

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

### KEY DATA

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

NATIONAL AUTHORITY ESTIMATE

**11.82 km<sup>2</sup>**

AP MINE  
CLEARANCE IN 2021

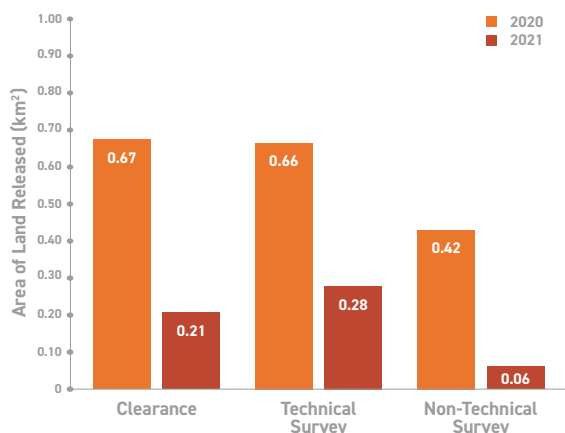
**0.21 km<sup>2</sup>**

AP MINES  
DESTROYED IN 2021

**1,526**

(INCLUDING 50 DESTROYED  
IN SPOT TASKS)

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Tajikistan released 0.55km<sup>2</sup> through survey and clearance in 2021,<sup>1</sup> a significant decrease on the 1.72km<sup>2</sup> released the previous year.<sup>2</sup> This decrease was mainly due to insecurity along the Tajik-Afghan border, which meant that demining teams were temporarily re-deployed away from the area to focus on battle area clearance (BAC) in the Central region. Having previously only undertaken survey, the Union of Sappers Tajikistan (UST) were accredited to undertake clearance for the first time in 2021.<sup>3</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Tajikistan should explore all possible avenues of increasing national capacity to the levels needed to fulfil its Article 5 extension request commitments, including training and deploying Border Guard forces on the Afghan border as deminers.
- The Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) should continue efforts to expedite planning and prioritisation of accelerated survey to reach a clear national baseline estimate of contamination, as outlined in the information supporting Tajikistan's last Article 5 deadline extension request.
- Tajikistan should clarify its resource mobilisation strategy, continuing to work with key stakeholders to address a projected shortfall in funding in order to meet its 2025 Article 5 deadline.

1 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, Director, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D.

3 UST was not accredited for clearance in 2020. The 22,715m<sup>2</sup> of clearance attributed to UST by Tajikistan in 2020 are thought by Mine Action Review to represent technical survey. 'Clearing the Mines 2021', Mine Action Review, p. 274.

- TNMAC should further develop plans for establishing sustainable demining capacity to tackle residual contamination identified after completion, including how existing national capacity will be strengthened to meet this need.

## ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
<b>UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION</b> (20% of overall score)	5	5	Tajikistan lacks a clear baseline estimate of contamination, with 28 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) yet to be surveyed, in addition to some re-survey planned to define the extent of other mined areas more accurately. Lack of access has also prevented an accurate determination of contamination on the disputed Tajik-Uzbek border.
<b>NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT</b> (10% of overall score)	7	7	Tajikistan has strong national ownership of mine action, which is led by the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) and implemented primarily by Ministry of Defence (MoD) clearance teams. It has political will and provides an enabling environment for Article 5 implementation but is heavily reliant on increased funding from international donors. This may present challenges to achievement of its extension request targets.
<b>GENDER AND DIVERSITY</b> (10% of overall score)	7	7	Tajikistan's mine action programme has a gender strategy drawn up with support from the Geneva Mine Action Programme (GMAP), but few women are employed in mine action. TNMAC says the government is committed to increasing involvement of women in mine action but there is little evidence that the number of female staff is rising. Mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age, and women and children are said to be consulted during community liaison.
<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING</b> (10% of overall score)	6	6	TNMAC upgraded its information management by installing Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core in 2019 and has continued efforts to streamline and improve the accuracy of data by modifying reporting forms. In 2020, TNMAC recruited an information management specialist to maintain and develop the database, filling a gap left by the closure of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support programme in 2019.
<b>PLANNING AND TASKING</b> (10% of overall score)	6	6	Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline extension request sets out a framework for mine action, including annual targets, but these far exceed past results and require a doubling of capacity. This is dependent on availability of increased donor funding, which, so far, has not been forthcoming. TNMAC has still to draw up comprehensive plans for clearance of residual contamination found after completion, although it has recruited an adviser for residual risk management, who took up post in March 2022.
<b>LAND RELEASE SYSTEM</b> (20% of overall score)	6	6	Tajikistan has national mine action standards that were revised in 2017 and are compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and regularly updated. The National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) are available in Russian and English. TNMAC reports it has also issued guidelines on land release, including a manual on testing and evaluating mechanical assets. In 2021, Tajikistan updated various regulatory documents, including for accreditation of mine action operators.
<b>LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE</b> (20% of overall score)	7	7	Land released in 2021 decreased significantly compared to 2020, mainly due to insecurity along the Tajik-Afghan border. This is a concern given that Tajikistan will need to accelerate clearance if it is to meet its 2025 completion deadline. Tajikistan increased the number of manual clearance teams in 2021 but maintained approximately the same number of deminers as in 2020. It also maintained four survey teams across all operators in 2021, the same as in 2020. To meet its 2025 deadline, Tajikistan estimates it will need to increase capacity by a further two survey teams and an additional six to eight manual demining teams.
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE</b>

## DEMINING CAPACITY

### MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIIHL)
- Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC)

### NATIONAL OPERATORS

- TNMAC
- Ministry of Defence (MoD), Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC)
- Union of Sappers Tajikistan (UST)
- Border Guard Forces of Tajikistan
- Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (CoES)
- National Guard

### INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)

### OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

## UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Tajikistan had an estimated 11.8km<sup>2</sup> of anti-personnel mine contamination at the end of 2021 according to national authority figures. This consisted of 138 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) covering 7.3km<sup>2</sup> and 82 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) affecting 4.5km<sup>2</sup> (see Table 1). Tajikistan reported releasing 0.55km<sup>2</sup> of mined area in 2021 but also added additional contamination to the database. As a result, the total is almost unchanged from a year earlier, when Tajikistan recorded contamination of just under 11.8km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>4</sup>

