 2023. HAMAP also supplied IT equipment and furniture for the deminers' camp.<sup>31</sup> MAG, through United Kingdom (UK) and Norwegian grants, contributed to capacity development through training on disarmament conventions, IMAS 2.10 (Guide for the Establishment of National Mine Action Standards), and project and budget management. MAG also organised a training on NTS in July 2024 and supported the acquisition of a Land Cruiser.<sup>32</sup>

There is currently no mine action working group in place. In 2024, the only meeting bringing together all operators took place in April, during the visit of a member of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) responsible for victim assistance. No further inter-operator meetings were organised thereafter. However, regular and improved communication was maintained between operators and the PNDHD coordinator and chief of operations.<sup>33</sup>

## FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

The PNDHD is funded by the Mauritanian government, which allocated approximately US\$180,000 in 2024, an increase on the US\$130,000 provided a year earlier.<sup>34</sup> This amount covers salaries and per diem of the PNDHD personnel and army engineers, as well as a small amount of operational costs. In addition, in-kind contributions,

such as infrastructure and vehicles, are made available free of charge by the government.<sup>35</sup> The national budget is not specifically earmarked for addressing AP mines and is insufficient to sustain large-scale clearance. Mauritania reported a need for international funding to strengthen the capacities of the PNDHD in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, as

21 Declaration of Compliance with Article 5 of the APMBC, submitted by Mauritania on 29 November 2018 at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties; and 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.

22 CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F; APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 4; and NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021.

23 CCM Article 7 Reports (covering 2023 and 2024), Form F; and email from Commander Sarr, Head of Operations, PNDHD, 23 April 2025.

24 Decree No. 1960/MDAT/MDN establishing the PNDHD, 14 August 2007; 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4.

25 "Plan d'Action Déminage 2023–2026", PNDHD, submitted on 15 August 2023 and to the Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC (hereafter, "Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026").

26 Decree No. 001358/MDAT establishing the Steering Committee of the PNDHD, 3 September 2007.

27 2023 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.

28 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 6; and 2025 CCM Updated Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

29 Presentation of Mauritania, Regional Conference on Improvised AP Mines, Ghana, 13–15 February 2024.

30 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 1 September 2024.

31 Email from Julien Kempeneers, Head of Mine Action, HAMAP, 15 April 2025.

32 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

33 Remote interview with Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 17 April 2025; and email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

34 CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form I; and emails from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 24 May 2024 and 23 April 2025.

35 Interview with Colonel Baham, National Coordinator, PNDHD, Geneva, 9 April 2025; and Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 13 (footnote).

well as for marking, clearance, and risk education.<sup>36</sup> To meet its obligations by 2026, Mauritania had requested US\$3.7 million in external funding in its updated work plan submitted in August 2023.<sup>37</sup>

The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs initially supported HAMAP with funding covering the period from October 2022 to February 2024,<sup>38</sup> and renewed its support in 2024. However, due to lack of co-funding, the project was discontinued, and no further funding could be secured for 2025.<sup>39</sup> Norway and the United Kingdom supported Mauritania through MAG, contributing NOK2.3 million (equivalent to US\$222,800) and £75,000 (equivalent to US\$100,000), respectively, for capacity support, the contamination baseline assessment and risk education.<sup>40</sup>

In its successive extension requests, Mauritania has expressed its intention to establish a national coalition that would bring together the PNDHD, specialised operators and organisations, and donors, including States Parties to the Convention willing to support Mauritania's efforts.<sup>41</sup> Although

this coalition has not yet materialised, HAMAP has offered its support to convene a meeting in 2025, and Mauritania's updated CCM Article 4 deadline extension request of 2025 confirmed that a fundraising roundtable will be organised with potential donors.<sup>42</sup> Mauritania also clarified that "it is fully open to receiving funding through an international NGO, provided that it retains a leadership role and that national capacities are mobilised".<sup>43</sup>

France supported Mauritania's mine action programme in 2023 and 2024 through HAMAP, and expressed its backing during intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties for the resource mobilisation efforts of several affected States, including Mauritania, noting the importance of not forgetting States with low levels of contamination that are nearing completion.<sup>44</sup> Mauritania actively participates in the Convention meetings where it reports on both progress and challenges, and advocates for more cooperation and assistance.

## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The 2023–26 mine action plan acknowledges that Mauritania still needs to develop a dedicated gender and diversity policy. As of June 2025, none had been adopted. In the interim, the PNDHD said it adheres to national policy promoting gender equality and encouraging women's participation in traditionally male-dominated roles.<sup>45</sup>

By the end of 2024, women made up around 38% of the PNDHD's 26 staff, with four women in managerial or supervisory positions (see Table 2), including the risk education and victim assistance department director.<sup>46</sup> The programme has a gender focal point, who is tasked with

promoting greater inclusion, particularly in management and risk education.<sup>47</sup>

Mauritania said it consistently highlights inclusivity, gender sensitivity, and diversity as priorities in the design and implementation of its programmes in its extension requests.<sup>48</sup> However, the reality is that women are primarily involved in support functions than in more technical or operational roles. The PNDHD acknowledged that achieving gender balance in survey and BAC teams can be challenging "due to limitations in the composition of seconded personnel from the Corps of Engineers".<sup>49</sup>

**Table 2: Composition by gender in the PNDHD and operators at the end of 2024<sup>50</sup>**

Operator	Staff	Women staff	Managerial or supervisory staff	Women managerial or supervisory staff	Operational staff	Women operational staff
HAMAP	28	2 (7%)	4	0 (0%)	22	0 (0%)
MAG	11	2 (18%)	3	0 (0%)	6	2 (33%)
PNDHD	26	10 (39%)	8	4 (50%)	18	6 (33%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>14 (22%)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4 (27%)</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>8 (17%)</b>

36 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), pp. 8–9; Article 7 Report (covering 2023), pp. 7–8; and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 6.

37 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, p. 11.

38 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 5 August 2024.

39 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025.

40 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

41 2023 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; and Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.

42 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025; and Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.

43 Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.

44 Statement of France, Cooperation and Assistance, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 17–20 June 2025.

45 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, p. 6.

46 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025.

47 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, p. 6.

48 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 12; and Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.

49 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.

50 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025.

In 2024, two female staff—a nurse and a cook—were deployed to support HAMAP clearance operations in Nouadhibou.<sup>51</sup> Despite efforts to diversify the composition of survey and clearance teams, all operational personnel seconded to HAMAP were men.<sup>52</sup> The contamination baseline assessment was conducted by a community liaison team supported by MAG comprising four men and two women.<sup>53</sup> MAG also introduced a breastfeeding support policy in 2024, covering the costs associated with supporting breastfeeding mothers and their infants during field deployments.<sup>54</sup>

Operators have emphasised the need to enhance gender inclusion in mine action programming, noting that prevailing stereotypes in the country may suggest that women are not suited to cope with physical demands such as walking long distances or enduring heat. Promoting change in current practices regarding gender inclusion in Mauritania will require sustained effort. Targeted advocacy and high-level awareness-raising will be essential to help drive progress, potentially leading to the development of a dedicated gender and diversity mine action strategy.<sup>55</sup>

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## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

In late 2024, Mauritania developed a draft national mine action standard focused on environmental protection, which was under review in 2025.<sup>56</sup> The objective of the standard is to ensure that areas targeted for clearance are not environmentally degraded and that their intended post-clearance use is preserved. It references IMAS 07.13 and outlines specific mitigation measures to reduce environmental impact during EOD and other clearance operations. These include provisions for handling hazardous and toxic substances, protecting water sources, and managing waste. The standard also requires operators to adapt their standard operating procedures (SOPs) accordingly.<sup>57</sup>

The PNDHD is responsible for ensuring the standard is applied and promoted among operators, but it does not have a dedicated environmental focal point.<sup>58</sup> In the meantime, the head of operations is responsible for ensuring that environmental considerations are integrated into the process, including during the preparation phase (when guidance and training are provided) and through on-site monitoring.<sup>59</sup> Environmental management was not, though, referenced in Mauritania's Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2021 or its latest Article 7 report (covering 2024).

