



# planetGOLD Criteria for Environmentally & Socially Responsible Operations

## Criteria Background and Report Form

Name of Mining Entity

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Date of completion

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Country, region, city

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Reporter name and surname

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## I. Background

Projects conducted under the planetGOLD Programme must align with requirements of the Minamata Convention on Mercury as well as the policies of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on Environmental and Social Safeguards. Therefore, in addition to conforming with Modules 1-4 of the CRAFT Code, planetGOLD Mining Entities (MEs)<sup>1</sup> must address three additional criteria that are specific to the planetGOLD Programme.

- ✓ Criterion A: Eliminate mercury in the mining process, and appropriately manage mercury- contaminated tailings, in keeping with the objectives of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Annex C;
- ✓ Criterion B: Respect and protect the rights of [Indigenous Peoples](#), per requirements of the GEF environment and social safeguards; and
- ✓ Criterion C: Minimize impact on biodiversity, reflecting additional environmental protection considerations required by the GEF, with a special emphasis on protecting biodiversity and critical habitats.

Mining Entities that satisfy all criteria are considered in conformance and are ready to engage with responsible buyers.

Mining Entities are considered conditionally in conformance and can still engage with responsible buyers if:

- At a minimum, the ME fully meets the requirements identified in planetGOLD criterion (A) and CRAFT Modules 1, 2, 3 and
- For planetGOLD criteria B and C, and for CRAFT Module 4, if risks are identified that are not fully addressed, the ME provides a mitigation plan that explains how progress will be made toward meeting these criteria and demonstrates continuous progress over time.

More information on the development of these criteria, and further explanation of conformance, is available in the full planetGOLD criteria document, which can be found here: [planetGOLD Criteria for Environmentally and Socially Responsible Operations](#).

## II. The planetGOLD Criteria

Criterion A: Mercury-Free Processing and Management of Chemicals and Wastes (cyanide, mercury tailings)

This criterion requires that all Mining Entities operate without mercury and align with Annex C of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (UNEP 2013), to eliminate the worst practice of using cyanide on mercury-contaminated tailings, which may remain from previous operations that used mercury.

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<sup>1</sup> These MEs include organizations involved in mineral extraction, selection, processing, or transportation of minerals from primary or secondary deposits, dumps and tailings. (ARM. 2020. CRAFT 2.0)

Criteria	Means of Verification
A1. Facilities are mercury-free.	Processing facilities have no evidence of mercury use.
A2. No cyanide leaching is conducted on sediment, ore or tailings to which mercury has been added without first removing the mercury. <sup>2</sup>	Processing facilities provide evidence that they do not use cyanide on mercury-contaminated tailings, nor do they sell mercury-contaminated tailings to other processors who use cyanide without first removing mercury; OR processing facilities that treat mercury-contaminated tailings with cyanide provide evidence of mercury treatment (and environmentally sound management of mercury) prior to further processing or sale of tailings, or disposal of tailings.

**Criterion B: Respect Rights and Lives of Indigenous Peoples**

This criterion requires that the Mining Entity demonstrate respect for the individual and collective rights, culture, Cultural Heritage sites, views, and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples who may be impacted by mining projects and mining communities.<sup>3,4</sup>

Note: The planetGOLD Criteria below recognize that the specific means of implementation of this criterion, including obtaining FPIC, may vary based on national laws and circumstances.

Criteria	Means of Verification
B1. The ME has a publicly available policy statement that acknowledges its responsibility to respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, their territory, natural resources, and Cultural Heritage sites. <sup>5</sup>	The ME must publicly share a written statement of commitment to respect Indigenous Peoples, their territory, resources and Cultural Heritage sites and ensure that Indigenous Peoples directly or indirectly affected by the company’s mining-related activities are aware of this policy.
B2. The ME has identified whether there are Indigenous Peoples who might be indirectly or directly affected by the mining operation and mining community.	The ME must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a description of those consulted, and other methods used, to help identify Indigenous Peoples who may potentially be affected.</li> <li>2. Provide a written plan to engage representative bodies of any such affected Peoples.</li> </ol>

<sup>2</sup>See Annex C, par.1 (b) (iv) (Minamata Convention); See Vol. 2B, Module 5, Section M.5/1.3.11/S.1.4 (CRAFT 2.0, 2020)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/UNDG\\_guidelines\\_EN.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/UNDG_guidelines_EN.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> MSS: par. 11, a-i (GEF, 2018)

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Available at: [www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

