MAURITANIA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2026

Not on track to meet deadline
Five-year extension to 31 December 2031 requested

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Medium
(Mine Action Review estimate)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (m^2)	Release in 2024 (m^2)
Clearance	321,157	15,574
Technical Survey	146,855	42,104
Non-Technical Survey	0	0

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	61	17

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025:

- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- The National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD) clearance teams

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2025, Mauritania achieved its highest annual land release output of the past five years, exclusively with national funding. The National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD) released 468,022m^2 of anti-personnel (AP) mined area through technical survey (TS) and manual clearance at two minefields in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region: Eguedet El Ghamboul-2 and part of Bouchon 24. Despite this progress, Mauritania's estimate of AP mined area increased substantially following a contamination baseline assessment (CBA) conducted jointly by Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and the PNDHD. The assessment identified 18 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region, adding of 18.38km^2 of recorded contamination to the national database. Mauritania has submitted a fifth request to extend its Article 5 deadline, seeking an additional five years by 31 December 2031.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Mauritania should strengthen resource mobilisation efforts to secure the international funding required to complete its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 obligations.**
- **Mauritania should conduct TS of the 18 newly identified SHAs to reduce the size of areas requiring future clearance and more accurately define the remaining challenge.**
- **Mauritania should clarify whether any further AP mined areas remain along the border with Western Sahara, in areas under its jurisdiction or control to which it currently lacks access.**
- **Mauritania should approve and implement its national mine action standard (NMAS) on environmental protection.**

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2025)	Score (2024)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	6	In 2025, a joint PNDHD-MAG assessment identified 18 previously unknown SHAs in Dakhlet Nouadhibou, increasing Mauritania's contamination baseline. All planned non-technical survey (NTS) in this region is reported to have been completed, suggesting a comprehensive understanding of the location and extent of suspected contamination, although the 18 SHAs still require TS. AP mine contamination also remains in Adrar.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	6	Mauritania has a well-established and adequately staffed national mine action programme, with clear operational responsibilities. Government funding increased in 2025, and Mauritania has committed to fund approximately 19% of its 2027–31 extension plan. Resource mobilisation remains a weakness, however, with no international funding secured by June 2026.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	4	Mauritania did not adopt a dedicated mine action policy on gender and diversity, despite plans to do so under its updated 2023–26 work plan. This commitment was reiterated in its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request, which also commits to systematically mainstreaming gender and diversity throughout the extension period. Women represent 39% of PNDHD staff but remain under-represented in operational roles.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION (10% of overall score)	6	5	In 2025, Mauritania reviewed the draft national standard on environmental protection, developed in 2024, although formal adoption remained pending in 2026. The 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request addresses potential climate-related impacts on mine contamination and indicates that environmental considerations are systematically integrated into PNDHD operations through SOPs, site management, monitoring, and staff awareness.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	5	In 2025, the PNDHD, with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), started migrating data to the new version of the Information Management System for Mine Action, IMSMA Core. Mauritania's reporting under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is consistent and timely.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	5	5	Mauritania did not meet the targets set in its updated 2023–26 mine action plan. The 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request includes a detailed and costed work plan for 2027–31, but lacks annual land release targets and sequencing of minefields. Prioritisation criteria for clearance were defined, but provided limited differentiation between tasks. Annual plans will be adjusted as survey and clearance progress, with implementation largely dependent on international support.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (10% of overall score)	7	6	Mauritania 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request listed 12 national mine action standards. A review was carried out in 2025 with the national authority approving the standards on clearance, marking, quality management, and accreditation of mine action organisations, while the remaining revised standards were still awaiting formal approval.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	5	In 2025, the PNDHD achieved its highest annual land release output of the past five years, releasing 468,022m^2 of AP mined area using national resources alone. However, Mauritania will not complete its Article 5 obligations by the end of 2026 and has therefore requested a further five-year extension. Despite strong national ownership and political commitment, Mauritania is unlikely to complete clearance without international support, estimated at €6.1 million over the requested extension period.
Average Score	**6.1**	**5.3**	**Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE**

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 (office closed in January 2025)
- Mines Advisory Group (office closed in December 2025)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Mauritania improved its understanding of its AP mine contamination in 2025 through the identification of 18 previously unknown SHAs in Dakhlet Nouadhibou.