HAMAP has an environmental protection policy for demining operations set out in SOPs and implements measures to minimise environmental impacts.<sup>60</sup> MAG does not have a dedicated policy.<sup>61</sup>

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## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The PNDHD hosts and manages the national mine action database. From 2017 to 2021, it used an old version (New Generation) of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA).<sup>62</sup> In 2022, the PNDHD created its own database.<sup>63</sup> Due to lack of resources to cover the hosting costs, this database is offline and not directly accessible to operators.<sup>64</sup> In early 2025, the PNDHD said it had started migrating data to IMSMA Core with the help of the GICHD.<sup>65</sup>

In 2024, work on harmonising data collection tools and survey and clearance data output was conducted with support from HAMAP and MAG; MAG also provided direct support to information management personnel.<sup>66</sup>

Mauritania submits its transparency report every year, and submitted its Article 7 report covering 2024 on 29 April 2025. Mauritania does not disaggregate AP mined areas (including those with mixed contamination) from purely AV mined areas in line with international best practice and IMAS in either its Article 7 reports or latest Article 5 deadline extension request (of 2021).

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51 Ibid.

52 Emails from Gourdo Bocoum and Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 10 April and 5 August 2024.

53 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025.

54 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

55 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025.

56 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 16 June 2025.

57 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025. The draft was shared with Mine Action Review.

58 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025.

59 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 16 June 2025.

60 Email from Gourdo Bocoum, HAMAP, 5 August 2024.

61 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

62 Article 7 Reports (covering 2017), Form D, p. 3; (covering 2019), p. 9; and (covering 2020), p. 9.

63 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 5.

64 Emails from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 12 and 25 June 2024.

65 Emails from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025; and Jérémy Repond, Programme Officer, GICHD, 27 May 2025.

66 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025; and Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.



## PLANNING AND TASKING

Mauritania submitted an updated strategic mine action plan for 2023–26 to the Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC in November 2023.<sup>67</sup> In the plan, the PNDHD aimed to release the then estimated 15.5km<sup>2</sup> of contamination (including those areas containing only AV mines) by the end of 2026, with a four-year budget of US\$3.7 million. This is much less than Mauritania sought in its 2021 extension request, which included a five-year budget of US\$9.65 million.<sup>68</sup>

Mauritania stated that the government would continue funding the mine action programme "to the extent possible given the economic situation", but that a large part of its needs would be asked from the international community.<sup>69</sup> In 2024, the government contributed US\$180,000 to mine action and some international funding was provided through HAMAP by France, and to MAG by Norway and the United Kingdom, but funding was not renewed in 2025.<sup>70</sup>

Mauritania's updated work plan for 2023–26 expected the PNDHD to release 3.7km<sup>2</sup> in 2023; 5.5km<sup>2</sup> in 2024; 4.1km<sup>2</sup> in 2025; and 2.2km<sup>2</sup> in 2026, but acknowledged that this was ambitious considering past performance and noting that it would require substantial additional technical and financial support to do so.<sup>71</sup> However, Mauritania only released 0.54km<sup>2</sup> in 2023 and less than 0.06km<sup>2</sup> in 2024, falling far short of the targets. Mauritania had also been working on

the flawed assumption that no, or only limited contamination would be discovered during the extension period,<sup>72</sup> whereas it discovered and added 6.9km<sup>2</sup> of CHA to the baseline in 2023.<sup>73</sup>

In its 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania required eight clearance teams each with ten deminers for five years for TS and clearance of all the mined areas. The teams were expected to work 250 days a year and each was predicted to clear an average of 250m<sup>2</sup> a day.<sup>74</sup> Mauritania also said it will consider using mine detection dogs (MDDs) in Nouadhibou where it may be difficult to detect deeply buried mines.<sup>75</sup>

In 2026, Mauritania will need to submit a new Article 5 deadline extension request, providing an opportunity to redefine its work plan with a more realistic and context-driven approach. The country currently operates eight clearance teams, four assigned to cluster munition-contaminated areas in Tiris Zemmour and four focused on AP mined areas in Dakhlet Nouadhibou, where civilian demining is prioritised. The revised plan should be grounded in this existing capacity and supported by international organisations already familiar with the operational context. It should also outline clear annual clearance targets, specify which minefields will be addressed each year, and include a transparent prioritisation system.