Two thirds of the confirmed mined area is in the Khatlon region, which includes Shamsiddin Shohin, the most heavily mined district in the country. Survey and clearance in the region reduced the estimate of its contamination by 0.98km<sup>2</sup> in 2021, approximately the same rate of progress as in 2020.<sup>5</sup>

Tajikistan still lacks a clear baseline estimate of its mined areas. In addition, almost three quarters of Tajikistan's SHAs (82 SHAs totalling 3.25km<sup>2</sup>) are on the border with Uzbekistan, parts of which have still to be demarcated and have still to be surveyed for contamination.<sup>6</sup> In June 2022, Tajikistan reported that, in accordance with its extension request, all required survey and re-survey of hazardous areas, should be completed by the end of 2023, including the remaining 28 SHAs with a total area of 1.23km<sup>2</sup> and resurvey of 31 CHAs with an area of 1.76km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>7</sup>

In 2021 a total of 693,542m<sup>2</sup> of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was added to Tajikistan's information management database in the following districts; 0.08km<sup>2</sup> in Shamsiddin Shohin district; 0.36km<sup>2</sup> in Darvoz district; and 0.25km<sup>2</sup> in Rasht district.<sup>8</sup>

Mine contamination in Tajikistan dates from conflicts in the 1990s. Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan was mined by Russian forces in 1992–98; the border with Uzbekistan was mined by Uzbek forces in 1999–2001; and the Central Region was contaminated during the 1992–97 civil war.<sup>9</sup>

A national survey in 2003–05 by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) estimated that mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination extended over 50km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>10</sup> Tajikistan later concluded the results were unreliable as a result of lack of experience among the initial survey teams as well as the absence of minefield records and poor equipment. As a result, the size of SHAs were miscalculated and their descriptions not clearly recorded.<sup>11</sup> Tajikistan said its minefield maps/records were mostly of good quality but did not accurately capture the location of some mined areas, for example in locations where mines were scattered from helicopters, and as a result needed to be verified and validated through new survey and data analysis.<sup>12</sup>

4 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April and 17 August 2021; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D.

5 Estimated contamination in the Shamsiddin Shohin district stood at 3,221,110m<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2020.

6 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April and 12 August 2021; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D.

7 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

8 Ibid.

9 Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC), "Scope of the Problem", accessed 29 July 2019 at: <http://bit.ly/2ZhiFpN>.

10 R. Roberts, "Evaluation of United Nations Development Programme Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", January 2012, at: <http://bit.ly/20qRe0B>, p. 11.

11 2009 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.

12 Ibid., p. 34.

In Khatlon region, mines were laid in and around military positions on hilltops overlooking the Panj river valley, mostly delivered remotely by helicopter or laid by troops who were moved in and out by helicopter. There are no established roads or tracks to access the minefields for survey or clearance.<sup>13</sup> Information about mined areas on the Tajik-Uzbek border is limited and based on the later non-technical survey conducted in 2011–15 by FSD and a needs assessment survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 2013–15. However, the FSD survey only covered one part of the border, Sughd province, and although survey teams recorded 82 accidents they did not have access to the border and relied mainly on incident forms. As a result, records lack detail on the exact location where mine incidents occurred.<sup>14</sup>

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan settled most of their 1,283km-long border dispute following the collapse of the Soviet Union but certain areas have not yet been delineated and the exact location of mined areas is still not known. Most mined areas are thought to be in disputed sections of the Tajik-Uzbek border which have not been accessible and assessed.<sup>15</sup> Although most of the mines are believed to be on Uzbek territory,<sup>16</sup> there is a possibility that some mines may have been displaced downhill into Tajikistan due to landslides or flooding.<sup>17</sup> The 3.25km<sup>2</sup> of SHA on the border with Uzbekistan is a rough estimate and the actual extent of any anti-personnel mined area on Tajik territory along this border will only be more accurately established once both countries permit survey and have delimited the border. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan agreed in 2018 to set up a joint commission to investigate mined areas along the border.<sup>18</sup> As at June 2022, Tajikistan had yet to report on any follow-up action regarding this proposed joint commission.

There are also mined areas on two islands in the Panj river on the Tajik-Afghan border, one of which is 538,500m<sup>2</sup> in size and the other 30,000m<sup>2</sup>, which are said to be “non-executable” at the present time. The islands were

created by a change in the flow of the river, and it is possible that the river may again change its path and re-connect the islands with the Tajik river bank in the future.<sup>19</sup>

Tajikistan acknowledges the urgency and importance of establishing a clear baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination as soon as possible. In August 2019, the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) announced that a survey working group would be established with expert representatives from all key stakeholders and implementing partners to help plan and prioritise survey tasks.<sup>20</sup> In June 2022, however, TNMAC reported that matters had progressed and there is no longer a need for this group to be established. According to TNMAC, survey teams have competent specialists carrying out internal control and quality assurance (QA) and specialists from TNMAC’s Operations Department are supporting them with QA of all results and reports from operations. Any discrepancies are discussed at technical meetings and measures are taken to reduce any inconsistency.<sup>21</sup> NPA concurs that “informal coordination between all stakeholders is working well, since the group and number of actors is limited”. NPA welcomes the monthly coordination meetings, hosted by TNMAC and attended by all stakeholders and implementing partners.<sup>22</sup>

TNMAC has reported that Tajikistan has a Land Release Operations Plan and expects that, in accordance with Tajikistan’s extension request, all required survey and re-survey of hazardous areas will be completed by the end of 2023. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Tajikistan Mine Action Programme (TMAP) plans to conduct survey on the remaining 28 SHAs with a total area of 1,227,493m<sup>2</sup> and conduct a resurvey of 31 CHAs with an area of 1,759,941m<sup>2</sup>. These surveys will include the SHAs without minefield records that have been identified in Darvoz (VMKB/GBAO province), and Shamsiddin Shohin (Khatlon province). By the end of 2023, Tajikistan plans to complete registration of all possible SHA and CHAs.<sup>23</sup>

13 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurevov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018; and Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties (16MSP), Vienna, 20 December 2017.

14 Ibid.; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 33.

15 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018.

