

PRESS RELEASE



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OECD rates ITSCI programme highest in responsible minerals assessment

A detailed assessment by the OECD recently concluded that the **standards** of the ITSCI Programme are 100% aligned with the 5 Step due diligence recommendations of the OECD's internationally accepted guidance for good company management, risk assessment and mitigation, auditing and public reporting in responsible minerals supply chains. This is a unique achievement among all initiatives assessed. Our **implementation** of the due diligence standards was also judged highly by a significant margin, with ITSCI achieving an alignment of 80%.

In a process that has lasted more than two years, the OECD, together with their consultant, developed, piloted and reported on an assessment methodology which will likely be adopted by the EU to assess industry schemes wishing to be recognised as part of their mineral due diligence regulation. Five mineral industry initiatives were included in this pilot assessment, three of which related specifically to audit at gold refiners, as well as the ITSCI Programme and the Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI, previously CFSI) smelter audits. Gaps were identified by the OECD in the first assessment of five programme standards in 2016, and these have now been reassessed for 2018. Fortunately, ITSCI standards were already 98% aligned in 2016 requiring limited change, but we nevertheless remain committed to continually improving implementation and all other aspects of our activities.

Kay Nimmo, tin representative on the ITSCI Governance Committee commented on these positive results *"We welcomed the opportunity to participate in the assessment and are delighted to have achieved recognition of the leading role that ITSCI plays in setting high due diligence standards in 3T mineral supply chains from central Africa. We believe that our high rankings are even more remarkable when considering the logistical and other practical challenges we face in implementation when supporting the mainly artisanal and small scale mineral sector."*

Ensuring appropriate standards of due diligence in supply chains remains the fundamental objective of the ITSCI Programme since that is what ensures market access for all. Continually monitoring that these standards are in place and implemented on-the-ground requires an extensive local network, something that is at the next level of difficulty after setting paper based audit standards, and only possible through a multi-stakeholder collaboration. Kay Nimmo also recognised that *"This achievement has come from the hard work and commitment of the entire ITSCI team, from the International Tin Association (ITA) and the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.) to our ITSCI member companies, government partners and implementing teams such as Pact Inc and Synergy Global Consulting."*

The OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas provides detailed recommendations to help companies respect human rights and avoid contributing to conflict through their mineral purchasing decisions and practices. The International Tin Association has participated in OECD activities since the first guidance was in draft and remains on the OECD Multi-Stakeholder Group for this topic. The OECD Guidance has always been a primary reference point for ITSCI and our role is to transform its complexities and flexibilities

into meaningful standards of due diligence supporting both large and small operators in many different countries.

The T.I.C.'s representative on the ITSCI Governance Committee, Roland Chavasse, explained that *"the ITSCI Programme strives to ensure market access for all, including artisanal miners, and we have worked hard to set appropriate standards of due diligence to avoid disengagement which remains one of our fundamental objectives. We believe that the implementation of ITSCI has driven enormous improvements in human rights and will seek to minimize increased requirements from this assessment to avoid further increases to the burden on miners on the ground."*

The OECD also assessed various aspects of **programme governance** which are not part of the OECD guidance but are felt to be of importance. In this category the ITSCI programme achieved the second highest percentage of fully addressed items out of the five initiatives. ITSCI has a clear and formalised governance structure, and, a level of disclosure and transparency that goes beyond that expected by the OECD Guidance and that provided by other initiatives. Public information about the programme and its results are published on a recently updated ITSCI website, launched since the OECD assessment, and extensive supply chain information is immediately available to any downstream company who wishes to purchase access rights.

Some information from the full OECD report is presented in the following table but we recommend reference to the source document linked below, as the assessment and scoring methodology is complex.

<http://mneguidelines.oecd.org/industry-initiatives-alignment-assessment.htm>

NGO Global Witness contributed to the development of the alignment assessment and while welcoming the results, also cautioned against their use without a full understanding of the methodology, and against a continued reliance on such audits.

<https://www.globalwitness.org/fr/press-releases/global-witness-statement-oecd-alignment-assessment-industry-programmes-oecd-minerals-guidance/>

Programme	OECD 5-Step Alignment (Fully vs Partially/Not)		Governance Review
	Standards (2018)	Implementation (2016)	
Dubai Multi Commodities Centre (DMCC)	84%	29%	Fully addressed
International Tin Supply Chain Initiative (ITSCI)	100%	80%	59%
London Bullion Market Association (LBMA)	96%	47%	54%
Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC)	74%	26%	52%
Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI)	88%	24%	70%

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For editorial information or to arrange an interview please contact:

Jeremy Pearce
Communications Manager
International Tin Association Ltd
Telephone +44 (0)1727 871 311
Email: Jeremy.pearce@internationaltin.org

Kay Nimmo
Manager Sustainability and Regulatory Affairs
International Tin Association Ltd
Telephone: +44 (0)1727 871 312
Email: kay.nimmo@internationaltin.org

Roland Chavasse, Director,
Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.)
Telephone: +32 2 649 51 58
Email: director@tanb.org



About ITSCI:

The ITSCI Programme is a joint industry mechanism designed to address 'conflict mineral' concerns in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and other Great Lakes Region countries. The Programme establishes traceability in the upstream mineral chain for 3T minerals by working with local Governments and their field agents, and assists companies to establish due diligence through independent monitoring on the ground and regular audits. The Programme supports the practical implementation of the OECD's Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas as well as the UN Security Council Resolution 1952 (2010) due diligence recommendations. Members are expected to recognise all aspects of these guidelines and cooperate with monitoring, evaluation and audits as required, as well as working on their own company policies and contracts to influence the supply chain in a positive way. Through the implementation of the internationally recognised OECD Guidance, the Programme aims to aid compliance with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Rule interpreting the US Dodd Frank law, section 1502 on conflict minerals. The Programme complements other initiatives, including the Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI), the ICGLR's Regional Certification Initiative, and BGR's Certified Trading Chains Initiative (CTC). Please see the project website; www.itsci.org



About International Tin Association:

The International Tin Association (formerly ITRI) is the world's foremost authority on tin with over 80 years' experience in tin related technologies. It is a membership based organisation representing major tin producers and smelters and is the premier source of tin related information. International Tin has specialist knowledge of tin use in all the major sectors as well as groups responsible for technology, statistical and market information, regulatory affairs and sustainability. It provides links to the main tin consuming sectors through a substantial network of industry contacts. The organisation hosts seminars, conferences and industry-specific group meetings. It also provides marketing and technical support to its members and the tin industry in general. International Tin is the tin representative to the ITSCI programme Steering Committee and Secretariat of the programme. Further information can be obtained from www.internationaltin.org



About the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.):

The Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.) is an international non-profit association, established in 1974 under Belgian law. It comprises around 90 members, all involved in the industries of tantalum and/or niobium, at various positions along the supply chain (mining, trading, processing, capacitor manufacturing, recycling, other end-users such as medical, aerospace...). The association organises an annual meeting with technical presentations and a plant tour to the facility of one of its members. It also collects/consolidates (via an independent company to ensure confidentiality) then reports industry statistics on production and consumption of tantalum and niobium products. It provides technical help to members and non-members and issues a quarterly Bulletin. The association also addresses major issues and challenges facing its industry: artisanal and small-scale mining, transport of radioactive materials. T.I.C. is the tantalum representative to the ITSCI programme Governance Committee. Please see further information on www.tanb.org