



UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S WORKING GROUP  
ON TRANSFORMING THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



*A briefing on the UN Secretary General's Initiative*

# **'Harnessing Critical Energy Transition Minerals for Sustainable Development in LDCs and LLDCs *Just Transitions in Low Carbon Technologies*'**

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Nairobi, 4 December 2023  
Committee of the Permanent Representatives  
Subcommittee meeting

# Responsible mining of critical energy transition minerals is an imperative

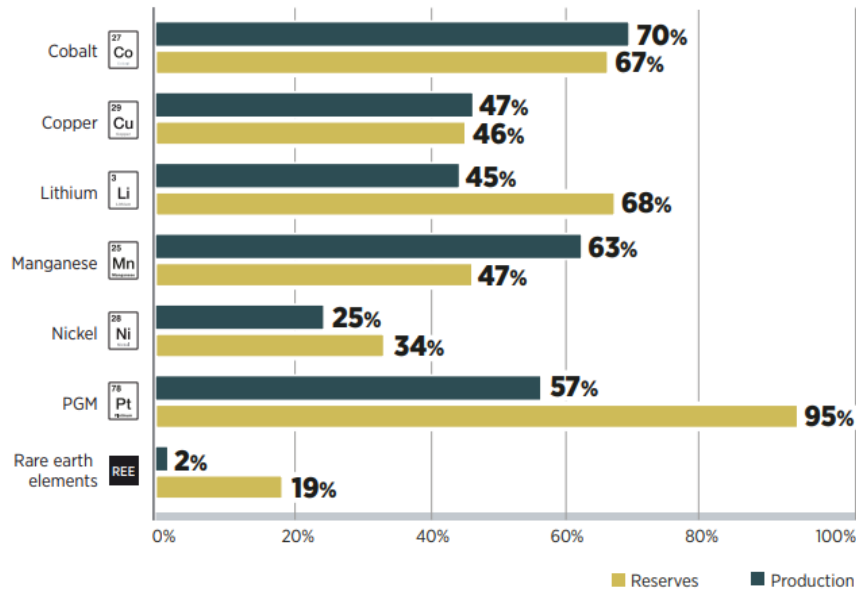
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- The energy transition will require **more minerals to be extracted at a faster pace.**
- This comes with **opportunities but also impacts on people and planet (climate, biodiversity and pollution).**
- UNEP has advocated for a **well-managed and responsible extraction of critical energy transition minerals** that supports reaching net-zero by 2050, while not imperiling other environmental goals.
- A **systems change** towards resource efficiency and circularity is critical, and so is **sharing the benefits** from circularity with original mineral owners.



# LDCs, LLDCs and developing countries have an important share of critical energy transition minerals

Share of global mineral production and reserves held by developing countries (2017)