At the end of 2025, confirmed contamination totalled 21.84km^2 across 21 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), almost all located in Dakhlet Nouadhibou near the border with Western Sahara (see Table 1). This represented an increase from 17.83km^2 across 20 CHAs reported a year earlier.[1] The increase resulted from the clarification that two minefields (Guergara-1 and PK 173-Part 2), previously considered contaminated only by anti-vehicle (AV) mines, also contain AP mines and the areas are thus covered by the APMBC. Following a livestock accident, survey in February 2026 heard evidence from former soldiers indicating that the minefields contain AV mines protected by AP mines. As a result, Mine Action Review aligned its data with Mauritania's revised 2026 Article 5 extension request, in which its baseline had been increased by 4.84km^2.[2]

Table 1: Confirmed mined area by region (at end 2025)[3]

Region	Location ID	CHAs	CHA with AP and AV mines (m^2)
Adrar	Emdel	1	176,633
Adrar	Mayaateg	1	186,752
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Berwaga	1	207,136
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Bouchon 24	1	*710,525
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Bouchon 55	1	9,147,780
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Gherd El Angra	1	5,693,715
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guergara 1	1	**1,203,880
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guerguerat	1	62,817
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Lewej-2	1	272,151
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Oued Emghewess	1	364,701
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	PK 126	1	132,585
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	PK 173-Part 2	1	**3,280,805
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Wettat Lechyakh	1	126,578
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 1	1	28,794
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 2	1	16,257
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 3	1	23,638
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 4	1	14,696
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 5	1	75,375
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 6	1	25,565
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 7	1	26,654
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Zirezargue 8	1	66,987
Totals		**21**	**21,844,024**

* Remaining surface after clearance conducted by the PNDHD in 2025. ** Areas reclassified as contaminated by both AP and AV mines following survey in February 2026.

Mauritania's current Article 5 baseline stems from the discovery of previously unrecorded contamination after it prematurely declared completion of its Article 5 obligations in 2018.[4] Following several incidents and a redefinition of areas under Mauritania's jurisdiction or control, particularly on the Nouadhibou Peninsula, the PNDHD identified additional contamination in 2019.[5] These findings were confirmed by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) during a one-month assessment in 2021, which verified 15.47km^2 of AP mined area, including 11.53km^2 in areas previously considered politically inaccessible.[6] In its 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania acknowledged contamination extending beyond its internationally recognised borders and 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".[7]

1 Article 7 Reports (covering 2024 and 2025). Mauritania refers to "anti-tank" mines in its reporting.
2 Email from Colonel Mohamedou Baham, National Coordinator, PNDHD, 17 April 2026.
3 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), p. 3; and Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 4 August 2026, p. 11.
4 Mauritania Declaration of Compliance with APMBC Article 5, submitted on 29 November 2018; and Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.
5 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 4–8; 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4.
6 NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021, p. 2.
7 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, map 1, p. 5; map 2, p. 6; and p. 13.

Since 2021, Mauritania's AP mine baseline has continued to evolve, decreasing through survey, clearance, as well as the reclassification of one area as contaminated by cluster munition remnants (CMR), while increasing following the identification of new hazardous areas. In 2023, six newly identified CHAs added 6.9km^2 to the recorded baseline, primarily in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region but also in Adrar.[8] Then, as part of a partnership between the PNDHD and MAG, two joint survey teams conducted a contamination baseline assessment (CBA) in Dakhlet Nouadhibou under a project implemented from September 2023 to December 2025, identifying 18 SHAs totalling 18.38km^2 (see Table 2).[9] Some of the newly identified SHAs have names closely corresponding to existing CHAs: Berwaga is an existing CHA, while Berwaga-3 was newly identified as an SHA; the same applies to Gherd El Angra/Gherd El Angra-1, Lewej-2/Lawej-3, PK173-Part 2/PK173-Part 3, and Oued Emghewess/Oued Emghewess-1. Despite these similarities in naming, MAG and PNDHD reported that the SHAs are not extensions or subdivisions of the corresponding CHAs, but distinct, newly identified hazardous areas. They were previously unknown, and their identification resulted from the CBA rather than improved access or any redefinition of areas under Mauritanian jurisdiction or control.[10]

Following their identification through the CBA, non-technical survey (NTS) was conducted to delineate their boundaries and define polygons using mine action geospatial tools. MAG reported that, according to the PNDHD, all planned NTS in the Nouadhibou region has now been completed, suggesting that Mauritania has a comprehensive understanding of the location and extent of suspected AP mine contamination in the region.[11] The recorded SHAs are unlikely to reflect the actual area requiring clearance, which is expected to be substantially smaller following TS. The PNDHD plans to further survey these areas as part of the work plan included in its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request.[12]

