

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2024
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

**ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION: LIGHT**
PRECISE EXTENT UNCLEAR

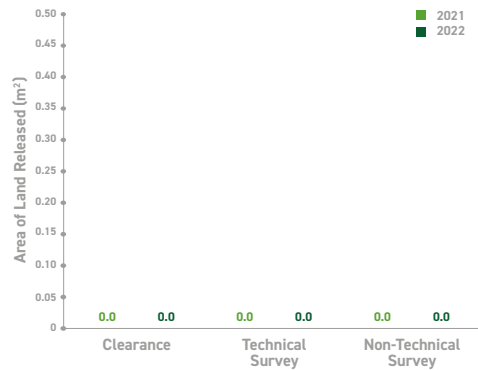
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2022

0 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2022

0

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Niger did not conduct any clearance in 2021 or 2022, and Niger has informed Mine Action Review that it will be submitting a new request to extend its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline beyond the end of 2024. In 2022, Niger updated national mine action standards (NMAS) on non-technical survey (NTS) as well as on risk education and community liaison and drafted new NMAS on tasking procedures and the accreditation of mine action organisations. Niger has said that it plans to restart clearance activities in 2024. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) left Niger in 2022 and the military coup of July 2023 has cast doubt on limited prospects for progress in mine clearance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Niger should submit a new Article 5 deadline extension request that includes realistic, costed targets for land release for both the anti-personnel (AP) mine contamination in Madama and the victim-activated improvised mines in the regions of Diffa, Tahoua, and Tillabery.
- Niger should put in place monitoring capacity and a database to support systematic collection of data and reporting on explosive ordnance incidents and casualties.
- Niger should submit comprehensive, annual Article 7 reports and include details regarding AP mines of an improvised nature.
- Niger should provide details of its resource mobilisation strategy and what engagement it has had or proposes with international donors and international organisations.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2022)	Score (2021)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	6	Niger has identified a small amount of AP mined area in the Agadez region but there is also an unknown amount of contamination from improvised mines being regularly laid by non-State armed groups active in the Diffa, Tahoua, and Tillabery regions.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	Niger's mine action programme is managed by the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (CNCCAI) and in 2022, with the support of UNMAS, it began holding coordination meetings with civil society actors. None of these organisations, however, are currently active in land release and the meetings have been halted since UNMAS's departure at the end of 2022.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	2	2	Niger's limited statements and Article 7 reporting on mine action make no reference to gender or diversity.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	Niger does not have a national information management system in place. Niger submitted an Article 7 report covering 2022 but it only contained limited information on mine contamination, survey, and clearance.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	3	Niger lacks a strategic plan for mine action as well as detailed work plans. Its Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2020 left out key details, including proposed timelines for clearance and available demining capacity. Niger drafted a provisional action plan for 2022 to 2026 but it did not include specific targets for land release although Niger claimed in August 2023 that it had submitted a new work plan to the APMBC.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	4	In 2022, Niger updated its NMAS on NTS and also drafted new NMAS on tasking procedures and accreditation of mine action organisations.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	2	2	No survey or clearance activities took place in 2022. Niger has reported to Mine Action Review that it plans to restart clearance in 2024 and that it will not meet its Article 5 deadline. Niger therefore plans to submit a new extension request.
Average Score	4.0	3.8	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites (CNCCAI)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- CNCCAI
- Army Engineers

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- UNMAS (departed end of 2022)
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Niger is believed to have only a small amount of mine contamination but its varying statements about contamination and clearance in recent years have left uncertainty about the precise extent. In its latest Article 7 report, submitted in August 2023, Niger reported that remaining contamination amounted to 177,760m², a figure consistent with the level of contamination identified in its Article 5 statement during the June 2023 intersessional meetings and its 2020 request for an extension of its Article 5 deadline.¹

¹ Article 7 report (covering 2022), p. 7; Statement of Niger, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18 June 2023; and 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

Contamination appears to consist of a suspected hazardous area (SHA) near Madama, a military base in the north-eastern Agadez region of the country. In 2018, Niger reported that it had two mined areas totalling 235,557m² near Madama, including a confirmed hazardous area (CHA) of 39,304m² and an SHA of 196,253m² containing both AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines.² Its Article 7 report (covering 2019–21) said the entire CHA and 18,483m² of the SHA had been cleared.³ Based on earlier information contained in Niger's last Article 5 deadline extension request in 2020, the CHA had been cleared previously, and clearance of the 18,483m² of SHA had taken place between July 2019 and March 2020.⁴ No clearance has been conducted since then.