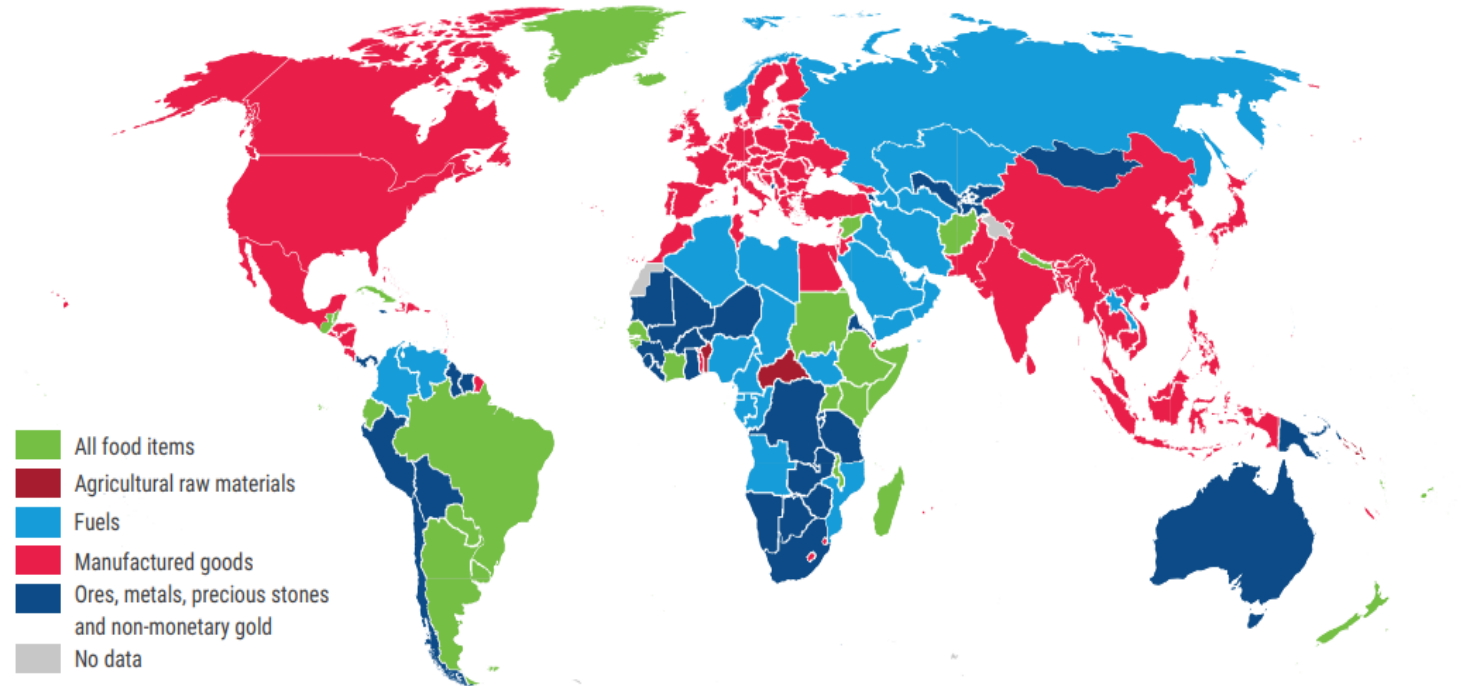
Source: IRENA (2023), Geopolitics of the Energy Transition: Critical Materials

Critical raw materials	Main uses	World production (tons), 2021	Main producers (tons), 2021
Rare earths		280 000	Australia, Brazil, <b>Burundi (100)</b> , China, India, <b>Madagascar (3 200)</b> , <b>Myanmar (26,000)</b> , Russian Federation, Thailand, United States, Vietnam; South Africa* and the United Republic of Tanzania*
Magnesium		950 000	Brazil, China, Israel, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Türkiye, Ukraine, United States
Niobium		67 700	Brazil, <b>Burundi (23)</b> , Canada, China, <b>Democratic Republic of the Congo (560)</b> , <b>Ethiopia (6.9)</b> , <b>Mozambique (9.1)</b> , Nigeria, Russian Federation, <b>Rwanda (156)</b> , <b>Uganda (6.6)</b>
Germanium		140	China, Russian Federation, United States
Lithium		100 000 <sup>9)</sup>	Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Portugal, United States, Zimbabwe; <b>Democratic Republic of the Congo*</b> , <b>Mali*</b>
Uranium		50 000 100	Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Peru, Russian Federation, Türkiye, United States**, Guinea**, Madagascar**
Strontium		360 000	Argentina, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mexico, Spain
Cobalt		170 000	Australia, Canada, China, <b>Democratic Republic of the Congo (120 000)</b> , Cuba, Indonesia, <b>Madagascar (2 500)</b> , Morocco, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russian Federation, United States, <b>Zambia (367)**</b>
Nickel		2 700 000	Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Indonesia, France (New Caledonia), <b>Madagascar (9 900)**</b> , Philippines, Russian Federation, United States, <b>Zambia (3 251)**</b>
Copper		21 000 000	Australia, Canada, Chile, China, <b>Democratic Republic of the Congo (1 800 000)</b> , <b>Eritrea (21 725)**</b> , Indonesia, Kazakhstan, <b>Mauritania (28 491)**</b> , Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, <b>United Republic of Tanzania (12 000)**</b> , United States, <b>Zambia (830 000)</b>