Table 2: Suspected mined area by region (at end 2025)[13]

Region	Location ID	SHAs	SHA (m^2)
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Aguedet Olbedbed-1	1	64,648
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Berwaga-3	1	495,515
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Boulenoir-1	1	697,021
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Carriere-1	1	3,283,954
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Chami	1	82,111
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Eguedet Ghanboul-3	1	361,416
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Gherd El Angra-1	1	504,664
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guerguer-1	1	228,385
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Guerguer-2	1	116,629
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Lawej-3	1	4,419,247
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Oum Roueissini	1	348,112
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Pk119	1	99,743
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	PK173-Part 3	1	6,420,590
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Soueisiya-4	1	639,458
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Sweidiat-9	1	76,525
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Tmeimichatt-9	1	234,069
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Oued Emghewess-1	1	92,678
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Wadel ghamboul-1	1	217,629
Totals		**18**	**18,382,394**

Mauritania's AP mine contamination is a legacy of the 1976–78 conflict over Western Sahara, during which mines were laid extensively without systematic recording.

8 Article 7 Reports (covering 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024); and 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 14 April 2026, p. 7.

9 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 12.

10 Interview with Col. Baham, PNDHD, in Geneva, 17 June 2026; and online interview with Emilie Sauvanet and Mor Mbaye, MAG, 6 August 2026.

11 Email from Mor Mbaye, Information Management Supervisor for West Africa, MAG, 10 August 2026.

12 Presentation of Mauritania on Article 5, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 15–18 June 2026.

13 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 12.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Mauritania is also affected by the presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW), 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 Moghrein, along the border with Western Sahara.[14] At the end of 2025, CMR contamination was estimated to cover 14.37km^2 across nine CHAs in the region.[15] See Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2026* report on Mauritania for more information.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The PNDHD is responsible for coordinating mine action operations in Mauritania. Since 2007, it has operated under the Ministry of Interior and Decentralisation, with oversight from an interministerial steering committee comprising representatives of the ministries of defence, foreign affairs, and finance, as well as civil society organisations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).[16]

The PNDHD is headquartered in the capital, Nouakchott, with a regional mine action centre in Nouadhibou. It is organised in five departments: operations (including information management and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC)); small arms and light weapons; risk education (RE) and victim assistance (VA); the secretariat; and administration and finance. In 2025, the programme employed 26 staff, including 10 women. Personnel include seconded military staff, civilian mine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) specialists, and former military demining experts. Operational activities are supported by the armed forces and implemented in close coordination with the Military Engineering Department.[17]

In 2025, the PNDHD continued to benefit from capacity-building support provided by MAG. Seven staff received project management training, while a further eight completed training in strategic planning and reporting, covering sectoral strategy development, international mine action requirements, and practical planning exercises. As MAG closed its programme at the end of the year, it also donated operational, communications, and office equipment to the PNDHD, including IT equipment, GPS units, satellite communications equipment, office furniture, and vehicle maintenance support for mine action assets.[18]

By the end of 2025, the PNDHD was the only survey and clearance operator in Mauritania following the closure of HAMAP Humanitaire (HAMAP)'s programme in January and MAG's programme in December. Consequently, there was no longer a need for an operational coordination platform.

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

The PNDHD is funded by the Mauritanian government, which allocated approximately US$285,000 in 2025, up from US$180,000 in 2024, and also provides in-kind support, including infrastructure and vehicles.[19] This funding covers the PNDHD's operational costs as well as limited survey and clearance of both AP mined areas in Dakhlet Nouadhibou and cluster munition-contaminated areas in Tiris Zemmour. The budget is not earmarked specifically for AP mine action and remains insufficient to sustain large-scale clearance.

Under its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania estimated that completing its obligations by 31 December 2031 will require approximately €7.5 million, of which it committed to provide more than €1.4 million (around €285,000 annually), while seeking approximately €6.1 million (€1.22 million annually) in international assistance.[20] As of June 2026, the PNDHD deplored that no international funding had been committed.[21]

HAMAP, a French NGO, conducted survey, clearance, and EORE in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region in 2023–24 with funding from France (Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs) and the Swiss Embassy in Dakar. Mine clearance ended in mid-2024. HAMAP has no plans to resume mine action operations in the short term because of a lack of funding.[22]

MAG, funded by Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, completed its baseline contamination assessment in Dakhlet Nouadhibou and closed its Mauritania programme at the end of 2025, also due to lack of funding. MAG continues to fundraise from its Dakar office and globally to support a possible resumption of mine action activities.[23]

Mauritania has consistently highlighted the need for international assistance during APMBC and CCM meetings, calling for increased cooperation and financial support. In successive deadline extension requests, Mauritania had

14 Declaration of Compliance with Article 4 of the CCM, submitted by Mauritania at the Fifth Meeting of States Parties, 2–5 September 2014; and CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.