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Survey and clearance are conducted in accordance with the Mauritanian national mine action standards (NMAS, known nationally as les Normes Mauritaniennes de l'Action Antimines). The NMAS are said to align with the IMAS, while being customised to the country's specific geographical and equipment-related conditions. The NMAS, which include standards on NTS, TS, mine clearance, and QC were first developed by the PNDHD with support from the GICHD, and approved by the government in 2007. They are said to undergo regular updates, incorporating insights gained from field experiences.<sup>76</sup>

At the request of the PNDHD, the GICHD visited Mauritania in 2022 and subsequently drafted NMAS for clearance, marking, quality management, and accreditation.<sup>77</sup> According to its 2024 deadline extension request under the CCM, the national standards were reviewed in 2024 by the interministerial steering committee, which oversees the PNDHD. In early 2025, the PNDHD said it was revising the NMAS and was planning to share the new drafts with a partner for further refinement.<sup>78</sup> It later clarified that the standards under review were NTS, TS, demining and clearance, environmental protection, accreditation, and quality assurance (QA)/QC, with MAG supporting the review process.<sup>79</sup> In 2024, operators had no access to the NMAS and were not involved in any revision.<sup>80</sup>

67 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026.

68 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 11–12.

69 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, p. 13.

70 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April 2025.

71 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, p. 11.

72 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.

73 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 4.

74 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10; NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021, p. 11; and email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 26 April 2021.

75 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13.

76 Ibid., p. 9.

77 Emails from Jérémy Repond, GICHD, 28 May 2024 and 27 May 2025.

78 2025 CCM Updated Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

79 Email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 16 June 2025; and Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

80 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025; and Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.



OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The PNDHD's operational capacity consists of eight TS/clearance teams, each comprising four deminers and one team leader from the Military Engineering Corps, for a total of 40 personnel. When necessary and subject to available funding, the PNDHD can call on the Military Engineering Corps to provide additional specialists.<sup>81</sup> In 2024, 20 personnel were seconded to HAMAP for the clearance of Lewej-2 minefield, while two personnel were seconded to MAG to take part in the contamination baseline assessment. Additionally, 20 deminers and 7 other personnel were deployed directly by the PNDHD to Tiris Zemmour to conduct TS of and clear two cluster munition-contaminated areas (see *Clearing the Cluster Munition Remnants 2025* for more details).

HAMAP was the only international clearance operator active in Mauritania from April 2023 to August 2024. In 2024, it operated with 28 personnel, including 16 deminers and four team leaders seconded from the PNDHD. The organisation cleared two minefields in 2023—Bouchon24-Part 1 and Rbeit l'Echar1—and partially cleared a third (Lewej-2) in 2024. HAMAP provided EOD Level 1 training, mine detection and personal protective equipment, as well as transportation (an ambulance). In 2024, HAMAP conducted a KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices) survey on explosive ordnance risk education in the Nouadhibou Peninsula, which helped identify key risk behaviours and inform targeted awareness messaging. However, public communication on explosive ordnance risks remains sensitive in areas like Nouadhibou,

where concerns about discouraging potential private investors influence how such risks are communicated.<sup>82</sup>

In the summer of 2024, HAMAP suspended operations due to lack of co-funding and then officially closed its programme in March 2025, while maintaining an indirect presence in another region through a water-related project. HAMAP offered to support the PNDHD in organising a roundtable with potential donors and partners to strengthen the country's resource mobilisation efforts.<sup>83</sup>

MAG has been active in Mauritania since November 2017, supporting the safe storage of arms and ammunition and training national security and defence personnel. Since the end of 2022 and until 2025, MAG implemented a project involving capacity support, the contamination baseline assessment, and the provision of risk education in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region using two mixed MAG-PNDHD teams (four staff and two support staff). A task order received in April 2024 covered 53 localities suspected of explosive ordnance contamination.<sup>84</sup> After excluding seven that were located outside the region, the mixed teams visited 46 localities, classifying 21 of them as *highly* suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) (see the survey component of the land release section for the results). MAG also collaborated with the PNDHD to ensure accurate integration of survey data into the national database, and delivered NTS training in July 2024 for MAG staff and eight PNDHD personnel.<sup>85</sup>

Table 3: Operational demining capacities deployed in 2024 (Dakhlet Nouadhibou region)<sup>86</sup>