With the spread of the conflicts in the Liptako-Gourma and Lake Chad regions, armed attacks in the eastern and western regions of Niger have intensified, with an increased use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The Liptako-Gourma area, spanning the borderlands of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, encompasses several regions: Sahel, Est, Nord, and Boucle du Mouhoun in Burkina Faso; Goa, Menaka, and Mopti, in Mali; and Tillabery in Niger. In the Liptako-Gourma area, Jamaa Nusra al-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) is the most active group which uses IEDs extensively, some of which are victim activated by a person and therefore constitute mines of an improvised nature covered by the APMBC. In contrast, use of mines by Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), the second most active actor, is rare.⁵ Niger has reported a predominant emergence of improvised mines in Tillabery and Tahoua since 2019 that primarily target military vehicles. Inevitably, however, there have also been civilian casualties.⁶

In Diffa, the expanding Boko Haram insurgency from Nigeria has led to the use of remotely controlled IEDs and victim-activated improvised mines since 2015. While the data shows sporadic rather than widespread use, these devices have mainly targeted defence and security forces, and have been particularly used to ambush military convoys.⁷ Again, civilians have also suffered casualties. For example, on 6

July 2022, two civilians died and two others were injured by an improvised mine between N'Guigmi in Diffa and the Chad border.⁸ Similarly, on 16 October 2022, an improvised mine near Bosso, also in Diffa, killed two women and seriously injured a child.⁹

On 26 July 2023, following the detention of President Mohamed Bazoum, Niger's presidential guard established a new military junta.¹⁰ There was a suspension of military operations against extremist groups and reports that the groups were seeking to exploit the coup-induced turmoil.¹¹ However, at the end of August, Niger reported to Mine Action Review that military operations have now resumed.¹²

According to UNMAS data, there were 55 explosive ordnance incidents in Niger in 2022, all of which were road-emplaced IEDs. The incidents were concentrated in the Tillabery region, in the south-west of the country, and, to a lesser extent, the Diffa region in the south-east bordering Chad and Nigeria. Twelve of the devices were victim activated.¹³ According to data from the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites, CNCCAI) from 2016 to the end of 2022 183 explosive ordnance incidents killed 203 people and injured 204 others. The incidents occurred in six of the eight regions in the country with 80% of the incidents occurring in Tillabery and Diffa.¹⁴

Niger had previously identified five additional SHAs in the Agadez region (in Achouloulouma, Blaka, Enneri, Orida, and Zouzoudinga) but said NTS and technical survey (TS) in 2014 had determined they were not contaminated by AP mines but that communities in the area had reported accidents only involving AV mines.¹⁵ A PRB M3 anti-vehicle mine was also discovered in March 2019 near the town of Intikane, also in the Agadez region.¹⁶ The areas are all located in a remote desert area, 450km from the town of Dirkou in Bilma department and are reported to contain mines that date back to the French colonial era.¹⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by CNCCAI. The CNCCAI is an interministerial body, reporting to the Civil Cabinet of the President of the Republic, and is composed of 21 focal points representing ministries concerned with defence

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2013 to April 2018), Annex I, p. 19.

3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019, 2020 and 2021), p. 9.

4 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

5 Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) Project, "Actor Profile: The Islamic State Sahel Province", 13 January 2023.

6 Provisional action plan 2022–2026 for the implementation of the components: risk education - victim assistance - humanitarian demining of mine action, p. 10.

7 Ibid.

8 ACLED, "Filters: 01/01/2022-31/12/2022, Remote explosive/landmine/IED, Niger", accessed 12 August 2023 at: www.acleddata.com.

9 Fenix Insight database, at: <https://fenix-insight.online/>.

10 Niger soldiers declare coup on national TV, BBC, 27 July 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3KHwG0H>; and "Niger general Tchiani named head of transitional government after coup", *Al Jazeera*, at: <https://bit.ly/3DXmbjW>.

11 "Niger's coup leaders say they will prosecute deposed President Mohamed Bazoum for 'high treason'", AP, 15 August 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3QFKx9k>.

12 Email from Salha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 28 August 2023.

13 Email from Philippe Renard, UNMAS, 10 August 2023.

14 Email from Salha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

15 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 6–8.

16 ACLED, "Explosive developments: The growing threat of IEDs in Western Niger", 19 June 2019, p. 3.

17 Executive Summary of Niger's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 27 November 2015; and Statement of Niger, Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, 24 June 2014.

and security, the customary chieftainship, and civil society actors (non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other entities working on peace and development).