15 CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F.

16 Decree No. 1960/MDAT/MDN establishing the PNDHD, 14 August 2007; and Decree No. 001358/MDAT establishing the Steering Committee of the PNDHD, 3 September 2007.

17 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 14–15.

18 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, Regional Programme Manager, West Africa, MAG, 9 June 2026.

19 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 21; interview with Col. Baham, PNDHD, in Geneva, 9 April 2025; and email from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 17 April 2026. The extension request separately provides for an annual government contribution of €285,000 during the 2027–31 extension period (p. 28). This amount is stated in euros, rather than US dollars.

20 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 28–29.

21 Presentation of Mauritania on Article 5, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 15–18 June 2026.

22 Email from Julien Kempeneers, Head of Mine Action, HAMAP, 16 March 2026.

23 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2026.

expressed its intention to establish a national mine action coalition bringing together the PNDHD, implementing partners, and donor States to support resource mobilisation. However, despite this commitment being reiterated in its CCM 2025 extension request, including plans to organise a roundtable, the coalition had not been established.[24] France reiterated its support for Mauritania's resource mobilisation efforts during APMBC and CCM Meetings of States Parties, noting the importance of supporting States with relatively limited remaining contamination that are approaching completion of their treaty obligations.[25]

At the APMBC Intersessional Meetings held in Geneva in June 2026, Mauritania expressed concern that international cooperation remains uneven, leaving some affected States Parties behind and undermining the Convention's universal objectives. It called for a stronger, more sustainable cooperation framework supported by diversified and predictable funding from governmental, international, and private donors. Mauritania also stressed the need for policies to ensure the Convention's long-term sustainability and supported the establishment of a voluntary trust fund to assist underfunded States Parties with moderate levels of contamination that could complete clearance within a relatively short timeframe.[26]

In its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania outlined several initiatives to mobilise resources. These include participating in the Individualised Approach process with the support of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), although no timeline has been established. Mauritania also committed to continuing its outreach to international partners and donor States Parties, engaging partners present in the country through information sessions on its humanitarian demining programme, and regularly reporting on implementation progress through Convention meetings and its Article 7 transparency reports.[27] For more information on funding, please see the Mauritania country profile on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[28]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Mauritania's 2023–26 mine action plan recognised the need for a mine action gender and diversity policy. While this remained outstanding in 2026, the Article 5 deadline extension request reiterated plans to develop one and committed to systematically mainstreaming gender and diversity throughout the extension period, including through disaggregated data, inclusive community consultation, consideration of the needs of different groups, and equitable participation. In the meantime, the PNDHD indicated following the national gender equality policy.[29]

By the end of 2025, women accounted for 10 of the PNDHD's 26 staff (39%), including four in managerial or supervisory positions, among them the head of the RE and VA department (see Table 3).[30] The PNDHD has designated a gender focal point to promote greater inclusion, particularly in management, RE, and VA. Although the 2025 CCM deadline extension request included a budget line for a "gender advisor", this was in practice a per diem for the existing focal point rather than funding for a dedicated advisory position.[31]

Women nevertheless remain under-represented in operational roles. Of the six MAG and PNDHD staff deployed across the two community liaison teams for the 2024–25 CBA, two were women, both from MAG; the teams also included two men from MAG, two from the PNDHD, and two drivers.[32] During HAMAP's survey and clearance in 2023–24, all seconded operational personnel were men, despite efforts to diversify field teams. HAMAP employed two women in support roles in Nouadhibou, as a nurse and a cook.[33]

The PNDHD attributes difficulties in achieving gender balance in survey and clearance teams partly to operational personnel being seconded from the Corps of Engineers, while operators have also pointed to social norms discouraging women from physically demanding field roles.[34]

Table 3: Gender composition of operators (at end 2025)[35]

