



DEFINING CONFLICT MINERALS

When dealing with the issue of conflict minerals it is important to first define what they are. The first and simplest definition is that conflict minerals are those that are linked to a conflict, abuse or human rights violation.

Geopolitics shifted after World War II with the fall of the major blocs and the Berlin Wall, and access to and control of natural resources has emerged one of the main sources of conflict.

According to the "From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment" (UNDP, 2009) report, there have been 18 conflicts over access to and control of natural resources since 1990, and 40% of violent inter-state conflicts have been related to natural resources.

Moreover, having these resources increases the chances of these conflicts reoccurring by 50%.

Let's turn to the different types of relationship between minerals and conflict and/or abuse. Conflicts can be caused by access to and control of minerals as well as a host of other issues, and accessibility to minerals in the region (or the control of their mining or sale) can prolong or intensify conflicts. The money made from selling conflict minerals finances both the conflict and armed groups; in other words, a conflict mineral is, by definition, one that is extracted and directly or indirectly finances or aggravates conflict or the abuse of human rights. Its mining and sale do not have to be the cause the conflict for the mineral to be defined as a conflict mineral.

However, there are several approaches to take when it comes to defining which minerals are conflict minerals and which zones are in conflict.

The first is a narrowed approach, both in terms of the number of minerals and the region or area from which they are sourced. This perspective focuses on Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, a United States federal law. According to this approach, there are four recognised conflict minerals: tantalum, tungsten or wolfram, tin and gold (known as 3TG). It also limits the scope to Africa's Great Lakes region.

The other approach is set out in the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct (<https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/OECD-Due-Diligence-Guidance-for-Responsible-Business-Conduct.pdf>) and is the model that has been followed in the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2017/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017, which establishes supply chain due diligence obligations for Union importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten, their ores, and gold originating from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

This legislation extends the scope to other territories and establishes a list of conflict-affected and high-risk areas, which not only includes Africa's Great Lakes but also proposes the development of a list (indicative and not exhaustive) of other regions.

ACTIVITY PROPOSAL

MAIN USES OF MINERALS AND CHEMICALS

Objectives: To learn how minerals and chemicals are part of daily life.

Materials: Periodic table of elements, PDF with the main uses of each of the 4 minerals:
<https://www.tecnologiaibredeconflicto.org/edukalboan-9-tlc/>

Development:

- 1.- Divide the class into groups of 4.
- 2.- Divide the periodic table into the number of groups. Each group is assigned several chemical elements. Each group's chemical elements should contain at least one "conflict mineral".
- 3.- Each group will have 15 minutes to search the internet for all end uses of the conflict mineral assigned to the group and the products it is used in.
- 4.- Participants are given 5 minutes to draw, cut out or find a way to represent these products and uses. Each group can use a blank sheet of paper for each chemical to list all the information found (products and end uses).
- 5.- Once all the information is included on the sheets of paper, create a periodic table with each sheet representing an element.
- 6.- Since there will be more than one sheet for each "conflict mineral", the group should select just one to represent that element.

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- www.tecnologiaibredeconflicto.org
- Eurac:** www.eurac-network.org
- OECD Due Diligence Guidance:**
<http://www.oecd.org/daf/inv/mne/GuidanceEdition2.pdf>
- www.edukalboan.org** (educational resources website)
- File 2 Conflict-free technology**
- From conflict to Peacebuilding**
"The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment: https://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/pcdmb_policy_01.pdf
- Regulation (EU) 2017/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council**
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8b0e378b-3c59-11e7-a08e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>
- The World order**
<https://elordenmundial.com/> (Maps) (Spanish)

A project from:



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Cooperate:

