



The Democratic Republic of the Congo Hosts a Regional Forum on the Implementation of the ICGLR Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) Gold Strategy

Kinshasa, DR Congo, 15 September 2023 - The Regional Forum on the implementation of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Strategy for Artisanal and Small-Scale mining (ASM) Gold was held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), on 12-15 September 2023. The meeting brought together representatives from the ICGLR Member States, Government officials of ministries in charge of mining, experts from the gold sector, civil society representatives, members of the ICGLR Regional Private Sector Forum, and various other stakeholders. Guided by the Protocol against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and the Lusaka Declaration on the Fight against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources, the participants underscored their commitment to address challenges relating to the illegal exploitation of artisanal gold in the DRC and the region.

Illegal exploitation and illicit trade in artisanal gold mining is a major concern in the Great Lakes region. This is due to the potential use of the illegally acquired artisanal gold for the financing of armed conflicts, which results in, among other things, mass displacement of people and the violation of their fundamental human rights as well as the deprivation of both mining communities and governments from benefiting from this precious metal.

Since 2006, various efforts have been put in place to address these challenges, including the [2006 Protocol against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources](#) and the 2010 commitments of the [Lusaka Declaration on the Fight against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources](#). Since then, the ICGLR and its partners have consistently championed the cause of combating the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Great Lakes region. The strategy is implemented by Member States following the orientations of the ICGLR Regional Initiative on the Fight Against the Illegal Exploitation of natural Resources (RINR).

The ASM Gold Strategy, a comprehensive framework that outlines key initiatives and interventions to address the complex issue of artisanal gold trade, is one of the key approaches that have been developed to tackle the problem. The strategy seeks to establish sustainable and responsible artisanal gold trade in the region. The strategy is implemented by Member States following the orientations of the [ICGLR Regional Initiative on the Fight Against the Illegal Exploitation of natural Resources](#) (RINR).

The Regional forum was, therefore, organized to disseminate and collaboratively formulate pragmatic recommendations for the effective implementation of the ICGLR ASM Gold Strategy across the Great Lakes region. One of the main objectives was to discuss modalities and strategies of developing a regional gold tracking system that promotes transparency and responsibility within the artisanal gold trade.

During the meeting, participants agreed on the formulation and validation of practical recommendations aimed at facilitating the dissemination and implementation of the strategy within each Member State of the ICGLR. Additionally, they agreed on commitments toward formalizing the artisanal gold supply chain, ensuring its transition from informal channels to legal pathways.