Operator	Staff	Women staff	Managerial or supervisory staff	Women managerial or supervisory staff	Operational staff	Women operational staff
MAG	4	2 (50%)	1	0	4	2 (50%)
PNDHD	26	10 (39%)	8	4 (50%)	18	6 (33%)
Totals	**30**	**12 (40%)**	**9**	**4 (44%)**	**22**	**8 (36%)**

24 CCM 2025 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.
25 Statement of France, Cooperation and Assistance, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 17–20 June 2025.
26 Statement of Mauritania, Cooperation and Assistance, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 15–18 June 2026.
27 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 31–32.
28 https://the-monitor.org.
29 Ibid., p. 19; and Mauritania, "Plan d'Action Déminage 2023–2026", p. 6.
30 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 4 August 2026, p. 20; and email from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 17 April 2026.
31 2025 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, pp. 14 and 19; and email from Commander Sarr, then Head of Operations, PNDHD, 16 June 2025.
32 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 9 June 2026.
33 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HAMAP, 10 April and 5 August 2024.
34 CCM 2025 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; 2023 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, pp. 15 and 16.
35 Emails from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 17 April 2026; and Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 9 June 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Mauritania developed a draft NMAS on environmental protection in late 2024, which was reviewed and finalised in 2025.[36] As of August 2026, it was undergoing formal validation and adoption. Developed in line with IMAS 07.13, the standard aims to systematically integrate environmental considerations into mine action and minimise the environmental impact of operations. It also addresses potential climate-related impacts on contamination, including the displacement or resurfacing of mines and other contamination following extreme weather events such as flooding.[37]

In its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania reported that the PNDHD systematically integrates environmental protection into the planning and implementation of demining operations. Measures include responsible management of worksites and camps to prevent damage to soil and vegetation; compliance with SOPs and national requirements containing environmental safeguards; monitoring activities that could adversely affect the environment; and regular staff awareness of good environmental practices.[38]

The PNDHD is responsible for promoting and monitoring environmental measures but does not have a dedicated environmental focal point. Instead, the Head of Operations oversees their integration into planning, training, and field operations.[39] During survey and clearance in 2023–24, HAMAP implemented its organisational environmental policy through its SOPs and applied measures to minimise environmental impacts. MAG did not have a dedicated environmental policy for Mauritania.[40]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The PNDHD manages Mauritania's national mine action database. Between 2017 and 2021, it used the New Generation version of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). In 2022, the PNDHD developed its own web-based database using EasyPHP. However, due to insufficient resources to cover hosting costs, the system was not operational online and could not be accessed directly by operators.[41]

In 2025, with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the PNDHD began migrating to IMSMA Core.[42] New reporting forms were also developed in line with the NMAS.[43] MAG's West Africa Information Management Supervisor provided capacity-building support on digitising reporting forms, migrating data to IMSMA Core, and strengthening data validation processes.[44]

Mauritania has consistently submitted its annual Article 7 transparency reports on time, including the report covering 2025. It submitted its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request on 14 April and a detailed, revised version on 4 August 2026. The request provided a clear and comprehensive account of progress achieved during the previous deadline extension period, which was consistent with Article 7 reporting. It also presented the remaining contamination disaggregated by CHAs and SHAs, size, and type of contamination.

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2025, Mauritania continued to operate under its updated 2023–26 mine action plan, which aimed to release the then-estimated 15.5km^2 of AP mine contamination by the end of 2026, with a budget of US$3.7 million.[45] Implementation fell well short of the planned land release target: between 2021 and 2025, Mauritania released just 1.2km^2, comprising 0.54km^2 reduced through TS and 0.66km^2 cleared.[46] The plan also assumed that little or no additional contamination would be identified. Instead, Mauritania added 6.9km^2 of CHAs to its baseline in 2023 and, following the 2024–25 CBA, identified a further 18 SHAs covering an estimated 18.38km^2.[47]

Recognising that it would not meet its Article 5 deadline of 31 December 2026, Mauritania submitted a fifth extension request, seeking an additional five years until 31 December 2031. The request does not set annual survey and clearance targets or specify which minefields will be addressed each year, reflecting uncertainty over the availability of international funding. Instead, Mauritania has established prioritisation criteria based on humanitarian impact, accident history, population exposure, socio-economic importance, and priorities identified with national and local authorities and affected communities. However, all 21 CHAs are considered

