

We are pleased to resume our bimonthly newsletter and to announce the launch of dedicated microsites for each of the impact projects implemented under our MARS Programme. You can explore them here: nir.se/programmes/mars/. These microsites are intended to provide our partners with ongoing information on progress and achievements in advancing more responsible, sustainable, and competitive mining in Latin America.

In this edition, we highlight how MARS projects are advancing across the region, with direct links to their corresponding microsites. Updates include strengthened collaboration with the OECD and mining associations on Responsible Business Conduct, a second phase of multi-stakeholder dialogues in Peru, enhanced engagement between formal small- and large-scale gold mining in Colombia, as well as advancing the next steps for evidence-informed dialogues on a responsible copper pathway, and ultimately, the launch of an interprovincial policy proposal for inclusive water governance in Argentina's lithium sector. Each update marks a step towards more sustainable and collaborative mining in Latin America.

Latin American Mining Sector at OECD Responsible Business Conduct Week



Source: MARS 2026. Carlos Urenda participating on behalf of Latin American mining associations during the OECD RBC Week in Paris.

MARS and its strategic regional partner, V3 LAB, had the privilege of participating in the OECD RBC Week, which marked the **50th anniversary of the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct**.

The forum brought together leaders from governments, business associations, companies, and other key stakeholders to reflect on the global impact of the Guidelines and the lessons emerging from their implementation across different regions.

Carlos Urenda, CEO of the Mining Council of Chile, represented the mining associations participating in MARS and delivered a joint statement agreed upon with the associations of Colombia, Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, reaffirming their commitment to advancing corporate sustainability in mining and positioning responsible business conduct as a strategic pillar for the sector's future.

His speech centered on the following key messages:

- Across the region, **Responsible Business Conduct (RBC)** has become a shared language for companies and mining associations, supported by stronger standards, improved practices, and dialogue with workers, suppliers, authorities, civil society, communities, and Indigenous peoples.
- A key lesson from Latin America's mining sector is that Responsible Business Conduct creates the most value when it moves beyond compliance and becomes part of business strategy.

- As demand for critical minerals grows, Latin America has a historic opportunity to turn its mineral wealth into sustainable development. Seizing it will require producing more with lower environmental and social impacts, while tackling illegal mining, strengthening public safety and legal certainty, and expanding oversight across the broader mining ecosystem.
- The region is determined not to let this opportunity pass by, and the world should care not only about the minerals it needs, but about how they are produced.

Discussion with Miguel Castro on the Role of Mining Associations in Promoting Responsible Business Conduct in Latin America



Source: Miguel Castro-Riberos. Regional focal point for Latin America and the Caribbean at the OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct.

MARS spoke with **Miguel Castro-Riberos** about the role of mining associations in advancing more responsible and sustainable mining in Latin America, and the contribution of the MARS Programme to this purpose.

Mining associations already play a central role as intermediaries between companies, governments, and other actors in the mining ecosystem, Miguel highlights. However, he considers that this role can be complemented through their collective action platforms to promote the implementation of the OECD standards on responsible business conduct. This includes, for example, strengthening capacities for the implementation of risk-based due diligence, facilitating the exchange of good practices, and supporting their members throughout this process.

According to Miguel, to effectively fulfill this role, mining associations must recognize themselves as leaders of this collective action and strengthen their technical, institutional, and collaborative capacities. Although each country faces specific challenges, many due diligence-related issues are common, which opens opportunities to share experiences, develop tools, and build shared solutions.

From this perspective, the MARS Programme provides significant added value to the OECD work by articulating a regional space among mining associations in Latin America, facilitating joint initiatives to address common challenges and bring the OECD international standards on responsible business conduct closer to the reality of the countries. For example, through the tool developed by MARS for mining associations, the role they can play in driving responsible business practices is promoted in a practical manner aligned with OECD standards.

The collaboration between the OECD and MARS aims to strengthen the capacity of mining associations to support their members in implementing OECD standards on Responsible Business Conduct.

Chumbivilcas, **Peru****Launching Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues for Territorial Development in Chumbivilcas**

Source: MARS. Landscape of Chumbivilcas, Cusco Department, southern Peru.

MARS has launched a new stage of work in Chumbivilcas, Cusco, to consolidate a more structured, inclusive, and sustainable territorial dialogue. Building on earlier progress, this phase seeks to strengthen trust, improve institutional coordination, and promote shared agreements for local development.

As part of this effort, MARS formalised a work plan with the expert consultancy firm Insuco to design and implement a multi-stakeholder dialogue and public-private collaboration platform for territorial development.

Launched in early June, the process will advance through five stages: alignment, preparation, design, implementation, and transfer, with actions focused on stakeholder mapping, governance mechanisms, shared priorities, and follow-up tools to strengthen territorial management.

Through this work plan, MARS seeks to advance a common development agenda in Chumbivilcas, supported by multisectoral agreements, a consensus-based roadmap, and evidence-based decision-making. Team Sweden's expertise in innovation and sustainability reinforces MARS' role as a platform for dialogue, capacity strengthening, and shared solutions aligned with the Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) agenda. Upcoming roundtables will focus on agreements, trust-building, and RBC in territorial governance. [Visit the project microsite.](#)

In Chumbivilcas, a structured multi-stakeholder dialogue process is strengthening trust, coordination, and shared agreements for sustainable territorial development.