16 Statement of Tajikistan, 16MSP, Vienna, 20 December 2017.

17 “National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan on Humanitarian Mine Action for 2017–2020”, 25 February 2017.

18 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.

19 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurevov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.

20 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.

21 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

22 Email from Melissa Andersson, Country Director, Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), 1 July 2022.

23 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

**Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2021)<sup>24</sup>**

Province	District	CHA		SHA		Total area (m <sup>2</sup> )
		Nos.	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Nos.	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	
DRD (Central Region)	Rasht	2	345,163	0	0	345,163
	Sangvor	1	50,000	2	50,000	100,000
<b>Subtotals</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>395,163</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>445,163</b>
VMKB (GBAO)	Darvoz (CR)	9	749,590	2	637,493	1,387,083
	Darvoz (T-A Border)	3	358,800	2	20,000	378,800
	Vanj	6	908,119	0	0	908,119
	Shughnon	3	56,000	0	0	56,000
	Ishkoshim	0	0	1	5000	5000
<b>Subtotals</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>2,072,509</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>662,493</b>	<b>2,735,002</b>
Khatlon	Farkhor	6	96,800	1	8000	104,800
	Hamadoni	3	80,772	6	177,000	257,772
	Panj	21	1,400,072	3	23,000	1,423,072
	Jayhun	8	135,636	11	307,000	442,636
	Sh. Shohin	74	3,122,841	0	0	3,122,841
	Qabodiyon	1	5184	0	0	5184
	Shahritus	1	30,000	0	0	30,000
<b>Subtotals</b>		<b>114</b>	<b>4,871,305</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>515,000</b>	<b>5,386,305</b>
Sughd	Ayni	0	0	5	535,000	535,000
	Asht	0	0	11	610,000	610,000
	Isfara	0	0	20	1,105,000	1,105,000
	Konibodom	0	0	3	165,000	165,000
	Panjakent	0	0	13	715,000	715,000
	Shahriston	0	0	2	120,000	120,000
<b>Subtotals</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3,250,000</b>	<b>3,250,000</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>7,338,977</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>4,477,493</b>	<b>11,816,470</b>

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIIHL), chaired by the first deputy of the Prime Minister, and containing key representatives from relevant line ministries and TNMAC, oversees the humanitarian sector and acts as Tajikistan's national mine action authority, responsible for mainstreaming mine action in the government's socio-economic development policies.<sup>25</sup>

TNMAC is the executive arm of CIIHL and the body coordinating mine action, responsible for issuing task orders, information management and QA/quality control (QC).<sup>26</sup> It was set up by government decree in January 2014, replacing the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre and taking over the process of managing transition to a fully nationally-owned programme.<sup>27</sup> In 2016, Tajikistan's Parliament adopted a Law on Humanitarian Mine Action, which covers all aspects of mine action, and in 2017 it approved a national mine action strategy for 2017–20.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D.

<sup>25</sup> 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 20; and 2009 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 20–21.

<sup>27</sup> 2009 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1; and TMAC, "About TMAC", 2012, accessed 10 March 2014 at: <http://bit.ly/2LvPub1>.

<sup>28</sup> Email from Aubrey Sutherland-Pillai, NPA, 18 October 2016; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 20–21.

TNMAC has submitted an evidence-based, costed, and time-bound mine action strategy for 2021 to 2030 and an action plan for its implementation, both of which have been approved by the government.<sup>29</sup> Tajikistan has an updated work plan for 2021–25, and an annual detailed and costed work plan for 2021–22.<sup>30</sup>

The Government of Tajikistan and TNMAC are reported as enabling of mine action activities in the country. This includes the granting of visas, concluding memoranda of understanding with operators, facilitating imports, and involving operators in decisions as and when needed.<sup>31</sup> In 2021, the Tajik government provided modest funding for mine action, including US\$480,000 in “technical and non-technical assistance”, the same level of funding it provided in 2020. A further US\$46,096 was allocated to support operational mine action.<sup>32</sup> The Ministry of Defence (MoD) plays a major role in Tajikistan’s mine action sector, in particular by providing personnel for Tajikistan’s main demining capacity,<sup>33</sup> the Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC), whose operations are funded by the United States.<sup>34</sup>

Tajikistan conducts regular in-country dialogue among all mine action stakeholders, based on Tajikistan’s Law on Humanitarian Mine Action, the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), the National Humanitarian Mine Action Strategy, the Charter of the CIHL, and Tajikistan’s other regulatory documents. To date, Tajikistan has not established an in-country national platform for dialogue (as per Action Point 44 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Oslo Action Plan), in order to discuss challenges and support for Article 5 implementation collectively. TNMAC confirms that Tajikistan will consider establishing such a platform in future, but no time frame for this has been given.<sup>35</sup> Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a multi-stakeholder mine action forum for Tajikistan met on a regular basis. These meetings ceased with the onset of the pandemic although Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) has suggested that they be revived.<sup>36</sup> However, a monthly coordination meeting takes place attended by all implementing partners and TNMAC.<sup>37</sup>

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Programme Office in Dushanbe (OSCE POiD) has supported the MoD to update its multiyear plan, entitled “Ministry of

Defence of the Republic of Tajikistan Co-operation Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2023.”<sup>38</sup> In 2020, it provided funding of approximately €250,000 to the mine action sector to finance three MoD HDC demining teams and seven TNMAC support staff.<sup>39</sup> In 2021, the OSCE provided €330,000 to TNMAC to enable it to continue supporting the three MoD demining teams (54 field operators in total) under TNMAC’s supervision. Two vehicles (a pick-up truck and an ambulance) and other equipment provided for in the 2021 budget were expected to be donated to the teams in June 2022. The OSCE planned to continue supporting the three teams in 2022 with funding of approximately €250,000. However, the OSCE notes this amount may change to allow for local currency fluctuation.<sup>40</sup>

The OSCE has supported the recruitment and appointment of an adviser for residual risk management, who took up post in March 2022, and is tasked with identifying improvements to the risk management of explosive hazards and to develop residual risk management guidelines to complement the NMAS.<sup>41</sup>

Under the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Cooperation Programme (EECCA RCP), TNMAC participated in three regional training courses offered by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in 2021.<sup>42</sup> Through GICHD sponsorship, TNMAC also participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> Technology Workshop in Geneva in 2021, providing the opportunity to witness and discuss the latest innovative solutions in Information Management, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), and land release.<sup>43</sup>

International operator NPA does not have a formal capacity development agreement with TNMAC but assists informally with capacity development as and when requested.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has reported that, on 24 June 2022, following a meeting of the Council of Defence Ministers of the CIS countries, Russia’s Minister of Defence, Sergei Shoigu, said that a joint unit of humanitarian demining will be created in the CIS. No timeline for this was given.<sup>44</sup> Tajikistan have not shared any information on this with Mine Action Review and it is not known if Tajikistan have been involved in these discussions.