Source: UNCTAD (2022), The Least Developed Countries Report 2022

# LDCs and LLDCs have many development needs and are commodity-dependent

Map 1.3 Main export products, 2021



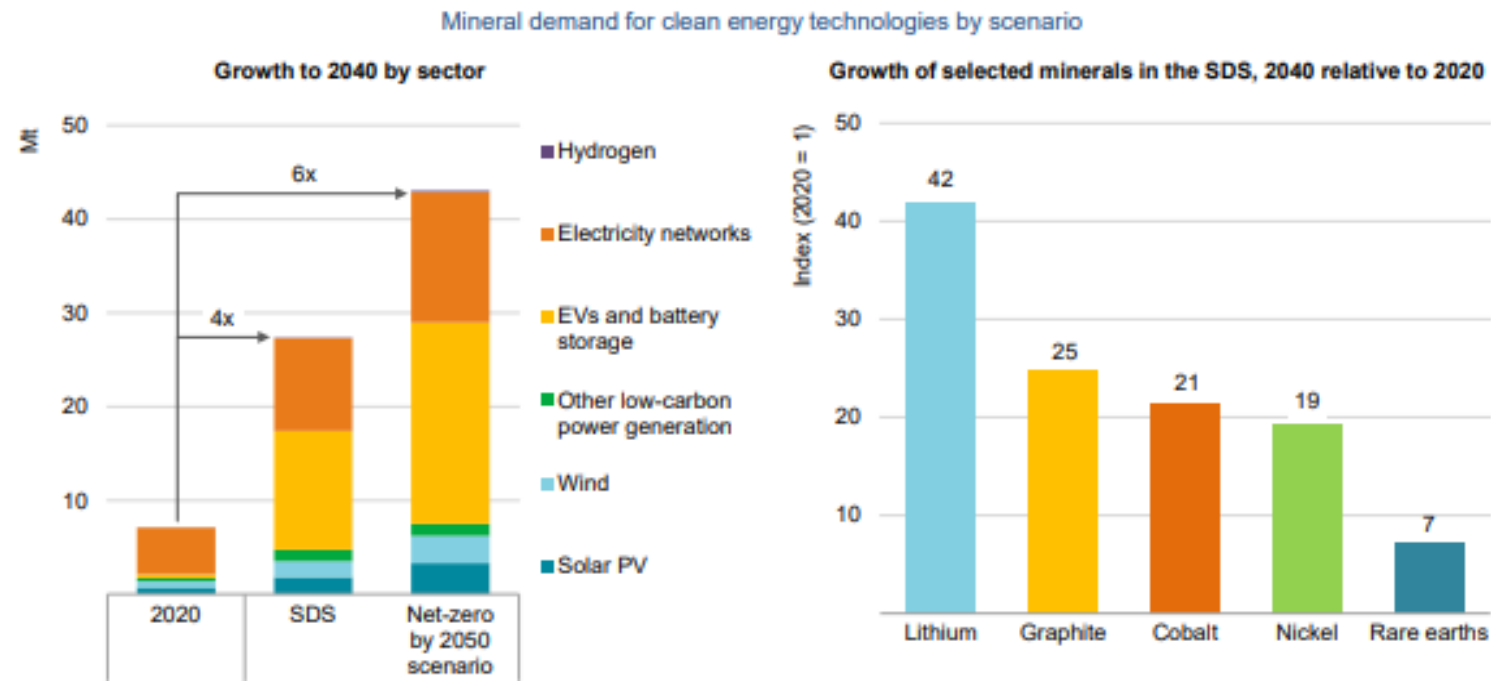
Source: The UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2022



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# How can these countries harness the increasing demand for critical energy transition minerals for Sustainable Development?