Colombia**From Evidence to Dialogue: Advancing Responsible Copper Mining in Colombia**

Source: Sida 2026. Colombia's Vice Minister of Mines, the ANM President, and representatives of MARS and the Australian, Swedish, British, and Danish embassies at the World Bank-convened GRuC session on critical minerals and Colombia's energy transition.

MARS and its co-development partner, the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), have consolidated the Baseline Study on the Copper Opportunity, which is informing the next phase of dialogue and territorial capacity-building in Colombia. The study examines the country's copper exploration phase, regulatory environment, key challenges and opportunities, and relevant international benchmarks.

In parallel, SEI and MARS launched preparations for the 2026 multi-stakeholder dialogue and territorial capacity-building process in Cesar and La Guajira, including selecting the lead consultancy, with support from the National Mining Agency (ANM) and other key stakeholders. This work strengthens engagement with ANM on copper governance for the energy transition, following the December 2025 copper round, which prequalified 14 companies, with five offers already accepted. [Visit the project microsite.](#)

Colombia

Formal small-scale gold miners strengthen collaboration with large-scale mining through CRAFT Code capacity-building



Source: MARS 2026. CRAFT Code training session in Marmato, Caldas Department, Colombia.



Source: MARS 2026. Mine visit in Segovia, Antioquia, during the exchange sessions.

After formalising their collaboration in 2025, MARS and Aris Mining, a Canadian gold mining company operating in Colombia, began implementing a CRAFT Code training pilot in April 2026 in Marmato (Caldas) and Segovia (Antioquia). Pioneering at the national level in promoting connections between large and small-scale mining, the initiative was led by the Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM) through field diagnostics and in-person and virtual sessions.

During the first phase, 17 leaders from formal small-scale mining operations linked to Aris Mining's supply chain participated. They identified risks, defined mitigation actions, and understood how CRAFT can strengthen their management systems against international due diligence standards.

Once the training phase was completed, deeper support was provided to two small-scale mining companies operating in Marmato and Segovia in implementing the CRAFT Code. These exchange spaces drive learning and continuous improvement between small-scale and large-scale mining. The work will continue throughout the year to strengthen compliance and establish a replicable model for other territories.

In addition, as part of its positioning in Colombia, MARS engaged companies, associations, government authorities, and key allies during Minexpo 2026 in Medellín, strengthening its presence on the country's mining agenda. Together with Team Sweden, it convened Colombian and Swedish leaders to discuss sector priorities and alignment between mining standards, with **Jorge Luis Montero**, former Minister of Energy and Mines of Peru, providing a regional perspective.

MARS also joined ARM's webinar series to present due diligence as a compliance and competitiveness tool for formal small-scale mining. The session is available at this link. The next session, in August, will address gender-responsive occupational health and safety in collaboration with Women in Mining and ARM. [Visit the project microsite.](#)

The Code of Risk-mitigation for Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners Engaging in Formal Trade (CRAFT) is an open standard that helps artisanal and small-scale miners improve their social, environmental, and economic practices, meet market and due diligence requirements, and strengthen the traceability and competitiveness of mining value chains.

Salta, **Argentina**

Developing an Interprovincial Policy Proposal for Responsible Lithium Production in Argentina's Puna, in Collaboration with IGF

Within the MARS Programme, the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) is advancing an inclusive water management process in the Pastos Grandes salt flat, in Salta Province, to strengthen technical knowledge and build trust among the company, public authorities, and the local community.

Through the co-development of an analytical tool based on hydrological data from the basin, the initiative strengthens participation, collaboration, and evidence-based decision-making on the potential for lithium production.

The contributions and lessons from the Pastos Grandes process aim to support its adaptation to other territories and contribute to the development of an initial interprovincial policy proposal to guide lithium-related decisions in Argentina while protecting water, ecosystems, biodiversity, and local livelihoods.

In this context, together with the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF), we are assessing the legal and institutional frameworks of Catamarca, Salta and Jujuy to strengthen responsible water governance for the future development of lithium production in these provinces, which are strategically important to the sector's expansion in Argentina.

Led by an IGF consultant, the plan reviews provincial frameworks, systematises lessons learned, and promotes agreement through dialogue with authorities and key stakeholders from Salta, Catamarca and Jujuy. The collaboration combines SEI's expertise in participatory water planning with IGF's experience in government dialogue and sustainable mining. [Visit the project microsite.](#)



IGF

INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM
on Mining, Minerals, Metals and
Sustainable Development

From Pastos Grandes in Salta to Catamarca and Jujuy, we are leveraging an inclusive hydrological management model to inform an interprovincial policy proposal that integrates water, ecosystems, livelihoods, and biodiversity into responsible lithium production in Argentina.

Contacts:

Henrik Hallgren

Programme Director
henrik.hallgren@nir.se

Andres Hernandez

Regional Programme Manager
andres.hernandez@nir.se