29 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021 and 7 July 2022.

30 Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

31 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

32 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021 and 19 June 2022.

33 MoD, “Strategic Plan on Humanitarian Demining 2013–2016”, Dushanbe, 17 July 2013; and response to Landmine Monitor questionnaire by Luka Buhin, Mine Action Office, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, 8 April 2014.

34 2019 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 23.

35 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

36 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

37 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

38 Email from Luka Buhin, OSCE Tajikistan, 9 October 2017.

39 Email from Johan Dahl, Head of Arms Control and Mine Action, OSCE Programme Office, Dushanbe, 9 April 2021; and interview with Saodat Asadova, Programme Assistant, OSCE, 24 June 2022.

40 Emails from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 and 9 June 2022; and interview, in Geneva, 24 June 2022.

41 Emails from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

42 Email from Maria Gurova, Programme Officer, Co-operation Programmes, GICHD, 24 June 2022.

43 Email from Maria Gurova, GICHD, 1 July 2022.

44 ‘Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that a joint unit of humanitarian demining will be created in the CIS’, *Commonwealth of Independent States*, 27 June 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3b1ulgn>.

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

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Clearance activities are undertaken according to Tajikistan's national NMAS, which contains a chapter on the environment, health, and safety. This chapter covers issues such as safeguarding of the environment during the establishment and removal of worksites and accommodation, waste disposal, air quality, water supply, as well as the recording and reporting of environmental "incidents".<sup>45</sup>

TNMAC further asserts that environmental issues are taken into consideration during survey and clearance to ensure that operations are conducted without negative environmental impact and that hazardous areas released and handed over to communities in a state suitable for intended use.<sup>46</sup>

NPA has its own environmental management system in place, which includes a policy adapted to the local context from NPA's Head Office guidelines. NPA also has an environmental standing operating procedure (SOP) and an annual action plan linked to the environmental policy. NPA seeks to limit the environmental impacts of all survey and clearance activities. This includes waste management as well as the proper storage and disposal of fuel and lubricants.<sup>47</sup>

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## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

TNMAC adopted a gender programme in October 2018 that was prepared by the Geneva Mine Action Programme (GMAP, now a programme of the GICHD), and is committed to improving the situation of women in the mine action sector.<sup>48</sup> With the assistance of the GICHD, gender and diversity issues were integrated into Tajikistan's national mine action strategy, updated to cover the period 2021 to 2030, with annual plans also addressing the issues.<sup>49</sup>

Tajikistan reports that gender is mainstreamed in all aspects of its mine action programme based upon international and national guidelines and resolutions, covering the areas of management, mine risk education, victim assistance, and land release.<sup>50</sup>

A UNDP evaluation in 2019 concluded TNMAC had made progress mainstreaming gender and diversity in mine action but the strategy had not yet been systematically implemented, a state of affairs that appears to continue. UNDP said areas for further action included ensuring that training of trainers for risk education was gender balanced, introducing female QA and QC officers, and developing a code of conduct and complaints mechanisms.<sup>51</sup>

TNMAC reports it always encourages women to apply for mine action positions and, all other factors being equal, gives preference to the female candidate. The number of women in mine action, though, remains small. In 2021, 30% of TNMAC's employees in managerial/supervisory positions were women.<sup>52</sup> No women were employed by MoD's HDC in either operational or managerial/supervisory positions in 2021.<sup>53</sup>

By comparison, TNMAC reported employing seven female staff in 2020. None of its female staff worked in operations.<sup>54</sup>

Tajikistan did not address gender and diversity issues in its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request but in response to APMBC Article 5 committee's requests for more information it acknowledged that it would be a challenge to achieve gender balance in operations in view of the predominance of men in the military, where service is compulsory for men and voluntary for women. At the same time, it noted NPA's successful employment of female deminers and said the government would address gender issues in Tajikistan's mine action programme.<sup>55</sup> TNMAC said if it is possible to identify key positions that can be filled by female candidates like paramedics and/or QA/QC officers this would be discussed and prioritised. In addition, TNMAC would seek to increase female civilian capacity in coordination with other implementing partners.<sup>56</sup>

TNMAC confirms that survey teams collect information on hazardous areas on an annual basis as well as conducting risk education sessions, with both of these activities including inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men.<sup>57</sup> Tajikistan also reports that monthly briefings take place with local communities on demining operations, with records of the briefing kept as part of documentation.<sup>58</sup> The Ministry of Defence's HDC multi-task teams reportedly consult with all groups, including women and children, during survey and community liaison.<sup>59</sup> Relevant mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.<sup>60</sup>

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45 Emails from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 and 9 June 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

46 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

47 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

48 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 14 June 2019.

49 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

50 Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

51 R. Roberts, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", UNDP, 30 December 2019, pp. 17–18.

52 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

53 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022.

54 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

55 Additional information provided for Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 3 August 2019, p. 6.

56 Ibid.

57 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

58 Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

59 Email from Johan Dahl, with information provided by Khurram Maksudzoda, Head of the MoD HDC, 27 August 2019.

60 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.