36 Emails from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 16 June 2025; and Col. Baham, PNDHD, 12 June 2026.
37 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.
38 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 4 August 2026, p. 18.
39 Emails from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 23 April and 16 June 2025.
40 Emails from Gourdo Bocoum, Project Coordinator, HAMAP, 5 August 2024; and Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2025.
41 Article 7 Reports (covering 2017), Form D; (covering 2019), p. 3; (covering 2020), p. 9; (covering 2022), p. 5; and email from Commander Sarr, PNDHD, 25 June 2024.
42 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; and email from Jérémy Repond, Programme Officer, GICHD, 27 May 2025.
43 Email from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 17 April 2026.
44 Email from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 31 March 2026.
45 Mauritania, Updated Article 5 Work Plan 2023–2026, pp. 11–12.
46 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 22.
47 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3; Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 4; and Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 14 April 2026, p. 12.

priorities: four are classified as *high* impact and the remaining 17 as *very high* impact, providing limited differentiation for determining the sequence of survey and clearance.[48] Mauritania indicated that annual work plans will be adjusted based on the results of TS and clearance operations and on the evolving understanding of contamination.[49]

The extension request estimates a total budget of €7.53 million for the extension period to address the 21 CHAs and 18 newly identified SHAs, with the government expected to contribute approximately €1.4 million (around €285,000 annually) and international donors the remaining €6.1 million (approximately €1.22 million annually).[50] The budget provides for the deployment of eight teams dedicated to AP mine survey and clearance throughout the extension period, and each comprising a team leader and four deminers, for a total of 40 personnel.[51]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Survey and clearance are conducted in accordance with the Mauritanian National Mine Action Standards (NOMAM) and SOPs, which are based on the IMAS while being adapted to local conditions. The NOMAM were developed by the PNDHD with support from the GICHD and were first approved in 2007. They are reviewed periodically to incorporate operational experience.[52] Operators may develop their own SOPs, but these must be approved by the PNDHD before operations begin.[53]

The GICHD visited Mauritania in late 2022 and drafted NMAS on clearance, marking, quality management, and accreditation.[54] The 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request lists 12 standards covering NTS, TS, clearance, quality management, marking, EOD, and other core mine action activities.[55] The standards were revised in 2025. While the revised standards on clearance, marking, quality management, and the accreditation of mine action organisations have been formally approved, the remaining revised standards had not yet been adopted at the time of writing.[56] MAG provided technical comments on the revised NTS and clearance standards, although it was not aware whether its recommendations had been incorporated.[57]

When operations are conducted by an operator, internal QA is undertaken by the operator, while external QA/QC is conducted by the PNDHD's dedicated unit.[58]

Operational efficiency is constrained by difficult environmental conditions. Shifting sand dunes can bury mines more deeply or displace them, making their location less predictable, while the hot, arid climate limits daily working hours. To reduce the impact of extreme heat, the PNDHD schedules operations in the early morning, with work generally ending around midday. Although temperatures are typically lower on the Nouadhibou peninsula, dust-laden winds and frequent fog reduce visibility and can require operations to be suspended. Clearance is further complicated by the presence of low-metal-content AP mines, such as the APID 51, which cannot be reliably detected using conventional metal detectors. These mines reduce productivity, slow clearance, and increase operational costs.[59]

In its 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania also indicated that it was considering the use of mine detection dogs (MDDs) in the Nouadhibou region, where deeply buried mines can be difficult to detect.[60] However, the 2026 deadline extension request makes no reference to this option.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Overall, the PNDHD's capacity to address both mine and CMR contamination comprises eight survey and clearance teams, each consisting of four deminers and one team leader from the Military Engineering Corps, for a total of 40 operational personnel.[61] When required and subject to available funding, the PNDHD can draw on additional specialists from the Military Engineering Corps.[62]

In 2025, the PNDHD deployed four TS and clearance teams to continue AP mine survey and clearance in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region (see Table 4). In addition, it deployed four battle area clearance (BAC) teams and seven support personnel to Tiris Zemmour to address two cluster munition-contaminated areas.[63] In 2024–25, the PNDHD also seconded four personnel—two community liaison officers and two drivers—to MAG to support the CBA in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region.

48 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 26–28.
49 Ibid., p. 6.
50 Ibid., pp. 28–31.
51 Ibid., p. 30.
52 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
53 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 19.
54 Emails from Jérémy Repond, GICHD, 28 May 2024 and 27 May 2025.
55 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.
56 Email from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 12 June 2026.
57 Email from Francois Fall, HMA Advisor for West Africa, MAG, 12 May 2026.
58 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 19.
59 Ibid., p. 13.
60 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13.
61 Interview with Col. Baham, PNDHD, in Geneva, 9 April 2025; and email from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 17 April 2026.
62 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 14.
63 See Mine Action Review, *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2026*, Mauritania report.