Operators	NTS teams	NTS personnel	TS and clearance teams	TS and clearance personnel	Comments
PNDHD and HAMAP	0	0	4	20	In addition to 20 seconded staff (16 deminers and 4 team leaders), HAMAP deployed four personnel at the base camp—a section leader, two medics, and an EOD expert—while four staff were based in Nouakchott (an operations room chief, a gender officer, a head of operations, and an expert advisor).
PNDHD and MAG	2	7	0	0	The PNDHD seconded two team members to join MAG's community liaison team, composed of one supervisor and four officers (two women and two men), bringing the total to seven staff conducting the contamination baseline assessment. It also seconded two drivers to support MAG's operations in Nouadhibou.
Totals	2	7	4	20	

NPA supported Mauritania's mine action programme from 2011 to 2015 under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Interior. Operations began around Bir Moghreïn and expanded in 2012 to cover Tiris Zemmour and Adrar, both of which were cleared by 2013. In 2014–15, NPA focused on

survey and clearance in Nouadhibou, completing all known areas on the eastern side of the peninsula as requested by the PNDHD. By the end of 2015, having fulfilled all assigned tasks, NPA closed its programme. Following discovery of new contamination and revising its understanding of

81 Email from Commander Sarr Mamadou, PNDHD, 1 September 2024; and Interview with Colonel Baham, PNDHD, Geneva, 9 April 2025.  
82 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025.  
83 Ibid.  
84 Emails from François Fall, HMA Advisor for West Africa, MAG, 7 May, 7 June, and 29 July 2024.  
85 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.  
86 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025; Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025; and Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 16 June 2025.

jurisdiction over contaminated areas on the Nouadhibou Peninsula in 2019, the PNDHD requested NPA's support for a reassessment, but the 2020 mission was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. NPA finally conducted a one-month

assessment in 2021, establishing a more accurate estimate of the remaining contamination in the country, but has not resumed operations in Mauritania since.<sup>87</sup>

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2024

In 2024, Mauritania reported releasing 57,678m<sup>2</sup> of mined area at Lewej-2 in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region through TS and manual clearance, all conducted by HAMAP. During the operation, 17 AP mines were destroyed. However, due to a lack of secured co-funding, the second part of operations were suspended in August 2024, leaving the Lewej-2 site open with 272,151m<sup>2</sup> still to be addressed. According to HAMAP, the remaining area for clearance is likely the most contaminated, as initial operations prioritised areas for reduction in accordance with the land release methodology.<sup>88</sup>

**Table 4: Summary of land release outputs in 2024**

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (m <sup>2</sup> )	Comments
<b>Clearance</b>	15,574	By HAMAP
<b>Technical survey</b>	42,104	By HAMAP
<b>Non-technical survey</b>	0	
<b>Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks</b>	<b>2024</b>	
<b>AP mines destroyed</b>	17	12 ID 51 AP mines; and 5 VS-50 AP mines

### SURVEY IN 2024

HAMAP was tasked to clear Lewej-2 minefield. It reduced 42,104m<sup>2</sup> of the mined area through TS.<sup>89</sup>

As part of a contamination baseline assessment, MAG visited 46 localities and concluded that 21 areas had a *high* probability of contamination, 2 had a *low* probability, 20 were *declassified* due to absence of evidence, and 2 were *non-conclusive* due to lack of information. Among the 21 highly suspected areas, five had been discovered by the PNDHD in 2023 and had their polygons confirmed by the assessment (see Table 5 below).<sup>90</sup> These results should follow

the PNDHD's process and are expected to be included in the next official reports to the Convention.<sup>91</sup>

Evidence was collected of contamination, such as old accident reports, explosive ordnance identified in the area, visible detours to alternative paths, and old explosive ordnance markings. The ranking of surveyed areas took into consideration the analysis of informant credibility, level of land use, presence of marking signs and clues, the value of the abandoned land, and the proximity and frequency community members enter and use nearby safe areas.<sup>92</sup>

**Table 5: Mined areas discovered in 2023 and assessed by MAG in 2024<sup>93</sup>**

Region	Location ID	CHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Contamination type
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Berwaga	1	207,136	AV and AP mines
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Eguedet El Ghamboul 2	1	398,422	AV and AP mines
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Gherd El Angra	1	5,693,715	AV and AP mines and other ordnance.
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guerguerat	1	62,817	PT Mi-K AV mines, reportedly with anti-lift devices incorporated that, if removed, can function as AP mines.
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Oued Emghewess	1	364,701	AV and AP mines
<b>Totals</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>6,726,791</b>	

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Hans Risser, Head Office Management Team, and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 19 April 2021; and NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021.