The OSCE seeks to promote gender awareness by collecting comprehensive relevant information during its work.<sup>61</sup> The OSCE also insists that a module on gender and human rights be included in all pre-season basic training of demining teams, in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The OSCE will continue to emphasise the importance of gender mainstreaming and balance throughout project implementation and raise awareness in the mine action community across Central Asia through joint events and training.<sup>62</sup>

NPA has a gender and diversity policy integrated into its Tajikistan programme. NPA's staff are diverse, employing staff from every region.<sup>63</sup> In 2021, 20% of NPA's staff in Tajikistan were women, with 29% of the managerial/supervisory positions, including task supervisors, team leaders, and organisational senior management being female. NPA have had no significant changes to the gender balance of personnel from 2020 to 2021 and have seen only a slight drop in operational positions occupied by women: from 17% (including 11 deminers) in 2020 to 14% in 2021. This was the result of some staff taking maternity leave.<sup>64</sup>

NPA ensures women and children in communities affected by mines are consulted during community liaison activities, including impact assessment, which is conducted by both male and female staff. NPA highlights that consulting with women and children is more challenging in the border regions, where the military/border guard forces are mainly, if not exclusively, male. NPA also highlights that most incidents in Tajikistan involve young men or boys working as shepherds. However, the needs of all affected residents are taken into account, in particular through the prioritisation of locations closest to populated areas.<sup>65</sup>

NPA and TNMAC revived meetings of a gender working group in early 2020. Its meetings were interrupted by measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic but resumed again in 2021 and the group met twice during the year. In addition, a consultant was hired to conduct gender sensitivity training with staff from both NPA and TNMAC.<sup>66</sup> Despite continuing cultural constraints that inhibit women from employment in mine action, particularly in field positions, NPA has found that greater knowledge about the activities of its female deminers has made it easier to recruit female staff.<sup>67</sup>

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

TNMAC upgraded its national mine action database to IMSMA Core in 2019,<sup>68</sup> making it easier to input, edit, and retrieve data. TNMAC also introduced new data collection forms intended to simplify data entry and improve data quality<sup>69</sup> and, in collaboration with NPA, drew on the experience of using the system in 2020 to make small adjustments to reporting forms in 2021.<sup>70</sup>

NPA maintains an accurate and up-to-date picture of activities through daily reporting into the IMSMA Core Portal, using the data collection forms introduced and then updated by TNMAC during 2020 and 2021. The portal also contains completion reports and details of outstanding contaminated areas that are scheduled for further survey and clearance work. In 2021, there were efforts to simplify and streamline the reporting system as well as to archive data from previous years. Further minor improvements are under discussion, including updates to some reporting forms as well converting

certain reporting forms (e.g. impact assessment, community liaison) to electronic format to make inputting into the database more efficient.<sup>71</sup>

In 2021, TNMAC launched a progress monitoring tool, intended to improve resource mobilisation and task activity planning, with the aim of improving the efficiency of land release. TNMAC also updated reporting forms for Hazardous Area Cancellation and Monitoring of Mine Action Training. These forms have been transferred into the IMSMA Core system.<sup>72</sup>

Discussions between TNMAC and NPA are ongoing regarding the possibility of syncing their respective information portals to avoid duplication of effort in data entry. However, this presents practical challenges around access to and the format of each organisation's portals and, to date, there has been no progress on this issue.<sup>73</sup>

61 Email from Johan Dahl, Acting Head, Political-Military Department, OSCE Programme Office, Dushanbe, 13 May 2020.

62 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 9 June 2022; and interview with Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 24 June 2022.

63 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2020.

64 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 23 June 2022.

65 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

66 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April and 4 July 2021 and 21 May 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

67 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April and 4 July 2021.

68 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020; and Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

69 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020.

70 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2020.

71 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022 and 27 July 2022.

72 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

73 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 27 July 2022.



## PLANNING AND TASKING

Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in March 2019, which sought a new deadline for mine clearance of the end of 2025, forms the basis of its operational planning. The extension request said land release efforts would focus mainly on the Central region and the border with Afghanistan, especially the Shamsiddin Shohin district as the area most contaminated with anti-personnel mines. It aimed to complete work on the Central region and complete survey of the Tajik-Afghan border by 2023.<sup>74</sup> A General Land Release Operational Plan for 2021–25 details areas targeted for clearance each year and the required funding.<sup>75</sup>

Land release on the Tajik-Uzbek border, including completion of survey by Tajikistan's stated aim of the end of 2023, will be partly dependent on effective cooperation between each States' respective authorities. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan agreed in 2018 to set up a joint commission to arrange survey and clearance of border areas. In 2019 Tajikistan said it would keep States Parties to the APMBC informed of developments but, in 2021, had yet to report follow-up action.<sup>76</sup> In June 2022, TNMAC reiterated that Tajikistan "will continue to provide updates on the development of cooperation with regard to land release along the Tajik-Uzbek border in Article 7 reports and to the Meetings of the States Parties".<sup>77</sup>

Tajikistan has revised its annual land release targets a number of times in recent years. Its extension request identified areas of agricultural and tourist importance as the main priorities and called for annual release of approximately 1.3km<sup>2</sup>. These annual targets were revised in the "General Land Release Operation Plan 2021–2025" issued in January 2021 which provided for release a total of 8.55km<sup>2</sup>,<sup>78</sup> which, even if met, would not have addressed all of the existing contamination recorded. In June 2022, Tajikistan shared revised annual land release targets for 2022 to 2025, setting an average annual target of 2.14km<sup>2</sup> (see Table 2).

Table 2: Annual land release targets<sup>79</sup>

Year	No. of areas	Total (m <sup>2</sup> )
2022	36	1,990,739
2023	51	2,099,463
2024	57	2,114,777
2025	22	2,361,491
<b>Totals</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>8,566,470</b>

TNMAC tasks operators according to a set of priorities agreed with government that include humanitarian impact, the proximity of hazards to settlements, national development priorities and the seasonal constraints on access to mined areas in mountainous terrain. Input from local communities and local government is also taken into account.<sup>80</sup> While these priorities stand, tasking decisions are also influenced by the ongoing security situation on the Tajik-Afghan border, where access is regulated by the Border Guard Forces of Tajikistan.<sup>81</sup>

In August 2021, OSCE-supported demining teams were relocated from the Tajik-Afghan border-detached area to the central regions of the country, where they continued battle area clearance (BAC) in the Rasht region until November 2021. In 18 April 2022, three demining teams re-initiated clearance along the border, in the Khatlon region (two teams in Shamsiddin Shohin district and the other in Panj district).<sup>82</sup>

NPA reports that dossiers are issued in a timely matter by TNMAC.<sup>83</sup>

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Tajikistan's revised National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) were approved by decree on 1 April 2017 and are available in Russian and English.<sup>84</sup> The standards were developed as general guidelines allowing implementing partners scope to develop their own SOPs.<sup>85</sup>

74 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 34 and 42.