<p><b>B3. The ME:</b></p> <p>1. Has conducted outreach in a culturally appropriate manner to affected Indigenous Peoples to identify potential positive and negative impacts of the mining operation. Such impacts may occur by way of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Restriction of land use or loss of access to natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use or occupation, or the location of a project or program on such land or the commercial development of such natural resources;</li> <li>b) Relocation from land and natural resources subject to traditional ownership, or under customary use or occupation; and</li> <li>c) Significant impacts on or the use of Cultural Heritage for mining operation purposes.<sup>6</sup></li> </ul> <p>2. Has worked alongside Indigenous Peoples to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Obtain consent for the project and mitigate any identified impacts; OR</li> <li>b. Respect the decision of the Indigenous Community if they choose not to accept the request, deny the request or delay the request pending additional information or clarifications.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The ME must:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide documentation of outreach with the full representative body of the Indigenous community, and other forms of consultations, to introduce and discuss the operation, and answer questions presented by the full representative body;</li> <li>2. Provide a description of the method used to identify potential impacts;</li> <li>3. Provide a report on any potential positive or negative impacts identified; and</li> <li>4. Provide evidence of mitigation of adverse impacts.</li> </ol>
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<sup>6</sup> MS5: par.10, a-c (GEF, 2018)

### Criterion C: Environment Protection

This criterion requires the ME to engage in preventive and restorative environmental practices and use environmentally responsible methods of production. Responsible MEs abide by the environmental laws in their countries, including requirements for environmental restoration; mitigate unavoidable negative impacts; and have systems in place to address and protect biodiversity.

Criteria	Means of Verification
C1. MEs observe all legal environmental requirements, practice pollution prevention and avoid working in areas of high conservation value.	<p>The ME must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide the environmental permit or license, where such permits or licenses are required; OR indicate that the area has been legally designated as an artisanal mining production area, and the miner has any required permissions to work in the area; and</li> <li>2. Provide water monitoring data or other evidence to demonstrate minimal water contamination.<sup>7 8</sup></li> <li>3. Consult with the relevant environmental authority to determine if they are working in a high conservation value area; or use the IBAT<sup>[1]</sup> or other relevant database to identify if they are working in such areas; and</li> <li>4. Provide the plan that they will follow to rehabilitate the mined land after the mining operations are complete.</li> </ol>
C2. [Applies only to existing facilities with any required permission to work in areas of high conservation value] If it is impossible to avoid a high conservation valued area, mitigation efforts must be in place. Any other remaining identified environmental risks must also be assessed and mitigated.	<p>The MEs must meet the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide their environmental permit or license that shows permission to work in this area and;</li> <li>2. In conjunction with relevant environmental authority, have a written plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the impact of the mining operation on land and water degradation; and</li> <li>• Report on what measures they will take to protect surrounding ecosystems, minimize biodiversity impact and deforestation, and protect the ecosystem services to surrounding communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

<sup>7</sup> Level of contamination of water bodies with suspended solids, chemicals, and fuel residues is moderate to the extent that water quality does not represent a risk for the health and livelihoods of other water users or a serious risk for the sustainability of the ecosystem. (See Vol. 4, Sec. 2.5.4, M.5/4.2.2/R.1, CRAFT 2.0, 2020)

<sup>8</sup> See Vol. 4, Sec. 2.5.4, M.5/4.2.2/R.1, CRAFT 2.0, 2020; MS7 (GEF, 2018)

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.ibat-alliance.org/>

### III. The planetGOLD Criteria Verification Form

**Instructions:**

1. Please provide the ME's declaration, in a written statement, of its commitment to follow the planetGOLD Criteria.
2. After reading each criterion, indicate the level to which the Mining Entity conforms with each requirement. Place a check mark (✓) next to the appropriate response (pass, in progress, fail/ no progress.). Each response requires an explanation.
3. If the criterion is "in progress", please include a description of your planned mitigation measures toward achieving conformance, in the template in [Annex I](#).
4. Attach any supporting documents such as written statements, permits, or licenses as requested for proof of verification. [See Annex II](#) for examples of relevant recommended documents for each criterion.

#### Declaration of Commitment to the planetGOLD Criteria

The Mining Entity declares that it is committed to follow the planetGOLD Criteria and promote the reduction and releases of, and exposure to, mercury in ASGM processing, including mercury-free methods, in accordance with the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

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SIGNATURE

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NAME AND SURNAME, JOB TITLE, ID NUMBER, DATE

Criterion A: Mercury-Free Processing and Management of Chemicals and Wastes (cyanide, mercury-contaminated tailings)

A1. Facilities are mercury-free.

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

Pass	The Mining Entity (ME) provides evidence that there is no mercury use in their facilities.
In progress	The ME is actively implementing measures to transition to mercury-free processing.
Fail	The processing facility uses mercury in processing with no plan for transition.

A1. Do you use mercury in your processing operations?

Pass In progress Fail

[ ] [ ] [ ]

*Explain your response here and attach any relevant evidence as an Annex to this document.*

A2. No cyanide leaching is conducted on sediment, ore or tailings to which mercury has been added without first removing the mercury.