<sup>88</sup> Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 15 April 2025; and remote interview, 17 April 2025.

<sup>89</sup> Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 3.

<sup>90</sup> Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

<sup>91</sup> Interview with Colonel Baham, PNDHD, Geneva, 9 April 2025.

<sup>92</sup> Email from François Fall, MAG, 31 July 2025.

<sup>93</sup> Emails from François Fall, MAG, 31 July 2025; and Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 17 August 2025.

CLEARANCE IN 2024

HAMAP manually cleared 15,574m<sup>2</sup> at Lewej-2 minefield, leaving the site open for future clearance.

HAMAP cleared an additional 66,977m<sup>2</sup> outside the polygon, corresponding to the area processed during preparatory work, due to the size of the minefield and the need to relocate the administrative area as operations progressed. Several other areas surrounding the hazardous zone were inspected prior to team deployment. These areas were also reported to the authority but were not deducted from the national contamination estimates.<sup>94</sup>

The PNDHD did not address any AP mined areas in 2024. However, following reports from MAG’s community liaison teams, three isolated explosive devices were identified in three villages. These included a mortar shell, a box containing 14 abandoned artillery shells of various types, and a single unexploded artillery shell. All three spot tasks were subsequently undertaken by the PNDHD.<sup>95</sup>

Table 6: Mine clearance in 2024

Region	Minefield name	Operator	AP mined area (m²)	AP mines destroyed
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Lewej-2	HAMAP	15,574	17
Totals			15,574	17

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the latest extension granted by States Parties in 2021), Mauritania is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than its extended deadline of 31 December 2026. Based on current land release outputs, Mauritania is not on track to meet this deadline.

Mauritania became a State Party on 1 January 2001. At the end of its initial 10-year deadline, it requested a first extension until 1 January 2016, during which, thanks to support from Norway, it reported the release of all known AP mined areas. At the end of 2015, however, Mauritania requested a second Article 5 deadline extension of five years as it “suspected that the security system along the border with Western Sahara, which comprises fortifications and minefields, may be located in some instances in Mauritanian

territory”.<sup>96</sup> On 29 November 2018, at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC, Mauritania announced that it had fulfilled its obligations under Article 5,<sup>97</sup> having cleared an overall area of 130.7km<sup>2</sup> with the identification and destruction of 8,080 AP mines, 891 AV mines, and 15,119 items of unexploded ordnance.<sup>98</sup>

Following the discovery of further AP mined area which it reported in 2019, Mauritania submitted two deadline extension requests, first through to 31 January 2022 and then a second to December 2026. However, it has since been unable to meet its Article 5 obligations, primarily due to lack of funding, limited international support, and further contamination discovered in 2023 and confirmed by MAG in 2024. The PNDHD has managed to release some AP mined areas (see Table 7), using national resources and financial support from France, although progress has been very slow.

94 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 28 May 2025.

95 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.

96 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4; and Analysis of Mauritania’s Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request submitted to the APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, 17 November 2015, p. 2.

97 Statement of Mauritania, Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties, 29 November 2018.

98 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 2; and 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4.

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )
2024	15,574
2023	185,914
2022	*50,769
2021	0
2020	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>252,257</b>

\*This does not include 81,559m<sup>2</sup> of purely AV mined area cleared in 2022.<sup>99</sup>

## PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

In its 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania reported that it will "continue to strengthen and maintain a capacity in-country that is equipped to deal with residual risk", and that in the event of discovering new contamination after the newly proposed deadline, Mauritania will "as soon as possible take action to accurately identify the extent of the contaminated areas identified and destroy all mines found in accordance with international and national standards".<sup>100</sup> Mauritania's updated work plan for 2023–26 includes several months each year for strengthening of the national capacity to address residual contamination.<sup>101</sup>

NPA had cautioned that even after newly identified areas are cleared, residual risk remains and further contamination may still be discovered. This is particularly so in Tiris Zemmour, due to the region's vast, remote, and sparsely populated terrain. This highlights the need for a clear residual risk management strategy and a strong national clearance capacity.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 4.

<sup>100</sup> 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10–11.

<sup>101</sup> Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, pp. 14 and 15.

<sup>102</sup> NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021, pp. 5–6.