75 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

76 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 44.

77 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

78 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 12 August 2021.

79 Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 June 2022.

80 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018 and 22 April 2021; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 5 April 2018 and 1 July 2022.

81 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

82 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022; and interview in Geneva, 24 June 2022.

83 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

84 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 31 March 2019, p. 21.

85 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020.

TNMAC reports that the NMAS are regularly updated and that all updates to NMAS and SOPs are made in consultation with clearance operators.<sup>86</sup> In general, demining operators are said to update their SOPs once every three years during the accreditation process.<sup>87</sup> NPA reports that Tajikistan's NMAS are adequate and that they enable efficient survey and clearance work.<sup>88</sup>

TNMAC introduced a new approach to survey in 2017 known as "non-technical survey with technical intervention". In addition to standard non-technical survey, survey teams use technical assets to confirm the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) and identify their location

avoiding poorly defined and inflated polygons.<sup>89</sup> This approach is particularly useful when dealing with minefield records that are incomplete or inconsistent due to incorrect coordinates and grid numbering or lack of landmarks/reference points, or when too few local people have remained who can be asked about evidence of mines or incidents. In addition, mines are sometimes displaced due to landslides, rock falls, or flooding.<sup>90</sup>

In 2021, Tajikistan developed new regulatory documents including for the accreditation of mine action organisations' activities and a technical manual, "Clearing the Battlefields".<sup>91</sup>

## OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Tajikistan's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request set an ambitious target of doubling the number of deminers from 90 to 180<sup>92</sup> and in 2020 it took initial steps in that direction while also raising survey and mechanical capacity. Overall, however, Tajikistan maintained approximately the same number of deminers in 2021 as in 2020; with NPA and HDC operating six manual demining teams each; UST operating four teams, capable of both survey and clearance; and FSD operating one WAD (Weapons and Ammunitions Disposal) team.<sup>93</sup>

The MoD's HDC had 72 demining personnel across six manual clearance teams in 2021,<sup>94</sup> a decrease on the peak 2020 capacity of 107 personnel but an increase on the 5 multitask teams of 50 deminers deployed at the start of 2020.<sup>95</sup>

NPA remains the only international operator undertaking mine clearance in Tajikistan, operating in 2021 with one multi-task team of nine personnel (deployed for both survey and clearance), and a further five manual clearance teams, totalling fifty deminers across these six teams. This is an increase on the five teams of forty-one deminers operational at the end of 2020, which was made possible by increased funding. However, it was necessary for NPA to reduce capacity from six back to five demining teams in the first half of 2022, when funding reduced. NPA's clearance teams are capable of conducting both mine and battle area clearance.<sup>96</sup>

NPA continues to cooperate with the Border Guard Forces, working in 2020 and 2021 with 13 seconded guards and starting in 2022 with 12 seconded guards (included in the clearance team personnel counted above). The officers are part of NPA's multitask teams and most have been trained in conducting both mine clearance and BAC.<sup>97</sup> NPA, in cooperation with HDC, reactivated a mini MineWolf mechanical asset in 2020, which is being used to support clearance by both the MoD and NPA.<sup>98</sup>

UST, a national not-for-profit organisation, is accredited for risk education, survey, and victim assistance, and was accredited to undertake clearance for the first time in 2021. UST added two survey teams in 2020, raising the total number of teams in 2021 to four with a total of 32 personnel, engaged in both non-technical and technical survey as well as clearance.<sup>99</sup> Tajikistan has acknowledged advantages in using civilian deminers, since they require less time overall in training and building up experience compared with military conscripts who rotate annually, necessitating training for each new intake.<sup>100</sup>

FSD remained operational in 2021 with one WAD Team undertaking explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks and stockpile destruction.<sup>101</sup>

86 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; and Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

87 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

88 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

89 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 August 2016, 22 May 2017, and 27 April 2018; GICHD, Presentation on "NTS Field Studies: General Findings", 15 February 2018, Geneva; and Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Forms A and D.

90 "Non-technical survey/technical intervention", Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, at the 21<sup>st</sup> International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and UN Advisers, Geneva, 13–16 February 2018; and interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.

91 "The Republic of Tajikistan. Updated information provided in accordance with paragraph 2, Article 7 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and their destruction, submitted April 30, 2022, for the period from January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021".

92 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

93 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 and 24 June and 25 August 2022; and Statement of Tajikistan on Article 5, 19MSP, 17 November 2021.

94 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; and Andrej Hegedis, Countering Security Threats Officer, OSCE, 28 July 2022.

95 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 12 August 2021 and John Dahl, OSCE, 9 April 2021.

96 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

97 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2021 and 21 May 2022.

98 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

99 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 24 June and 25 August 2022.

100 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 36.

101 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; Statement of Tajikistan on Article 5, 19MSP, 17 November 2021; interview with Dr Nickwah Din Mohammad, Programme Manager & Country Director, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD), Geneva, 23 June 2022.

In June 2022, TNMAC stated that, in order to clear the remaining contamination in line with its extension request, Tajikistan will need to increase capacity with an additional two survey teams (raising the total to seven), and between six and eight manual demining teams (raising the total to between 22 and 24 teams).<sup>102</sup>

**Table 3: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2021<sup>103</sup>**

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers*	Dog teams (dogs and handlers)	Mechanical assets/machines**	Comments
NPA	6	50	0	1	Includes one multi-task team deployed for survey and clearance. An increase on 5 teams of 41 deminers in 2020.
HDC MoD	6	72	0	0	A decrease on 6 teams of 107 personnel in 2020.
UST	4	32	0	0	4 survey teams of 32 personnel. An increase on 14 personnel in 2020.
FSD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	One WAD (Weapons and Ammunitions Disposal) team undertaking EOD spot tasks and stockpile destruction.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	

NPA commented that, apart from a reduction in international visitors, its Tajikistan programme was not significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. NPA was able to adhere to its work plan, with COVID-19 related staff absences causing only limited disruption.<sup>104</sup> TNMAC also confirmed that the national mine action programme was able to continue to work according to its 2021 Land Release Plan despite the continued pandemic, through implementing protective measures and COVID-19 vaccination of all employees of demining operators.<sup>105</sup>

Tajikistan did not expect any major changes to the number of mine survey or clearance personnel in 2022.<sup>106</sup> Given that it has stated that overall demining capacity needs to increase to meet its clearance deadline of 2025, this is of concern.