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

Pass	The Mining Entity (ME) provides evidence that there is no use of cyanide on mercury contaminated tailings without first removing the mercury, nor is there sale of such tailings to processing facilities that use cyanide without first removing mercury.
In progress	The ME is in the process of developing measures to ensure no mercury-contaminated tailings are processed with cyanide.
Fail	The ME uses cyanide on mercury-contaminated tailings or sells their mercury-contaminate tailings to a cyanide processor without mercury treatment.

A2. Can you provide evidence that there is no cyanide use on any mercury-contaminated tailings at your facility, and/or that you do not sell such tailings to cyanide processing facilities, without prior mercury-treatment and environmentally sound management of mercury? Choose N/A if you do not process tailings at your facility.

Pass In progress Fail N/A

*Explain your response here and attach any evidence as an Annex to this document.*

### Criterion B: Respect Rights and Lives of Indigenous Peoples

B1. The ME has a publicly available statement that acknowledges its responsibility to respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, their territory, natural resources, and Cultural Heritage sites.

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

Pass	A written statement of commitment has been publicly shared and all representative bodies of all Indigenous Peoples in the region have been made aware.
In progress	A written statement of commitment to respect Indigenous Peoples, their territory and Cultural Heritage sites is being prepared, and there is a clear plan to publicly share the statement with Indigenous Peoples.
No progress	No statement has been written.

B1. Can you provide a publicly available written statement of commitment to respect Indigenous Peoples, their territory, resources, and Cultural Heritage sites and ensure that Indigenous Peoples directly or indirectly affected by the company's mining-related activities are aware of this policy?

Pass In progress No progress

*A statement can be found in ANNEX III for any ME who may not have such statement available to them. Explain your response here and attach your statement as an Annex to this document.*

**B2.** The ME has identified whether there are Indigenous Peoples who might be indirectly or directly affected by the mining operation and mining community.

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

<b>Pass</b>	The identification of Indigenous Peoples who might be indirectly or directly affected by operations has taken place, and a written plan to engage representative bodies of any such affected Peoples has been completed.
<b>In progress</b>	The identification of Indigenous Peoples who might be indirectly or directly affected is underway and a written plan to engage representative bodies of such affected Peoples is in progress.
<b>No progress</b>	Indigenous Peoples who may be indirectly or directly affected by the mining operations and/or communities have not been identified.

**B2.** Have you identified whether there are Indigenous Peoples who might be indirectly or directly affected by the mining operation and mining community? Where such Indigenous Peoples have been identified, do you have a written plan for engagement?

**Pass**      **In progress**      **No progress**

*Explain your response here. Where applicable, include a description of those consulted, and other methods used, to help identify Indigenous Peoples who may potentially be affected. If you have a written engagement plan, please attach as an Annex to this document.*

**B3.** The ME has conducted outreach in a culturally appropriate manner to affected Indigenous Peoples to identify potential positive and negative impacts of the mining operation.

*\*\*If this is not applicable to your operation, please mark the "N/A" box and proceed to Criterion C\*\**

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

<b>Pass</b>	Outreach has been conducted in a culturally appropriate manner to affected Indigenous Peoples to identify and mitigate potential positive and negative impacts of the mining operation
<b>In progress</b>	An outreach plan is in place and/or outreach is underway.
<b>No progress</b>	No outreach has been conducted.

**B3.** Have you conducted outreach in a culturally appropriate manner to affected Indigenous Peoples to identify and mitigate potential positive and negative impacts of the mining operation?

**Pass**    **In progress**    **No progress**    **N/A**  
 [ ]            [ ]            [ ]            [ ]

*Explain your response here. Where applicable, attach any documentation of this outreach, including a description of the method used to identify potential impacts, a report on any potential positive or negative impacts identified, and evidence of mitigation of adverse impacts, as an Annex to this report.*

### Criterion C: Environment Protection

C1. Mining Entities observe all legal environmental requirements, practice pollution prevention, and avoid working in areas of high conservation value.

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

Pass	The ME's operation follows all legal environmental requirements, practices pollution prevention, and does not work in areas of high conservation value.
In progress	The ME is in the process of obtaining necessary environmental permits/ adopting measures to meet all environmental requirements and to practice pollution prevention and aims to avoid working in areas of high conservation value.
No progress	The ME does not have and has not applied for an environmental permit, does not observe legal environmental requirements, does not practice pollution prevention, and/or works in areas of high conservation value.

**C1.** Does your operation follow all legal environmental requirements applicable in your jurisdiction?

**Pass**      **In progress**      **No progress**  
[ ]            [ ]            [ ]

*Explain your response here. Attach a copy of the environmental permit or license, where such permits or licenses are required, or include evidence that the site has been legally designated for ASM production area, and the ME has permission to work in the area (whichever is applicable) as an Annex to this document.*

**C1a.** Do you have water monitoring data or other evidence to demonstrate minimal water contamination?

**Pass**      **In progress**      **No progress**  
[ ]            [ ]            [ ]

*Explain your response here. Where applicable, attach water monitoring data as an Annex to this document.*

**C1b.** Have you consulted with the relevant environmental authority to determine if you are operating in a high conservation value area; or other relevant database, such as IBAT<sup>9</sup> to identify if you are working in such areas?