The CNCCAI's primary role is to aid the President of the Republic in formulating and executing strategies to counter the trafficking and proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, landmines, and cluster munitions, aligned with ratified treaties. The CNCCAI has a Permanent Secretariat under the authority of the Commission President.¹⁸

UNMAS established a presence in the country in September 2021, following a needs and threat assessment that showed an increased use of IEDs in Niger. In 2022, four staff were working on mine action in Niger. From September 2021 to its departure at the end of 2022, UNMAS was developing a consolidated IED incident database; working with the CNCCAI to enhance its mine action capabilities and develop a sustainable national capacity; providing technical support and assistance in updating national mine action standards; and delivering risk education and IED threat mitigation training.¹⁹

Humanity & Inclusion (HI) are mainly providing risk education to affected populations in Niger but are also providing some capacity development support to CNCCAI, particularly since the departure of UNMAS.²⁰

CNCCAI reported that they co-chaired several coordination meetings with UNMAS and civil society actors during 2022. Following UNMAS's departure at the end of the year, the meetings were suspended and at the time of writing, the CNCCAI was planning to relaunch the meetings in collaboration with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).²¹

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) conducted evaluation missions to Niger in May 2015 and December 2017 to assess the possibility of assisting Niger to meet its Article 5 deadline. Contacts continued in 2019, exploring the possibility of NPA setting up a programme to support CNCCAI clearance operations, but in the end the authorities did not proceed.²²

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Niger does not have a national mine action standard for the environment or a policy on mitigating the environmental impact of mine action. The CNCCAI seeks collaboration with partners to support the establishment and implementation of an environmental management system.²³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Niger's last two Article 5 deadline extension requests, submitted in 2016 and 2020, made no reference to gender or diversity. Niger reported that women made up eight of the forty deminers deployed in June 2019 in the resumption of clearance operations.²⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Niger does not have a national information management system in place. In 2022, UNMAS was providing support with information management and in 2023, HI reported that, in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), it will support the CNCCAI on information management.²⁵ Training on the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) will be part of this support, though specific dates for this assistance to begin were not finalised.²⁶

18 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 3.

19 UNMAS, Niger, data as of October 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/45zm9ue/>.

20 Email from Julie Bouvier, Specialist in Armed Violence Reduction, HI, 13 July 2023.

21 Email from Satha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

22 Emails from Jean-Denis Larsen, DRC Country Director, NPA, 19 July 2017, 3 October 2018, and 15 August 2019.

23 Email from Satha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

24 Statement of Niger, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, 27 November 2019.

25 Emails from Philippe Renard, UNMAS, 10 August 2023; and from Julie Bouvier, HI, 13 July 2023.

26 Email from Julie Bouvier, HI, 13 July 2023.

Niger submitted an Article 7 report in August 2023, but only limited information was provided on the extent of contamination, and on the historic survey and clearance of AP mines. Niger delivered a statement to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings in June 2023.

The APMBC Committee on Article 5 Implementation noted that Niger's Article 7 reports were not compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and lacked detail on a range of issues including an updated work plan with adjusted milestones, financial commitments to implementation of Article 5 extension request, and its information management system.²⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

Niger does not have a strategic plan for mine action. Its Article 7 Report for 2013–18 set out a rudimentary operational timeline providing for clearance of 196,253m² by 2020: 56,000m² in 2018, 100,253m² in 2019, and 40,000m² in 2020.²⁸ It did not meet any of these targets.

Niger's fourth Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in May 2020, called for four additional years to complete clearance of 177,760m², but did not provide annual clearance targets or a detailed work plan or identify what operating capacity was available for survey and clearance. It projected the cost of completion at US\$1.14 million, of which US\$400,000 is to come from national sources.²⁹

The Committee on Article 5 implementation called on Niger to submit a detailed work plan with annual clearance targets and to submit annual reports detailing adjustments to milestones, criteria for clearance priorities, and the extent to which security was affecting access, survey, and clearance. It also requested information on how implementation efforts take into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities.³⁰ A provisional action plan for 2022 to 2026 was drafted in October 2021 with the support of UNMAS but it did not include specific objectives for land release beyond a more general goal that demining would occur by December 2026.³¹

In May 2022, Niger said it could not fulfil its obligations in the time available and it would submit a new plan for 2022–24.³² In August 2023, the CNCCAI informed Mine Action Review that Niger had submitted a new work plan to the Implementation Support Unit of the APMBC following their submission of this year's Article 7 report but that clearance activities will not begin until 2024.³³

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

With the support of UNMAS and HI, Niger has updated its NMAS on risk education, community liaison, and NTS and has also drafted new NMAS on tasking procedures and the accreditation of mine action organisations.³⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

CNCCAI reports it has created a humanitarian demining cell supported by Niger's security forces and civilians in the sector.³⁵ The CNCCAI reported they were not deployed in 2022 as no demining operations took place due to lack of resources, even though 60 trained deminers, including a number of women, are available.³⁶ No international operators are active in survey and clearance in Niger.