Mineral demand for clean energy technologies would rise by at least four times by 2040 to meet climate goals, with particularly high growth for EV-related minerals



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Notes: Mt = million tonnes. Includes all minerals in the scope of this report, but does not include steel and aluminium. See Annex for a full list of minerals.

Source: IEA(2022), The Role of Critical Minerals in Clean Energy Transitions (World Energy Outlook Special Report)



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# The UN Secretary General Working Group on Transforming Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development

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Develop a **common narrative and framework**



Frame an implementation initiative to **deploy recommendations**



Develop **policy recommendations**, tailored to national governments, non-state actors.



**Provide a central hub of information and knowledge exchange** on global policy actions, global standards, tools and best practices.



**Foster collaboration** to respond better to existing and emerging needs for state and non-state actors.



**Align efforts with ongoing processes and events** relevant to extractive industries



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# Harnessing Critical Energy Transition Minerals for Sustainable Development in LDCs and LLDCs

## *Just Transitions in Low Carbon Technologies*

**Technical and political support** based on carefully curated solutions from a diverse range of UN actors to develop safeguards, standards, policy incentives, and strategies for a Sustainable and Just Mineral Development.

**Mobilization of actors along the supply chain** to build trust, introduce sustainable development perspective and enable new market opportunities

**Enhanced national capacities** to negotiate, attract investment, create partnerships, develop skills for new business model, manage job transition

**Tools** to effectively assess and manage social-environmental risks linked to mining

**Stronger governance** and safeguards against illicit flows, corruption



# Galvanizing collective action for just transitions in critical energy transition minerals



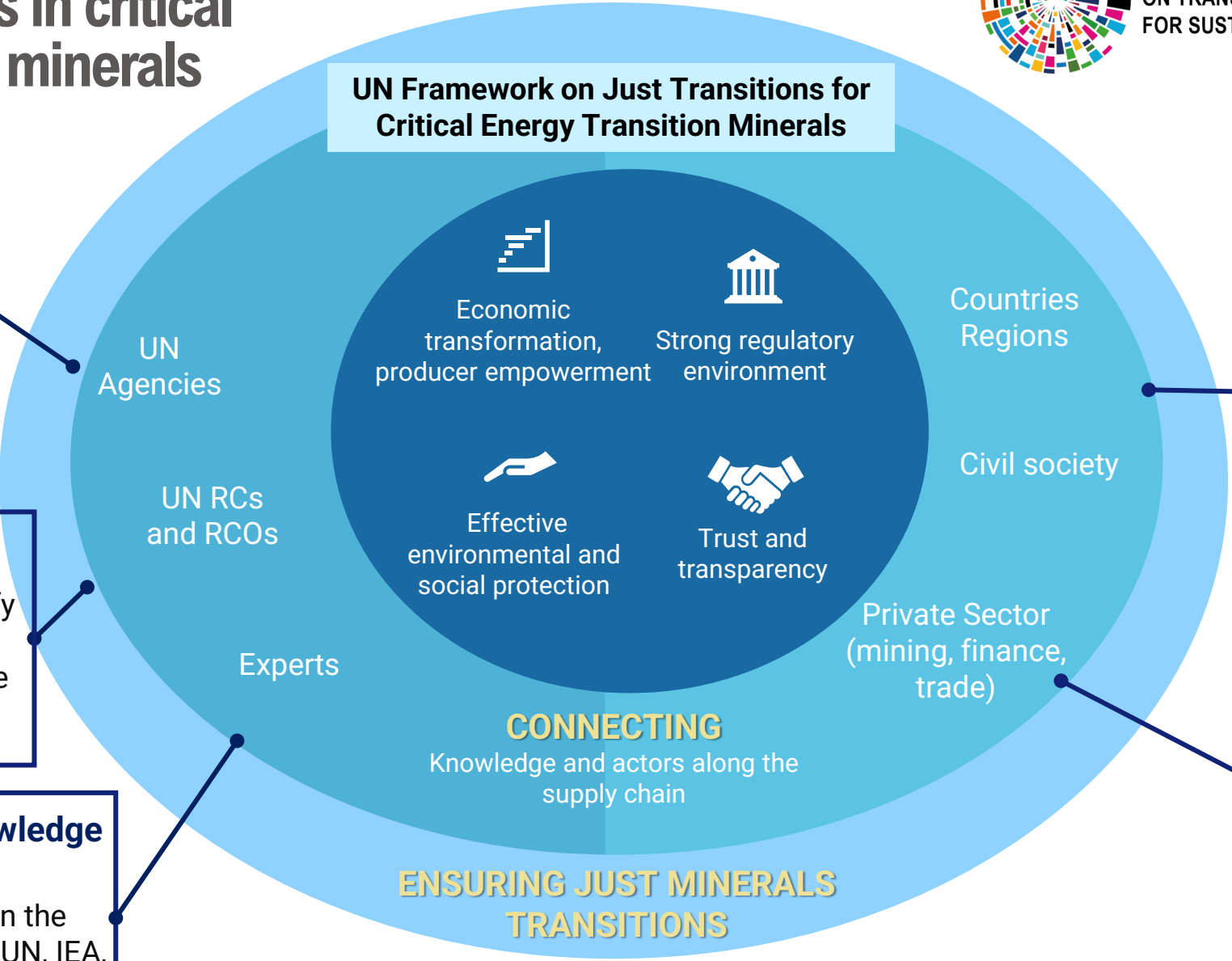
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## UN Framework on Just Transitions for Critical Energy Transition Minerals