**Pass**      **In progress**      **No progress**  
[ ]            [ ]            [ ]

<sup>9</sup> Integrated Biodiversity Assessment ; <https://www.ibat-alliance.org/>

*Explain your response here.*

**C1c.** Can you provide the plan that you will follow to rehabilitate the mined land after the mining operations are complete?

**Pass**

**In progress**

**No progress**

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

*Explain your response here. Where applicable, attach the plan as an Annex to this document.*

**C2:** [Applies only to existing facilities working with permission in high conservation value areas]:  
If it is impossible to avoid a high conservation valued area, mitigation efforts must be in place.  
Any other remaining identified environmental risks must also be assessed and mitigated.

**\*\* If this is not applicable to your project, please mark the "N/A" box and proceed to the next section\*\***

Conformity with requirements is expressed as:

Pass	Mitigation efforts are in place, and any other remaining identified environmental risks have been assessed and mitigated.
In Progress	Identification and establishment of mitigation efforts are in progress.
No progress	Mitigation efforts are not in progress.

**C2:** Do you have efforts in place to mitigate impacts on high conservation value areas, as well as to mitigate any other remaining identified environmental risks from your existing operation?

Pass    In progress    No progress    N/A  
           

*Explain your response here. Where applicable, attach a copy of the permit/and or license that shows permission to work in this area, along with documentation of mitigation efforts, as an Annex to this document.*

**C2a:** Do you have a written plan, prepared in conjunction with the relevant environmental authority, to reduce the impact of the mining operations on land and water degradation, and to report on what measures you will take to protect surrounding ecosystems, minimize biodiversity impact and deforestation, and protect the ecosystem services to surrounding communities?

Pass    In progress    No progress    N/A  
           

*Explain your response here. Where applicable, attach the written plan and any reports prepared in response to the plan as an Annex to this document.*

## IV. Signature of Declaration

I hereby declare and demonstrate that the answers I provided to the different questions about my mining operations and practices are true and completely verifiable.

SIGNATURE
NAME AND SURNAME, JOB TITLE, ID NUMBER, DATE

# ANNEX I: Risk and Mitigation Plans

Criterion (description)	Remaining Risks	Mitigation Plan
<p><b>Example:</b> Criteria B: publicly available written statement of commitment to respect Indigenous Peoples, their territory, resources, and Cultural Heritage sites and ensure that Indigenous Peoples directly or indirectly affected by the company’s mining-related activities are aware of this policy.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> We do not yet have a written a publicly available statement of commitment of respect.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> By [month, day, year] we will have written and publicly shared a commitment of respect.</p>

## ANNEX II: List of Recommended Report Annexes

The documents below are suggested Annexes to support the planetGOLD report. Other forms of accepted modalities of justifications include, but are not limited to: WhatsApp audio, video and pictures of progress.

### Criteria A: Mercury-Free Processing and Management of Chemicals and Wastes (cyanide, mercury tailings)

- Evidence that facilities are mercury-free, and that cyanide is not used to treat any remaining mercury contaminated tailings, such as process diagram, photos, etc.
- Records showing sales of any mercury-contaminated tailings to only processing centers that treat mercury prior to processing.
- [For facilities that process tailings] Description of procedures used to ensure tailings are mercury-free or process to remove mercury prior to treatment and mercury management plan.

### Criteria B: Respect Rights and Lives of Indigenous Peoples

- Public statement of commitment
- Description of those consulted and methods used to help identify Indigenous Peoples
- Written plan to engage representative bodies of such affected Peoples
- Documentation of outreach and other forms of consultations (e.g., meeting notes).
- Description of methods used and/or reports to identify potential impacts (negative or positive)
- Evidence of mitigation of adverse impacts

### Criteria C: Environment Protection

- Environmental permits/licenses with evidence to legally operate in the production area (including permission to operate in areas of high conservation value, where applicable)
- Water monitoring data
- Written rehabilitation plan
- [Existing facilities operating in high conservation areas]
  - Written plan to reduce the impact of the mining operations on land and water degradation
  - Report on mitigation efforts to protect surrounding ecosystems, minimize biodiversity impact and deforestation, and protect the ecosystem services to surrounding communities

# ANNEX III: Statement to Respect Indigenous Peoples

The Mining Entity commits to respect the rights, interests, special connections to lands and waters, Cultural Heritage sites, and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

SIGNATURE
NAME AND SURNAME, JOB TITLE, ID NUMBER, DATE