MAG has been operating in Mauritania since 2017, supporting the safe management of arms and ammunition and building the capacity of national defence and security personnel. Between September 2023 and December 2025, MAG implemented a project combining capacity support, CBA, and EORE in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region through two mixed MAG–PNDHD teams. Under two task orders covering 63 villages (including seven outside the region and therefore excluded from the assessment), the teams identified 18 SHAs during the CBA, and MAG worked with the PNDHD to validate and integrate the survey results into the national mine action database. MAG also conducted EORE sessions in the communes of Nouadhibou, Inal, Nouamghar, and Boulenoir. MAG closed its programme at the end of 2025 due to lack of funding, and donated operational, communications, and office equipment to the PNDHD upon departure.[64]

HAMAP was the only international operator conducting clearance in Mauritania between April 2023 and August 2024. It completed clearance at Bouchon 24-Part 1 and Rbeit l'Echar 1 minefields in 2023 and partially cleared the Lewej-2 minefield in 2024. HAMAP also provided EOD Level 1 training, mine detection equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), and an ambulance. Operations were suspended in mid-2024 due to a lack of co-funding, and the programme formally closed in January 2025 following the completion of its EORE activities, although HAMAP maintained a presence in Mauritania through a separate water project.[65]

Table 4: Operational capacity deployed for AP mine clearance in 2025[66]

Operators	Community Liaison teams	Community Liaison personnel	TS and clearance teams	TS and clearance personnel	Comments
PNDHD	0	0	4	21	Each team was composed of four deminers and a team leader (totalling 5 personnel). There was also a site supervisor.
MAG and PNDHD	2	6	0	0	The PNDHD seconded two team members to join MAG's Community Liaison team. MAG teams were composed of one supervisor and three officers (two women and two men). PNDHD also seconded two drivers to support MAG's operations in Nouadhibou.
Totals	**2**	**6**	**4**	**21**	

NPA supported Mauritania's mine action programme from 2011 to 2015, conducting survey and clearance in Bir Moghrein, later expanded to Tiris Zemmour, Adrar, and Nouadhibou areas before completing all assigned tasks and closing its programme. Following the identification of additional contamination in 2019, NPA returned for a one-month assessment in 2021, which helped establish a more accurate estimate of the remaining contamination. It has not resumed operations in Mauritania since.[67]

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2025

Mauritania reported releasing 468,022m^2 of mined area in 2025 through TS and manual clearance, all conducted by PNDHD teams in the Dakhlet Nouadhibou region. This represents a significant increase compared with 2024, when 57,678m^2 was released at Lewej-2 with support from HAMAP.[68]

Operations in 2025 focused on two minefields. At Eguedet El Ghamboul-2, 164,865m^2 was reduced through TS and 233,557m^2 was cleared, allowing the minefield to be recorded as closed. At Bouchon 24, a further 69,600m^2 was cleared, but the minefield remains open. In total, 61 AP mines, 13 AV mines, and three ERW were destroyed.[69]

During 2025, the PNDHD also conducted 25 EOD spot tasks, resulting in the removal and destruction of 657 explosive ordnance items, including 13 rockets, 642 shells of various calibres, and 2 grenades, in the regions of Dakhlet Nouadhibou, Adrar, Tiris Zemmour, and other areas.[70]

64 Emails from Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 9 June 2026; and Mor Mbaye, MAG, 6 August 2026.

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

66 Emails from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 12 June 2026; and Emilie Sauvanet, MAG, 9 June 2026.

67 Interview with Hans Risser, Head Office Management Team, and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 19 April 2021; and NPA, Mauritania Assessment Report, 12 April 2021.

68 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), p. 4.

69 Email from Col. Baham, PNDHD, 17 April 2026.

70 Ibid.

Table 5: Summary of land release outputs in 2025[71]

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (m²)	Comments
Clearance	321,157	At Eguedet El Ghamboul-2 and Bouchon 24 minefields
Technical survey	146,865	At Eguedet El Ghamboul-2 minefield
Non-technical survey	0	
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	**2025**	
AP mines destroyed	61	APID 51 mines

SURVEY IN 2025

The PNDHD reduced 146,865m² through TS at the Eguedet El Ghamboul-2 minefield prior to clearance. This represents a significant increase compared with the 42,104m² reduced by HAMAP at the Lewej-2 minefield in 2024.[72] Since resuming mine clearance in 2022, Mauritania has not cancelled areas through NTS.