**Breaking silos**  
A framework co-developed by UNDP, UNEP, UN Regional Economic Commissions, UNCTAD, ILO, UNIDO, OHCHR

**Impact-Oriented**  
A framework that will identify principles, policies and partnerships to build durable institutional capacities

**Building on years of knowledge and experience**  
A framework that will build on the work and expertise from the UN, IEA, IRENA, IGF, OECD, World Bank, EITI, IRMA, and others.



**Bringing together producers and consumers**  
A framework that will be developed through meaningful and broad multistakeholder consultations, offering a space to exchange views and best practices

**Harmonizing effective approaches**  
Bringing in voices from several parts of the value chain to harmonize safeguards, create enabling conditions for economic transformation, reliability, resilience and benefit-sharing

**CONNECTING**

Knowledge and actors along the supply chain

**ENSURING JUST MINERALS TRANSITIONS**



# The UN Framework on Just Transitions for Critical Energy Transition Minerals

## Module 1: Building trust in the critical minerals supply chain

**Module 2:**  
Enhancing producer capacities to overcome asymmetries of power

**Module 3:**  
Strengthening trade potential

**Module 4: Protecting people and planet**  
(UNEP, UNDP, OHCHR)

**Module 5: Creating a strong regulatory environment for just transitions**

## Module 4: Protecting People and Planet

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**UNEP, OHCHR, UNDP** developing module around three dimensions:

- Look at ways and means of **going beyond doing no harm in mining sites** and their surroundings, towards net-positive impacts on land and biodiversity, including restoration and rehabilitation.
- **Rights-based mineral economic development**, protecting human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as well as the **responsibility and accountability** of governments and industry. Consider socio-economic aspects such as **jobs and livelihoods**
- Explore opportunities for responsible mining and minerals value chains, including improved sourcing of materials, addressing unsustainable resource extraction by lowering the pressure of extraction through **circular approaches**, recycling of minerals, provenance, tracking, **value addition and benefit sharing**.



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