

Implementing UNEA Resolution 4/19 on Mineral Resource Governance

Regional Summary

West Asia

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Mineral Resource Governance Recommendations and Suggested Actions Key



Intensified mining for recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)



Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM)



Platforms for cooperation and capacity-building



Mine waste recycling, re-use and circularity



Tailings management



National-level governance



Harmonization and alignment of governance initiatives

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West Asia Consultation Report

This report describes the outcomes of the West Asia Region consultations conducted on the implementation of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) Resolution 4/19 on Mineral Resource Governance. Three consultative meetings were held, during which 33 representatives from Member States, including through UNEP national focal points, as well as major groups and other stakeholders were convened to identify best practices and knowledge gaps, assess governance options and consider common elements of interest for next steps on the mineral resource governance agenda. Participants provided their feedback to three key consultation questions:

- What are the most pressing mineral resource governance challenges in your region?
- What are some examples of emerging, good, or best practices in your region?
- What themes and issues should be the focus of future action, including by international or UN bodies, on Mineral Resource Governance?

One additional submission was received from a West Asian government in response to the consultation questions. Participants were invited to the following consultations:

- Briefing – Europe and West Asia, 23 July 2020 (English/Russian/Arabic)
- Regional Consultation – West Asia, 26 August 2020 (Arabic)
- Global Forums on the UNEA-4 Resolution on Mineral Resource Governance – 22 & 24 September 2020 (All UN languages)

Most pressing challenges in knowledge and practice

The first key question for the consultations was, "What are the most pressing mineral resource governance challenges in your region?". This section provides a summary of responses from the region, and incorporates input from both the online consultations and written submissions.



Awareness of responsible business practices

Participants raised the need for greater awareness amongst business leaders about the importance of social license to operate and the concept of sustainable development license to operate. Participants believed that opportunities exist for sustainable partnerships between business leaders and policy makers.



Public participation

There is a belief held by some participants that governments of the region should more strongly promote public participation in decisions related to mineral resources.



Information access

Access to information was identified as an issue for researchers and the general public, who report difficulties in accessing information on mineral resources from the official information channels, whether they be governments or companies.



Good governance for investment

According to some participants issues of good governance of the mineral sector of the region are neglected and hampering investment.



Strategic planning

Some countries reported under-developed strategy for managing mineral materials, and a need to develop guidelines for environmental impact assessment.



Recycling and re-use

There was interest reported by some governments and wider stakeholders in greater re-cycling and re-use of tailings and other mine waste in the future.



Harmonization of mining laws, policies and governance initiatives

Participants identified a current lack of coordination of mining initiatives and laws between the relevant ministries, such as the ministries of mining, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and other ministries.



Technical assistance and capacity building

A strong view of participants was the need for more technical assistance and capacity building, particularly in relation to compliance and enforcement of new and existing regulation. Participants also called for more information regarding legislation, methods and laws to deal with: the use of treated wastes as raw materials; the impact of sand extraction, especially beaches, on biodiversity; the Feasibility of removing chemicals from tailing dams; and solutions, studies and promising research on the topic of the feasibility of using desert sands as construction aggregate.

Good practices

The second major question guiding the consultations was, "What are some examples of emerging, good, or best practices in your region?". This section provides a summary of responses that incorporates input from both the online consultations and written submissions. It should be noted that this report does not endorse the accuracy, impact or efficacy of the listed examples, instead it faithfully reports the information contributed by participants during the consultations.



In Kuwait, the Environment Public Authority acts as a monitoring agency for the projects and activities of the state. Environmental and social impact assessments of those activities and projects must be done before the project commences.



On sand extraction, the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research is currently implementing a number of projects for the rehabilitation and cultivation of plant and fungal species.



In Saudi Arabia, the mining sector has turned into a major economic activity, and it is considered the third tributary within the Kingdom's 2030 vision.



Saudi Arabia is working with the World Bank in terms of sustainability, in line with best practices, including closure and rehabilitation.



In Oman, the mining sector development plan began with the establishment of the mining authority and the preparation of the mining strategy in 2017-2018. The goals of this strategy are sustainability, improving the standard of living, preserving the environment, and the participation of the local community.



In UAE, the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council or GCC have a committee to coordinate mineral wealth, and there are some joint initiatives and projects, including the development of a mining strategy for the GCC countries, which has been approved.

Future action

Participants from the region shared a great range of ideas for future action, this section summarizes the main ideas.



Recycling and re-use

Further research into the re-cycling and re-use of tailings and other mine waste.