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

TNMAC reported land release through survey and clearance totalling 549,295m<sup>2</sup> in 2021,<sup>107</sup> a significant reduction on the 1,722,688m<sup>2</sup> released in 2020.<sup>108</sup> TNMAC has attributed this decrease mainly to the need to suspend demining operations along the Tajik-Afghan border in July 2021, due to security concerns.<sup>109</sup> Despite this need to redeploy teams away from the border for part of the year, land release was still heavily concentrated in Shamsiddin Shohin, a district on the Tajik-Afghan border as well as in Darvoz in GBAO Province. Together these areas accounted for just over 75% of the total (see Tables 4, 5, and 6).

### SURVEY IN 2021

Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline extension request noted that the progress of survey was slowing because survey teams have already tackled areas that are most accessible to the local population and were increasingly left with hazardous areas in remote and rugged terrain.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 and 24 June and 25 August 2022; and Statement of Tajikistan on Article 5, 19MSP, 17 November 2021. In information supplied directly to Mine Action Review, TNMAC stated that a further eight manual demining teams would be required. However, in Tajikistan's Article 5 Statement, it specified a slightly lower required increase of six teams.

<sup>103</sup> Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June and 25 August 2022 and Melissa Anderson, NPA, 1 July 2022; Statement of Tajikistan on Article 5, 19MSP, 17 November 2021; and FSD, "Tajikistan", accessed 7 September 2022 at: <https://bit.ly/30zn7hh>.

<sup>104</sup> Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

<sup>105</sup> Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.; and email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022.

<sup>107</sup> Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

<sup>108</sup> Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D.

<sup>109</sup> Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

<sup>110</sup> 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 47.

59,427m<sup>2</sup> were cancelled through non-technical survey in 2021, by teams from UST and NPA (see Table 4). This was a significant reduction on the just over 0.4km<sup>2</sup> cancelled through non-technical survey in 2020,<sup>111</sup> partly due to the need to suspend operations along the Tajik-Afghan border.

Of the remaining tasks, survey teams have been prioritising the easiest to access, as the easier a task is to access, the more likely it is that local people will try and use the land. The effect of this is that, year-on-year, tasks get harder to access, which slows down progress towards completing non-technical survey in Tajikistan.<sup>112</sup>

**Table 4: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2021<sup>113</sup>**

Province	District	Operator	Area cancelled (m <sup>2</sup> )
Khatlon	Shamsiddin Shohin	UST	23,627
	Khovaling	NPA	35,800
<b>Total</b>			<b>59,427</b>

The 0.28km<sup>2</sup> reduced through technical survey in 2021 (see Table 5) was less than half the 2020 figure of 0.66km<sup>2</sup>,<sup>114</sup> a significant slowdown after such release more than doubled between 2019 and 2020.<sup>115</sup> Again, the potential for undertaking technical survey was severely impacted by the need to redeploy teams away from the Tajik-Afghan border.

**Table 5: Reduction through technical survey in 2021<sup>116</sup>**

Province	District	Operator	Area reduced (m <sup>2</sup> )
GBAO	Darvoz	HDC MOD	36,400
	Darvoz	NPA	94,747
DRS	Sangvor	NPA	45,037
Khatlon	Khovaling	NPA	40,148
	Shamsiddin Shohin	HDC MOD	23,300
	Shamsiddin Shohin	NPA	22,793
	Shamsiddin Shohin	UST	21,355
<b>Total</b>			<b>283,780</b>

## CLEARANCE IN 2021

Tajikistan cleared 0.21km<sup>2</sup> in 2021,<sup>117</sup> a decrease on the 0.67km<sup>2</sup> cleared in 2020.<sup>118</sup> Having previously only undertaken survey, UST was accredited to undertake clearance for the first time in 2021<sup>119</sup> and cleared 4,645m<sup>2</sup> in Shamsiddin Shohin. TNMAC reported clearance operations resulted in destruction of 1,476 anti-personnel mines and 106 items of UXO. A further 50 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in EOD spot tasks: 46 by FSD and 4 by NPA. FSD also destroyed three anti-vehicle mines during EOD spot tasks.<sup>120</sup>

The decrease in land cleared in 2021 compared to 2020 was due to the need to suspend demining operations along the Tajik-Afghan border on 17 July 2021. TNMAC explains that, following the change of government in Afghanistan and "due to the military-political situation" on the border, and in the interests of protecting the safety of personnel, demining teams were moved away from the Shamsiddin Shohin district of the Khatlon region and redeployed to the Central region from August to November 2021 to focus on BAC.<sup>121</sup> Demining teams were able to return to working in the Khatlon region from April 2022.<sup>122</sup> NPA resumed clearance operations at the border in May 2022.<sup>123</sup>

111 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

112 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 47.

113 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022 and Melissa Anderson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

114 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 12 August 2021.

115 Ibid.; and email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2021.

116 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; and Melissa Anderson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

117 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

118 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

119 UST was not accredited for clearance in 2020. The 22,715m<sup>2</sup> of clearance attributed to UST by Tajikistan in 2020 are thought by Mine Action Review to represent technical survey.

120 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; and Melissa Anderson 1 July 2022.

121 Ibid.; and email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022.

122 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022.

123 Email from Melissa Anderson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

A total of 22,829m<sup>2</sup> was cleared in 2021 which proved to contain no anti-personnel mines; this was in the Shamsiddin Shohin and Khovaling districts of the Khatlon province and the Sangvor district in DRS province.<sup>124</sup>

**Table 6: Mine clearance in 2021 by operator<sup>125</sup>**

Operator	Province	District	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
HDC MoD	GBAO	Darvoz	22,686	10	6
	Khatlon	Shamsiddin Shohin	*46,553	639	9
NPA	GBAO	Darvoz	59,253	11	60
	Khatlon	Khovaling	7,250	0	0
	DRS	Sangvor	6,345	0	0
	Khatlon	Shamsiddin Shohin	59,356	816	31
UST	Khatlon	Shamsiddin Shohin	4,645	0	0
<b>Totals</b>			<b>206,088</b>	<b>1,476</b>	<b>106</b>

\* This figure includes an area of 4,589m<sup>2</sup> where no AP mines were detected.

## ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBBC (and in accordance with the latest extension granted by States Parties in 2019), Tajikistan is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025.

An immediate challenge to achieving Tajikistan's extension request targets is lack of capacity. The request called for the mine action programme to double the number of deminers from 90 in 2019 to 180. By the end of 2021, MoD HDC, UST, and NPA together mustered 154 deminers. TNMAC has expanded the role of the Border Guard Forces, which used to support demining teams by providing security to operators working on the Tajik-Afghan border, and since 2019 it has involved them in survey and clearance. It also mobilised one demining team from the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (CoES). However Tajikistan was looking to international donors to cover the non-salary costs and it remains unclear what additional capacity could be mobilised for clearance and in what period of time.<sup>126</sup> In 2021, UST's scope extended from survey to include clearance, following accreditation; a further step towards expanding national capacity.

In 2019, Tajikistan said it needed \$3 million a year to maintain the capacity it had at the start of the extension period but estimated it needed US\$33 million for costs of manual clearance alone to meet its extended Article 5 deadline.<sup>127</sup> TNMAC has received support from Norway and the OSCE<sup>128</sup> but overall funding has been heavily dependent on the US Department of State and TNMAC has acknowledged it needs to attract other donors.<sup>129</sup> Tajikistan conducted a workshop with other major

<sup>124</sup> Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

<sup>125</sup> Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June and 25 August 2022; and Melissa Anderson, NPA, 1 July 2022.

<sup>126</sup> 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 22; and emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April and 12 August 2021.

<sup>127</sup> 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 52; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.

<sup>128</sup> In addition to funding provided to TNMAC to support three MoD HDC teams, the OSCE expected to provide €300,000 a year in bilateral funds for training until 2023. Email from Johan Dahl, OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, 9 April 2021.

<sup>129</sup> Additional information provided for Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 3 August 2019, p. 7.

international donors in June 2019 in an effort to diversify its sources of support but by the end of the year had not received any additional funding.<sup>130</sup> As at June 2022, Tajikistan estimated that up to an additional US\$13.9 million of funding was required between 2022 and 2025, over and above resources currently available, to be able to meet the completion date.<sup>131</sup>

Tajikistan also does not yet know the full extent of the contamination it needs to address, though it has stated that, in accordance with its extension request, it aims to complete all required survey and re-survey of hazardous areas by the end of 2023.<sup>132</sup> This seems overly ambitious given the significant decrease in survey between 2020 and 2021. Some of the minefields due to be surveyed by 2023 are located in remote, mountainous areas where conditions only permit 40 operational days a year. Furthermore, the existing estimate of SHAs along the Tajik-Uzbek border, covering 3.25km<sup>2</sup>, is based on only partial access. Further survey and clearance are subject to agreement with Uzbekistan.<sup>133</sup>

Online sources from 2021 indicate that a "joint Tajik-Uzbek commission for delimitation and demarcation of the mutual border" is active and that working groups met in August 2021 in Dushanbe and in the Uzbek city of Namangan in November 2021,<sup>134</sup> following discussions in May of the same year.<sup>135</sup> Mine Action Review has not been able to source further information about any progress made by the joint commission.

Tajikistan identifies several ongoing challenges for mine action across the country, including difficult terrain, harsh weather conditions, natural disasters such as rockfalls, avalanches and landslides, as well as dense vegetation. Tajikistan identifies a need for increased equipment and cross-country vehicles in order to fulfil the country's commitments under Tajikistan's APMBC Article 5 deadline extension by 2025.<sup>136</sup>

TNMAC also highlights ongoing security challenges along the Tajik-Afghan border as a significant challenge to mine action, which continue to impede access to some of Tajikistan's most heavily mined districts and add a further element of uncertainty to the outlook for implementation.<sup>137</sup> This challenge was exemplified in 2021, when the need to deploy personnel away from the border led to a significant reduction in land release compared to 2020.

**Table 7: Five-year summary of anti-personnel mine clearance**

Year	Area cleared (km <sup>2</sup> )
2021	0.21
2020	0.67
2019	0.54
2018	0.59
2017	0.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.63</b>

## PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Tajikistan has yet to develop comprehensive plans for tackling residual contamination. Tajikistan said in 2019 that it recognised the importance of the issue and had held preliminary discussions with the GICHD. In 2019, and again in June 2022, Tajikistan reported that it planned to hold a workshop with the GICHD to develop detailed plans and said it would incorporate them into its mine action strategy for 2021–25.<sup>138</sup> However, no further details have been made available on when this workshop may take place. The OSCE has supported the recruitment and appointment of an adviser for residual risk management, who took up post in March 2022, and is tasked with identifying improvements to the risk management of explosive hazards and to develop residual risk management guidelines to complement the NMAS.<sup>139</sup>

In 2021, under the coordination of TNMAC, the activities of the four survey teams of UST were expanded to include manual clearance, after training, SOP updates, and accreditation. TNMAC plans to further expand UST's demining operations and to use their capacity to deal with any residual contamination after completion.<sup>140</sup>

130 Roberts, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", p. 19.

131 Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, to the Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 June 2022. In the presentation, TNMAC specified that an additional US\$13.9 million was required. However, a figure of US\$10.06 million was contained in Tajikistan's Statement on Article 5 Implementation to the 19MSP on 17 November 2021.

132 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

133 Presentation by Tajikistan on Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Geneva, 23 May 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021).

134 Tajik-Uzbek border delimitation and demarcation commission meets in Uzbekistan", *Asia Plus*, 30 November 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3zDDNzJ>.

135 "Uzbekistan and Tajikistan discuss demarcation of state border", *KUN.UZ News*, 22 May 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3iSbky7>.

136 Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 June 2022.

137 Presentation by Tajikistan on Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Geneva, 23 May 2019; and email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

138 Additional information provided for Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 3 August 2019, p. 8.

139 Emails from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

140 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.