Table 6: Technical survey in 2025[73]

Region	Minefield name	Operator	AP mined area (m²)
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Eguedet El Ghamboul-2	PNDHD	146,865
Total			**146,865**

CLEARANCE IN 2025

The PNDHD manually cleared 321,157m² across the Eguedet El Ghamboul-2 and Bouchon 24 minefields. Eguedet El Ghamboul-2 was completed and recorded as closed, while Bouchon 24 remains open for further clearance. The latter had previously been partially cleared by HAMAP, which released 59,299m² in 2023. Clearance in 2025 was a substantial increase compared with the 15,574m² cleared in 2024 and was the programme's highest annual output since operations resumed, exceeding the 132,328m² cleared in 2022 (including AV mined areas) and the 191,194m² in 2023.

Table 7: Mine clearance in 2025[74]

Region	Minefield name	Operator	AP mined area (m²)	AP mines destroyed
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Eguedet El Ghamboul-2	PNDHD	251,557	45
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	Bouchon 24	PNDHD	69,600	16
Totals			**321,157**	**61**

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR MAURITANIA: 1 JANUARY 2001
↓
ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JANUARY 2011
↓
FIRST EXTENDED DEADLINE (5 YEARS): 1 JANUARY 2016
↓
SECOND EXTENDED DEADLINE (5 YEARS): 1 JANUARY 2021
↓
DECLARATION OF COMPLETION OF ARTICLE 5 OBLIGATIONS: 29 NOVEMBER 2018
↓
REPORTED DISCOVERY OF NEW MINED AREAS IN 2019
↓
THIRD EXTENDED DEADLINE (1 YEAR 1 MONTH, INTERIM EXTENSION): 31 JANUARY 2022

71 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), p. 3.
72 Ibid.
73 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 22.
74 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 22.

FOURTH EXTENDED DEADLINE (4 YEARS 11 MONTHS): 31 DECEMBER 2026

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE

FIFTH EXTENDED DEADLINE REQUESTED (5 YEARS): 31 DECEMBER 2031

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. It will not meet this deadline and on 14 April 2026, it submitted a new deadline extension request seeking an additional five years until 31 December 2031. The request, its fifth, was due to be considered at the Twenty-Third Meeting of State Parties on 30 November–4 December 2026.

Mauritania became a State Party on 1 January 2001. At the end of its initial 10-year deadline, it requested a first deadline 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".[75] 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, having cleared an overall area of 130.7km^2 with the identification and destruction of 8,080 AP mines, 891 AV mines, and 15,119 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO).[76]

Following the discovery of additional AP mined areas reported in 2019, Mauritania submitted two Article 5 deadline extension requests, first to 31 January 2022 and subsequently to December 2026. However, it has been unable to meet its Article 5 obligations, primarily due to insufficient funding and limited international support. Between 2021 and 2025, Mauritania released 1.2km^2 of mined areas, including 540,766m^2 reduced through TS and 660,253m^2 through clearance but overall progress remained slow (see Table 8).

In addition to a lack of funding, the discovery of new mined areas has prevented Mauritania from fulfilling its Article 5 obligations. In 2023, 6.9km^2 of CHAs were added to the national database, while the CBA conducted with MAG in 2024–25 identified a further 18.4km^2 of SHAs. All mined areas are located under the jurisdiction of the country.[77] Mauritania did not explain why new hazardous areas continue to be identified following the 2021 assessment.

Table 8: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (Mine Action Review estimate)

Year	Area cleared (m^2)
2025	321,157
2024	15,574
2023	185,914
2022	*50,769
2021	0
Total	**573,414**

* This does not include 81,559m^2 of purely AV mined area cleared in 2022 (not covered by Article 5 of the APMBC).[78]

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Mauritania's 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request commits to maintaining a permanent national capacity to address residual contamination after completion. The PNDHD will retain responsibility for national coordination and information management through IMSMA Core, including the recording, verification, and follow-up of newly reported suspected areas. Mauritania also plans to develop a national residual contamination management strategy defining mechanisms for reporting, assessment, and response, and to maintain sustainable national survey and response capacity. However, no timeline is specified for developing this strategy. The work plan included three months, at the end of 2031, to establish a capacity to address residual contamination, which appears low.[79]

75 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.

76 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 2; and 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4.

77 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13.

78 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 4.

79 Revised 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 26 and 32.