Niger's army engineers are the only capacity conducting clearance in Madama to date. An NPA visit to Madama in December 2017 noted that manual clearance was the main tool of demining by Niger's army engineers but highlighted the operational challenges. The M-51 mines mostly found in the area contained no metal components and were largely undetectable by

27 Preliminary Observations, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Intersessional Meetings, 20-22 June 2022.

28 Article 7 Report (covering 2013 to April 2018), Annex 1, p. 23.

29 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 12–14.

30 Statement to the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties by the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on the Analysis of the Request for Extension submitted by Niger, 16–20 November 2020.

31 Niger Provisional action plan 2022–2026, p. 21.

32 Article 7 Report (covering 2019, 2020, and 2021), p. 9.

33 Email from Salha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

34 Emails from Philippe Renard, UNMAS, 10 August 2023; and Salha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

35 Article 7 report (covering 2022), p.3

36 Email from Salha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

conventional detectors and sufficiently small as to make detection by ground penetrating radar (GPR)-based detectors unreliable. This means that full manual excavation may be the only effective methodology. The process is slow and the sandy environment, prone to subsidence and back-filling, makes it difficult to maintain consistent excavation depths.

Mechanical excavation using sifting and screening equipment would dramatically improve the speed of technical survey and clearance but faces severe logistical challenges because of the long distances, absence of roads, limited provisions for maintenance and cost. Mine detection dogs have also been deemed unsuitable because of the extreme climate and the potential for deeply buried mines.³⁷

Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) of IEDs is carried out by units of the Army Engineers.³⁸ In 2022, a total of 88 members of the Nigerien Defence and Security Forces were trained in IED Threat Mitigation with the support of UNMAS and HI.³⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

CLEARANCE IN 2022

In its Article 7 report covering 2019–21 Niger reported having cleared 18,483m², but did not provide additional details.⁴⁰ Based on previous information contained in its Article 5 deadline extension request, this clearance took place between July 2019 and March 2020.⁴¹ Niger reported that no clearance took place in 2022 due to lack of resources and international donor support.⁴²

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBBC (and in accordance with the four-year extension request granted by States Parties in 2020), Niger is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2024. Niger will not meet this deadline.

In its statement at the June 2023 APMBBC intersessional meeting, Niger said it had made no progress since its fourth Article 5 deadline extension request was submitted due to a lack of national resources and the absence of external donor support. Niger said it cannot guarantee clearance of its mine contamination by the end of 2024.⁴³

Niger has cleared less than 0.02km² of mined area in the last five years (see Table 1), with clearance only occurring between July 2019 and March 2020. This puts into serious doubt its compliance with Article 5. Niger has, though, reported to Mine Action Review that it plans to restart demining operations in 2024 and will submit a new Article 5 deadline extension request.⁴⁴

37 NPA, "End of Mission Report: CTA-HMA Inputs", undated but 2018.

38 Email from Satha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 28 August 2023.

39 Emails from Philippe Renard, UNMAS, 10 August 2023; and Satha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

40 Article 7 Report (covering 2019, 2020, and 2021), p. 9.

41 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, p. 8.

42 Statement of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), Geneva, 18 June 2023.

43 Ibid.

44 Email from Satha Mahamane Manirou, CNCCAI, 9 August 2023.

Table 1: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2022	0
2021	0
2020	*0.01
2019	*0.01
2018	0
Total	0.02

* 9,081m² was cleared in July–November 2019 and 9,403m² in December 2019–February 2020.⁴⁵

Niger also cited a range of other factors hampering progress of the mined areas near Madama: sandstorms, intense heat and cold, and a lack of security necessitating a military escort for the 2,000km-long journey from the capital Niamey to Madama.⁴⁶

Niger also has an unknown amount of contamination from improvised mines in the Diffa, Tahoua, and Tillabery and has not reported on whether any survey or clearance have taken place in these areas.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Niger does not have plans in place to address residual contamination once its Article 5 obligations have been fulfilled.

⁴⁵ Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, pp. 22–24.

⁴⁶ Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 8; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019, 2020, and 2021), p. 9.