Harmonization of mining laws, policies and governance initiatives

Coordinate mining initiatives and laws between the relevant ministries, such as the ministries of mining, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and other ministries.



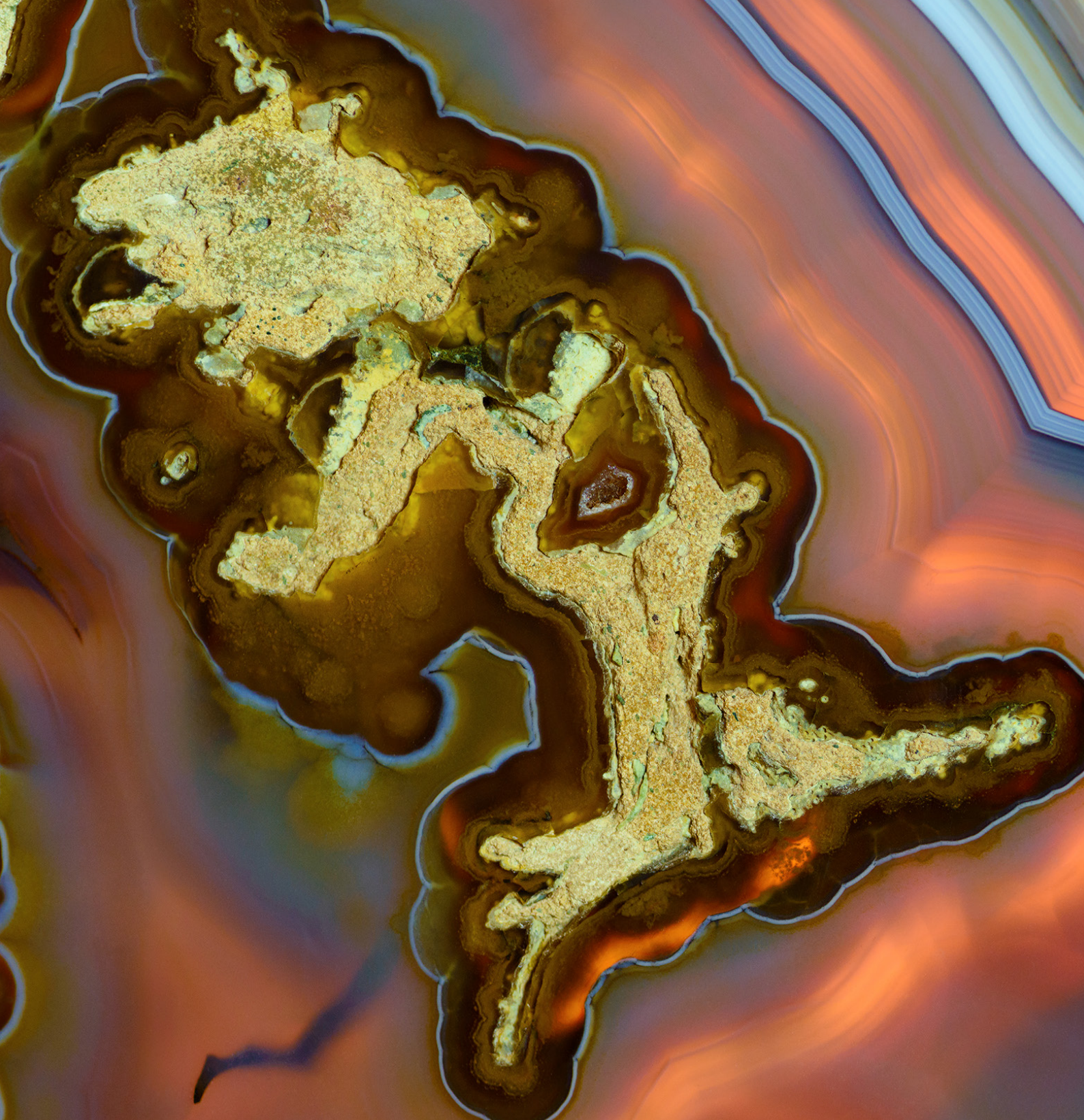
Technical assistance and capacity building

Many opportunities for technical assistance and capacity building were nominated by the participants, particularly in relation to compliance and enforcement of new and existing regulation.



Participants also called for more information regarding legislation, methods and laws to deal with

1. The use of treated wastes and raw materials
2. The impact of sand use from some areas, especially beaches, on biodiversity
3. Feasibility of removing chemicals from tailing dams
4. The best solutions, studies and promising research in the field of use of the desert sands



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